



Highlights



Mission

Seoul International School develops inquisitive, independent thinkers and collaborative learners, who acquire the essential knowledge necessary to be caring and creative contributors to the world around them.



Vision

Seoul International School will foster an earnest passion for learning that inspires students to work with others in creating a better world for all.



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Beyond COVID-19

SIS community
facing global pandemic with creative
and innovative solutions.



Seoul International School Board

The Seoul International School Board was established in May 2019 and it is comprised of devoted parents, leadership team members and appointees from the Founder. The purpose of SIS School Board is to lead in the service of its constituents toward the school’s vision and mission. Due to COVID-19, some of the meetings this year have been conducted virtually. Please welcome our new board members that have been appointed this year.



Parent
Representatives

Sonia Kim
Hye Jeong Lee
Sung Taek Hwang
Matthew Christiansen (Replacing Jay Lim)
Sang Won Kim (Replacing Hee Sung Choo)

Appointed by
Edward B. Adams,
Founder

Kyung Mook Lee
Chun Ki Baek
Michael Colaianne
Young Ok Chi

Parent Auditor

Jee Young Kim

Lessons Learned

Michael Colaianni
Head of School

As SIS continues to deal with what seems to be a fading COVID-19 pandemic, let's take a look at what the school has learned and what students and staff may have even gained from living through such a world-wide tragedy that has left many of us saddened and with tremendous loss.

SIS felt that it was prepared for the distance learning that was necessary in February of 2020. SIS teachers had been well prepared and passed along to their students what they needed to know in order to begin online lessons. The school made sure that all students had the needed tools to begin their distance-learning journey.

Although there were difficulties with distance learning among the younger students, in particular in early March, it was found that as students began to be accustomed to Google Meet, Skype or Zoom, they became quite adept and even expert at using these applications. Many of the children have made use of their newly learned skills, even outside of the online classroom.

It may be claimed that due to increased awareness of good hygiene practices, we have remained healthy and even better than in past years. Hand washing, wearing of masks, use of disinfectant and staying out of crowds have all become day-to-day habits that will continue to keep us healthy.

We have become more supportive, not only within our own families but among our community. We are always looking for ways to guide each other through these difficult times. Let's hope this also becomes more routine over the course of the next few months and beyond.

We have learned to cut back on unnecessary travel, which has positively impacted the quality of the air we breathe. More use of public transportation options have led to fewer road accidents.

Working remotely has become routine as more and better tools and software have developed due to the need that has arisen from the coronavirus. These tools will stay with us and continue to be improved.

We long for pre-pandemic days, without a doubt, and sure enough they will return. But let's hold on to the positives that have come about as a result of the dire situation into which we were all thrown. We will come out of this better, stronger and more resilient.





Admissions Office Changes due to Pandemic

Irene De Shazo
Admissions Administrator

When the pandemic shut down schools in Korea in the beginning of 2020, it made for an unwelcome disruption in everyone's lives. However, this disruption also provided an opportunity to pay close attention to how SIS reaches out to prospective families.

Virtual open house was a new adventure for admissions this year. With in-person visits, the prospective families' goal is to understand the actual feeling of being at Seoul International School. A virtual open house can offer this same opportunity. Potential parents and students virtually walk through our classrooms and listen to SIS students get excited about what they are learning in school. While requiring extensive planning, this digital method of showcasing Seoul International School has shown a number of benefits. First and foremost, is its accessibility. Posting the virtual open house on the SIS website and other social media platforms allowed for more families to appreciate our outstanding school. In a very short period of time, the admissions office is able to reach many families, from different parts of the world, which wasn't possible when open houses were in-person. There is also an added bonus of viewing the open house on demand, in the comfort of one's home and on one's own time schedule. While virtual open house doesn't allow for real-time engagement, families are encouraged to inquire via a google doc link, call or send the office an email with questions. Aside from the convenience, virtual open houses are also a

chance to demonstrate to parents and students that the school is "tech ready" for anything that comes its way. Seoul International School can readily mobilize and utilize available technological tools for remote learning. This evidence promotes confidence in prospective families that are considering SIS – the school is prepared!

SIS also reaches out to prospective families through the application process. The school has offered flexibility and creativity in entrance requirements. This pandemic has forced potential families to face challenges, when applying to SIS. For those applying outside of Korea, the challenges have become greater. Proctors and test centers to help supervise Seoul International School's entrance tests are not readily available. These tests are an important tool to determine if an applicant will find success in SIS' rigorous academic curriculum. The silver lining in this pandemic is evident in the response of SIS in implementing different ways to achieve the school's goal, such as proctoring the test on Zoom and enhancing interview questions to determine important soft skills.

The pandemic has seized the attention of the SIS community in ways that can be rewarding. Regardless of what one does, each attempt can be inspiring. It opens doors for creativity.



▶ youtu.be/fLKnoQeBF8A



Always Moving Forward To The End

Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development

This has been a year of tremendous change. In the spring of 2020, when COVID-19 arrived in Arizona, the once bustling school campus full of activity and student laughter, became a ghost town overnight. The eerie feeling will not be easily forgotten. Saddened by not being able to officially say “goodbye” to students, there was the realization that normality and routine could be taken without warning. Daily joys often taken for granted, could no longer be guaranteed.

Yet at the same time, my focus and vision were directed elsewhere because three months earlier, I had made a commitment to move to South Korea and work at Seoul International School. Plans had already been made, so the COVID-19 experience in Arizona was a type of closure, even though unintentionally. Viewing experiences of such magnitude in life, as open doors for change, is my goal. Spiraling down to the uncontrollable “muck” of the moment achieves nothing, but rather one should catch the wave that lifts above situations and circumstances. Life always moves forward until the last breath is taken, so whatever is experienced in the moment, is guaranteed to change! There will always be new challenges to tackle in life’s journey.

Sufferings of the moment often become faded memories over time. The year of COVID-19 will be added to the faded memories, as life carries on. The essential question is what can one learn through the experience. The most unimaginable occurred

and much of the world was not prepared for it. Yet, regardless of circumstances, it doesn’t need to consume all of life. SIS has experienced enormous changes, expansions and even bumps in the road, since it was founded in 1973. It is beneficial to acknowledge the past, but allow life to naturally move on. Focus on the future and what may lie ahead.

The past can never be altered. Difficult situations can distress us, but important lessons can be gleaned from them. Important people may disappoint us, but ultimately it is not the actions of others that define us. How one determines to respond to a crisis, is what gives true meaning to that event or time in life.

Seoul International School achieved a phenomenal response to COVID-19. The school was able to jump into action as a collaborative force. The circumstance actually united us. The world has changed, but it is always changing. Seoul International School is also always changing. The school’s response to COVID-19 was to embrace the change with growth. We have a lot to be proud about.



Prioritization

David Coleman

Director for Curriculum &
Professional Development

Over the past year, people around the world have adjusted to a variety of unexpected changes. It's hard to imagine just how much has happened in such a short period of time. Borders have closed. Global travel has been significantly curtailed. Healthcare systems have been tested. People have been isolated.

Governments have spent trillions on vaccine development, distribution, and economic recovery. Indeed, many industries have been forced to reinvent themselves to meet the new demands of a COVID-19 stricken world. At the same time, the seemingly ordinary function of school quickly became a bewildering calculus where the ways forward demanded a collaborative intersection of technology, creativity, flexibility, and above all else, a renewed understanding of the distinction between what is good to learn and what is truly essential.

At SIS we have engaged in student-centered initiatives focused on vertical curriculum alignment, flexible instructional design, and assessment practices intended to promote understanding through knowledge transfer and skill development. Our school wide efforts to innovate, align, and prioritize standards while assessing skills has been at the forefront of our schoolwide professional development and has supported exciting new pathways for all our students. This has positioned us to address the COVID-19 crisis with confidence, clarity, and a commitment to excellence.

As distance learning became the new reality, teachers were ready to quickly pivot and leverage the many tools and resources available due to initiatives already in process. Learning platforms and online compatible

curricula were ready to be scaled-up and proved to be the perfect interfaces necessary to put students in front of their teachers and classmates.

One of the important initiatives which has helped to reduce the impacts of distance learning has been the movement toward prioritizing academic and social/emotional learning standards. This simple but important step has helped all to see what we teach through new eyes and encouraged adjustments toward essential learning. Through this prioritized delineation, the most important skills, strategies, processes, and content has been identified and has facilitated collaborative conversations. This helped in the transition to distance learning and aided teachers and students alike in understanding what needed to be prioritized in the new online environment.

As we know, SY 2021-21 has been a challenging school year in ways no one could have anticipated. The unpredictable nature of the Coronavirus pandemic has affected every aspect of our personal and professional lives and left billions around the world without a clear picture of what the future may hold. SIS' diligence and dedication to curriculum and program development has proven to be the very foundation our students, teachers, and parents rely on to provide stability, clarity, and the necessary meaning behind distance teaching and learning at SIS. Our documented, guaranteed, and viable curriculum has provided the necessary backbone for the distance learning protocols implemented as a result of this global crisis. Our teachers are prioritizing what must be taught. Our students are clear and well informed regarding what must be learned. Our parent community has affirmed our work with their unwavering support and appreciation.



Go Far, Go Together

Young Ok Chi
Business Manager

Taking over the heavy burden as Business Manager during a global pandemic crisis has afforded little time to take in the view as the year comes to an end. Seoul International School was my first step into society after graduation and for 38 years, I have served with great pride and a sense of responsibility as a member of the SIS community. The school is built on the kaleidoscope of dedication, hard work and memories of wonderful faculty and staff. The love for SIS has helped countless students build their future dreams. I miss all the beautiful people who have passed through SIS.

Faced with the unprecedented pandemic, initially SIS experienced confusion like most of the world, but recovered by building guidelines and action plans led by the government and health authorities. SIS found ways to balance academic needs and desire for normalcy. Well-deserved applause goes to our Leadership Team, faculty, and staff who responded with professional integrity from every corner. But the hidden figures that deserve our deepest appreciation are our parents whose perseverance won the day and made this school year truly possible.

Like people, organizations age over time and fall behind amidst new environments and cultural landscapes. SIS which has continued to grow for the past 48 years, is now at the cusp of a great leap forward towards new development. Redefining the problems gives this chance for rebirth, sets new goals and corrects bad habits. Together, SIS will devise measures for improvement and innovation, in working in measured steps and in sync.

The irony of the new era of coronavirus is “Un-tact”, the newly coined word of “contact” with a negative prefix “un”, in which society is learning to share more information even faster. Rather than aspiring to individual perfection, the new era is finding a sense of accomplishment and sense of presence in the joy of completing it together as a community. To be trusted, one must first respect others and sometimes lead but also sometimes provide support. Open communication and mutual growth leads to a higher happiness quotient and well-being.

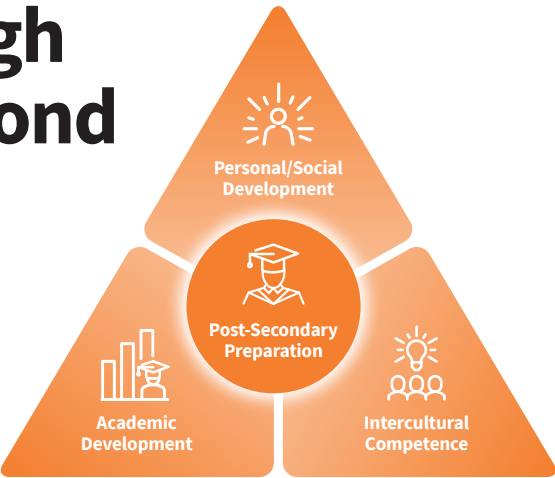
The SIS COVID-19 Task Force Team (TFT), has fulfilled its responsibilities and roles silently but efficiently over the past year by embodying the saying, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” The sense of dedication is also apparent in the Leadership Team, staff, specialist adviser and parents working hard on the SIS Architectural Planning Committee and subcommittee in coming together to plan for innovative improvements for SIS’s future. Mutual respect and open communication will result in innovative future solutions with well-balanced curricular and administrative goals to provide the best educational landscape for SIS to succeed.

On behalf of SIS, I would like to conclude with a special thanks to all the staff members who worked year-round to help out with the COVID-19 measures. Thanks to all of you, we have a bright and happy school life to look forward to again. Thank you.



Counseling Through COVID-19 and Beyond

Kelcey Edwards
Director of Guidance &
College Counseling



Seoul International School added two counselors this year and now has dedicated school counselors in the elementary and middle schools, as well as three school counselors and a college counselor in the high school. This exciting growth allowed the school to better serve students and families through this unusual year. Time was provided for more individual support, as well as to develop new resources for families (e.g., newsletters, Google classrooms, and the SIS Counseling Instagram).

The core of our work is personal/social development. Counselors help support students to develop independence and self-confidence, become self-aware, explore identity, manage feelings and behavior, develop positive attitudes about oneself and others, and manage relationships. THIS is critical to success at SIS and life in general. Colleges care deeply about the social-emotional side of students. There is also the focus on academic development. Counselors help students become self-reflective learners, evaluate strengths and weaknesses, develop organizational, time-management, and goal-setting skills, and identify and use strategies to improve outcomes.

SIS encourages intercultural competence. The school wants students to have an international perspective,

be able to bridge cultural differences, and understand, respect, and appreciate their culture while being open to different values and traditions. These three elements are the foundation to the final piece...post-secondary development. Seoul International School strives to shape students to be well prepared for college and career. Without a solid foundation, particularly in terms of social-emotional well-being, they could struggle during the college process and after leaving SIS.

“Colleges know that our students have strong academic profiles. It’s the other pieces of the admission puzzle that starts to differentiate students. Colleges want to understand:

- Who is this student as a person?
- How do they engage with teachers and peers both in and out of the classroom?
- What are they going to bring to our campus community?

The Counseling Team helps students navigate SIS from the moment of entry through graduation, collaborating with parents, teachers and administration along the way. Students will connect with counselors through individual meetings, small group conversations, and classroom lessons.



“Every day, I connect with individual students, families, teachers, and student groups. Whether to discuss an academic or personal issue, or to play games in my office, my door is open.”

Alyssa Haugen
Middle School Counselor



“Character Education is part of the specialist rotation starting in preK, so all students receive lessons covering such topics.”

Jennifer Kurbel
Elementary School Counselor

“We met with students in person and online this year, adjusting our classroom lesson plans so that students continued to receive timely information and support.”

Ashlee Davis
High School Counselor

The Counseling Team

Ashlee Davis (HS), Alyssa Haugen (MS), Morgan Davis (HS), Kelcey Edwards (HS), Carly Santos (HS), & Jennifer Kurbel (ES)

Our work involves...

- Character education
- Individual counseling
- Social-emotional support
- Conflict mediation
- Peer mentoring
- New student orientation
- Academic support
- Educational planning
- Summer program applications
- Boarding school applications
- Career exploration
- College advising



► www.instagram.com/p/CKVTrzCAB9Z/



Virtual Learning and Academic Currency

James Gerhard
HS Principal

Did our program gain or lose academic currency during the pandemic?

Our students and teachers have shown an incredible resilience this year. Things have been different, we all realize a virtual program is different than being on campus, but has that difference really been apparent in our learning outcomes?

One indication of the viability of a good academic program is the extent of academic currency. Traditionally in the American system, academic currency was identified by student seat time in a class. Each class, each year, was worth one Carnegie unit. When a student completed the minimum number of Carnegie units to meet requirements in a high school program, they received a diploma. Academic currency in our program is a bit more than that, our currency registers through the depth and breadth of learned curriculum as shown through skills and performance by the student, over time, during each class. We don't just keep track of your time, we keep track of what you did with your time.

To take a short-term view of academic currency we could use the analogy where learning is seen as the money students accrue, each year a little more educational wealth helps to increase their academic success. In a longer-range perspective this currency is more like capital where learning and skills compound to enable evaluation in places like the AP exams, final classroom grades, or universities evaluating our educational program in order to offer letters of acceptance. When your academic currency is large, your educational goals have to keep up. There is no

doubt our goals have been very high for a long time. Over the last year our program was still the same great program, even in a virtual medium. The tangible parts of our program; instruction, assessments, in-class activities, peer-collaboration in classes, science labs, singing or playing instruments, molding ceramics projects, all those things continued to function at a really high level despite our being virtual. There weren't many schools that can say they still had an extraordinary music program and rigorous AP outcomes, valid assessments in core subjects, and physically challenging PE classes during the pandemic. We were able to accomplish all those things and more, allowing our program to retain its strong currency. Our exchange rate stayed the same during virtual learning.

Our school standard is not just currency for your basic standard of living. Our program is meant to excel and exceed as a world class international school. Our learning currency is shown to be valid over time and any circumstance, in order to deliver the important aspects of what school is really for, which is preparing young adults to become educated citizens who can help find solutions to our current issues. We are proud of the fact that we continued with that mission in a virtual manner over the last year. What made the difference? As always, teachers were the key. The diligence and effort by our high school faculty was the main reason for the success of our program and students. Their continued work is the bank that backs our educational currency.

Johnstone, Ewell, and Paulson. Student Learning As Academic Currency. American Council of Education.

Artistry Spilling Over at SIS

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development

Jane Mitchell has been teaching high school art at SIS since 2015. Before coming to South Korea, she also taught in Jakarta, New Zealand and London. When asked what gave her the passion to become an art teacher, she said that her teacher in secondary school inspired her to go into teaching. “She was so passionate” says Jane.

“It doesn’t feel like a job, but rather you are working with like-minded individuals to be creative. I treat students as fellow artists and I aim to bring out the best in them.”

When we asked what she enjoyed most about working in an international school, Jane says it is the skill set and diverse cultural aspects. “I love that Seoul is a great city that really values art. Many of the exhibitions here are phenomenal. They bring internationally recognized artists to Seoul to exhibit. The galleries are contemporary. There is art everywhere and that influences and inspires students as well.” Jane Mitchell has a website with a comprehensive list of awards and exhibitions she has achieved.

Jane says the most challenging aspects of teaching art during the COVID-19 pandemic were working with limited materials, packaging up materials for students to pick up, constant last minute changes, lack of ability to be connected with students face to face and to assist them individually on artwork.



▶ www.instagram.com/p/CKVTrzCAB9Z



Timeless Art

My Mind
Asuka Kurebayashi (11)



Formation of Me
Rachel Lee (11)

Digital Imaging and photo manipulation with Photoshop
Seongyun Jeong (12)



Hopeless Zoo
Claire Hahn (10)



Personalized Still Life
Amy Cha (9)



The Duality of Ballet
Yubin Han (11)

Vanitas Still Life
Abigail Kim (11)



From High School



▶ youtu.be/tB8_Jlz80TA

Game-Based Learning

Tessa Alden & Peter Alden
HS English & HS Science

Game-based learning is getting a lot of attention in educational research. Game-based learning, defined as “teaching and learning through games with defined objectives and outcomes,” is a way to get students to master important concepts while developing a culture of respect and teamwork. SIS educator, Peter Alden, uses game-based learning techniques to teach plate tectonics to his Grade 10 Science class. First, students work collaboratively to create the games, which involves complex problem solving. They develop expertise in their topics and they think creatively about designing games that reward players for their knowledge.

Peter models the game-design process after the engineering cycle, which is the collaborative process engineers use to develop new materials. When the students play the games, the learning concepts are reinforced and students get to see how other teams approached the game design.

Peter uses games because they help students “build critical thinking skills... designing a game shifts the students from just memorizing information to solving real world issues. It’s a fun way to get them thinking about innovative ways they can solve problems.” Peter is proud of his students for not giving up when they met some tough challenges. “They kept the game design in view at all times. Before long, they gained a far greater depth of knowledge than they would’ve otherwise.”

The biggest challenge with this type of learning is that students quickly realize that applying design and aesthetics to an educational game is a daunting task. The class used a logic model, the engineering cycle, to make the project more efficient and easier to execute. The students determined a series of inputs taken from their prior investigations and then reassembled them to create the components of their game.

What matters the most about game-based learning? Peter says that games can be an important complement to memorization of facts and extrinsic motivators like grades and standardized exams. Parents can also come to understand that game design and similar problem based learning activities are student-focused and promote active learning that often results in greater retention of the course material. This method also exposes students to real-world experiences and perspectives that push them to understand that problems can have more than one solution.



Crisis Teaches Us What We Value

Gray Macklin
HS Assistant Principal



There are countless famous quotes about crises and how we respond to them. They usually point out the power of positive thinking without ever really engaging the paralyzing doubt or frustration that can overwhelm us. For me, crisis is a situation that demands affirmation of what I value through the choices I make in response to it. If I apply that definition, here is what I have learned we value.

1. We value the health and safety of all within our community. Whether we are looking at the decision to do distance learning through May last year or our return from winter break virtually, in every instance we listened to the experts to determine what was the safest for our community. Even when we returned to full attendance this year and students were required to wear masks at all times, students have been conscientious and cooperative in doing so. It is evident that we have a shared value for the common good and promotion of safety for all.

2. We value a strong educational program. As we settled into a long period of distance learning, we saw a number of schools struggle to keep students engaged. Teachers and students alike had to retool their approaches to teaching and learning, sometimes on only a few hours’ notice. That kind of flexibility does not come naturally, but our shared value of quality outweighed our tendency to be rigid in our approaches. Even when AP exams became optional and took place in the middle of the night, we were able to persevere, adjusting the daily schedule so students could successfully participate in AP exams. I think our 75% participation rate and 98% score of 3 or higher on

all exams is one that places SIS among the best in the world.

3. We value creative problem solving. I suppose there are those who would challenge this claim but I stand by the creative efforts of our faculty to resist the temptation to oversteer every time we faced a challenge. Sometimes the most creative thinking looks to optimize in new circumstances rather than make wholesale changes. Whether we look at the investment in smartboards for math classes or the solutions to ensemble music, teachers and students were willing to take risks and challenge themselves to find new ways to achieve the same excellent results.

4. We value being together. Prior to this pandemic it was very easy to wake up and think about how we have to go to school. The circumstances of this year remind us to wake up each morning and think about how we get to come to school. We have been prohibited from school trips, athletic competitions, and school performances for a year. The challenges of this pandemic have helped us remember that our lives at SIS are opportunities that need to be seized before they are gone.

I will be the last person to try and spin this year as something that was all for the best, but it has forced us to think about our values, set priorities that reflect them, and make the most of circumstances that were beyond our control. Despite the difficulties, we have deepened our understanding of who we are as a community. I know that I have never felt more proud of being a part of SIS than I have in these past 18 months.

The New Journey as a Designer

Rachel Lee (11)



Rachel Joohyun Lee, an 11th grader at SIS won the silver award in the 2021 National YoungArts Competition. The YoungArts Competition is a prestigious art competition in the US and the only art program that nominates for the US Presidential Scholars Program for the Arts. There are at least 7,000 students around the world who participate in the National YoungArts Competition every year and only a few are nominated for the awards. Finalists are able to participate in the National YoungArts Week and work with other leaders of their field. Rachel encourages SIS students to participate in the YoungArts Competitions.

The SIS design classes offered at the school have allowed me to experience different art mediums and expand my art perspective. Most of all, art has facilitated my self-expression and free communication with others. In November 2020, the National YoungArts Foundation announced that I was a finalist in the design discipline of the YoungArts Competition among the 2021 YoungArts award winners and was given the opportunity to participate in the National YoungArts Week+.

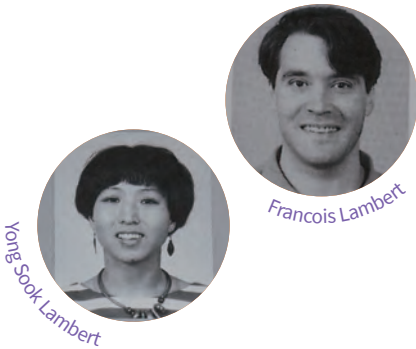
The program not only offered me the opportunity to work with a group of extraordinary, worldwide distinguished groups of accomplished artists including Paula Scher, and learn different fields of design, but I was also able to learn how the range of learning has no end. The National YoungArts Week+ program empowered me to pursue a life in the arts, beginning at the critical time when many are faced with decisions about life after high school. I was also thrilled to be the only silver medal awardee among three finalists who reside in Korea, receiving a cash prize of \$5,000. However, I was much more excited to meet so many talented young artists and even mentors who gave me many life mottos for the field of graphic design. It was such a spectacular experience.



The work I turned into YoungArts is called Mien. Mien, which is defined as a person's look or manner that creates the individual's characteristic, is the purpose of my design that leads people to learn and express a variety of facial expressions and capture their daily emotions. Mien is composed of several products: daily manual, application, an eco-bag with a badge, and calendar. Paul Ekman, an American psychologist, has discovered that several facial expressions of emotion, such as anger, disgust, joy, sadness, surprise, and fear were universally shared in different cultures. Moreover, Scott Mccloud, a cartoonist, has added to Paul Ekman's six basic facial expression theory, insisting that little modifications to the six basic emotions could present a third expression that we see everyday. Inspired by both Paul Ekman and Scott Mccloud's explanation of facial expressions, I created a manual that helps people to learn and practice a variety of facial expressions and captures their daily emotions. Someday I want to become a graphic designer who can communicate with the audience using visuals, not only to make the lives of the audience more comfortable but for everyone to interact with each other more easily.

SIS Connection to Past Faculty

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development

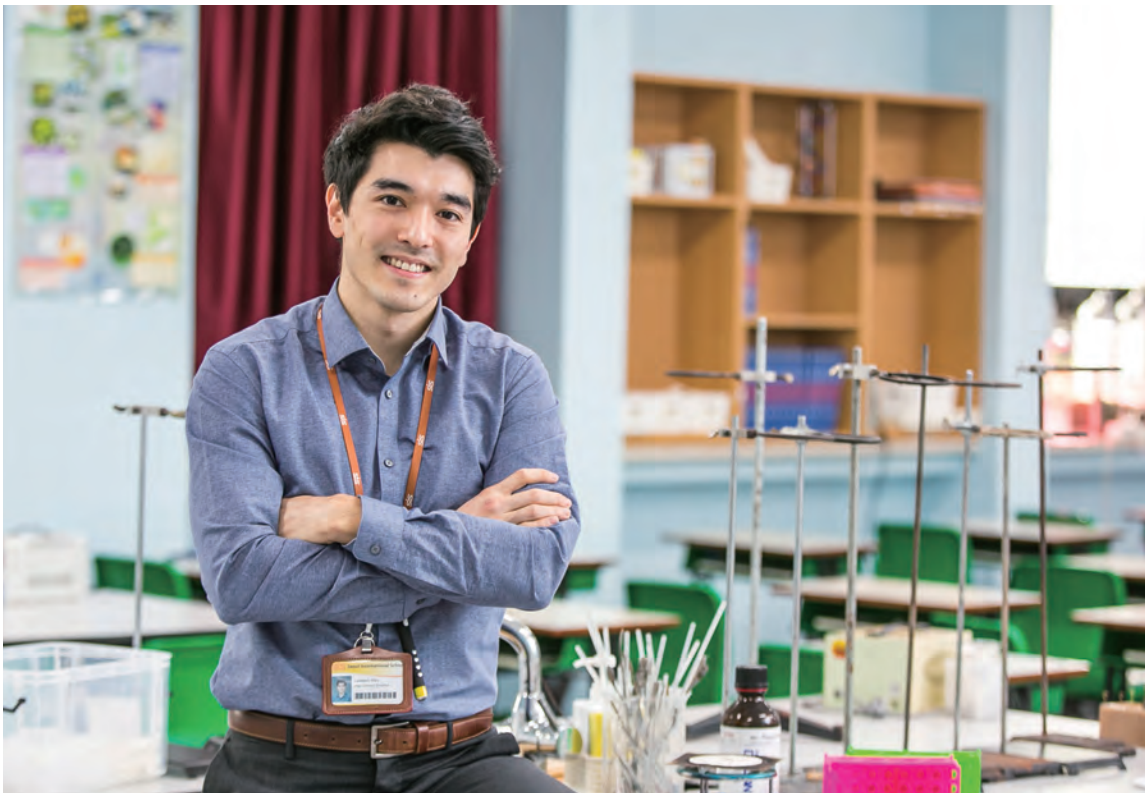


One of school’s new faculty, the high school science teacher Niko Lambert, has a unique family history with SIS. Niko’s parents, Yong Sook and Francois Lambert, taught at SIS from 1988 to 1991. During their time at SIS, Mrs. Lambert was a teacher’s aide and Mr. Lambert provided French instruction to the students, as well as coaching women’s varsity tennis and providing a valuable service as senior class advisor. The kind and charming couple welcomed their first daughter, while serving at SIS. Mrs. Lambert is particularly remembered as an artist who wore delicate architectural jewelry she crafted herself and her husband was beloved as a tennis coach, known for “torturous” drills that actually brought the athletes closer together.

Their son, Niko Lambert, who is now following his parents’ footsteps at SIS had the opportunity to join an interview held by the Lambert’s previous student, Ms. Hye Yong Min. The past faculty reminisced on their experience at SIS as a wonderful school where students were ambitious and highly motivated with a supportive administration and parent community. They mentioned how they have been in contact with some SIS alumni and past students. The Lamberts are now retired in Canada.

When asked how they could advise their son, Mrs. & Mr. Lambert encouraged him, as a young educator, to take this unique year of COVID-19 with its new hybrid learning environment as an opportunity to sharpen instructional skills for personal growth. They are delighted to have Niko continue in the family tradition as an international school teacher and they viewed the decision for Korea as the logical choice, since listening to stories of SIS were a part of his growing up years. They are looking forward to visiting Korea and SIS again, as soon as travel becomes possible.

All three Lamberts agree that one of the fundamental endeavors of a teacher is to get engaged in extracurricular activities outside the classroom where barriers between teachers and students can be pulled down to build meaningful relationships. Continuing in the family tradition, this year Niko Lambert is coaching the high school women’s varsity soccer. The SIS community always welcomes the children of past faculty members and the Highlights team was ecstatic to have this opportunity to interview past and present faculty together.



SIS Helps Develop a Writer

By Kim Elisa Adams

Director of School Development

Emily Solim Sung, an 11th grader at Seoul International School had the unique opportunity in December to be published in the winter 2020 edition of the Concord Review. Emily has been attending SIS since 7th grade and says she has enjoyed writing since elementary school where her passion was built. In high school, she says she joined the school newspaper, The Tiger Times and was able to learn many different aspects of reporting and journalism that helped her flourish as a writer. She has submitted other pieces of writing to other organizations in the past, but this is the first time she received a public accolade which she claims, “This makes it more special to me.” She wrote a research paper entitled “The Battle of the Booksellers: The Question of Copyright at Common Law in Eighteenth-Century England.”

The Concord Review is the only quarterly journal in the world to publish the academic research papers of secondary students. The Concord Review is known for the high quality of works published from student writers all over the globe and is considered the most prestigious writing award for high school students. This is the first time Emily has submitted an article to the Concord Review and she says that she is so thankful that she was able to have her paper published the first time she submitted something.

The assignment was not for a class, but something that Emily pursued outside of her regular studies.

Emily says, “The Concord Review is already famous among students, hence why I wanted to take part in it. At first, I didn’t really expect much from my writing and research, but as I continued to write, I started to see the possibility of getting selected steadily increasing. Thus I continued to work hard to produce the final product which ultimately did get published!” Out of all the thousands of works submitted, only eleven per issue are chosen, so Emily Solim Sung, representing Seoul International School, was one of the total 44 high school students chosen this year.

Being the first major award she has received for her writing, which makes it even more special to her, we say “Congratulations Emily on this incredible achievement!” When we asked her if she has aspirations for her writing in the future, she replied

“I wish to continue writing and other humanities related activities such as public speaking in college and further on as well.”

Social-Emotional Learning and Positive Relationships During COVID-19 Times

John Benavidez
MS Principal

The past 15 months can best be described as “inconsistent and challenging”. With one day’s notice, on February 25, we moved to online learning platforms. In March, to stay online for the remainder of the year was decided and although a challenge, students and teachers had meaningful relationships and routines firmly established. Although teachers worked from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Quad, we made it work.

This year, the MS has juggled multiple attendance and instruction scenarios, not knowing what the following week would bring. For short periods, teachers saw their students daily. Other times, students attended classes only 2 of 6 days or on campus 4 of every 6 school days. At times, students were online AND in the classroom simultaneously. The question became, “How do we continue building positive relationships and meeting the social-emotional needs of students during these unpredictable times?”. Although not easy, creative and highly committed staff rose to the challenge.

Sadly, many students were literally stuck inside apartments for nearly 10 months. Therefore, when students returned, staff implemented strategies and activities that provided opportunities to interact and work collaboratively with peers. Some activities teachers utilized were: Cooperative activities in classroom, class periods outside, allowing more movement, team building activities outdoors, counselor visits to classrooms, discussing strategies to reduce stress and anxiety, avoiding multiple test sessions while on campus, and Spirit days.

To maintain strong relationships with students even hundreds, if not thousands of miles away, became very daunting, so teachers implemented the follow online activities: Pick up what you see on your left and share it with us (Laughter and funny comments in the chat box would always ensue), bring pet to “class” day, 20 second dance challenge, group chat rooms, allowing students to “hang out” with each other, videos from our counselor sharing ideas and strategies students could use to stay healthy emotionally, awards assemblies online, and virtual talent show.

One most memorable week was when teachers led non-academic, fun Advisory activities: make amazing omelettes, make a tic toc video, crazy card tricks, make Ice cream, iron a dress shirt, line dancing, juggle, crochet, make slime, brainteasers, virtual museum visits, talking to toddlers, tiny desk concerts, make a slushy, and Zen coloring. Teachers and students really enjoyed these moments. Personally, I taught over 30 students how to make an omelette and had an amazing time. Those 25 minutes’ sessions were highlights of the year for many.

All in all, teachers continue to inspire through commitment and dedication to students. Often with no notice nor skipping a beat, teachers moved to online learning due to COVID-19. SIS will always provide a high quality learning experience for our students. Hopefully soon, the world will return to “normal” and students will attend school every day. For sure, we have all become better educators by facing this challenge cooperatively and with the mindset that we will always do our best to ensure that our students are taken care of.



Timeless Art



N Tower
Won-Gyeom Yang (8)



Through the Lights
Jihwan Alex Lee (8)

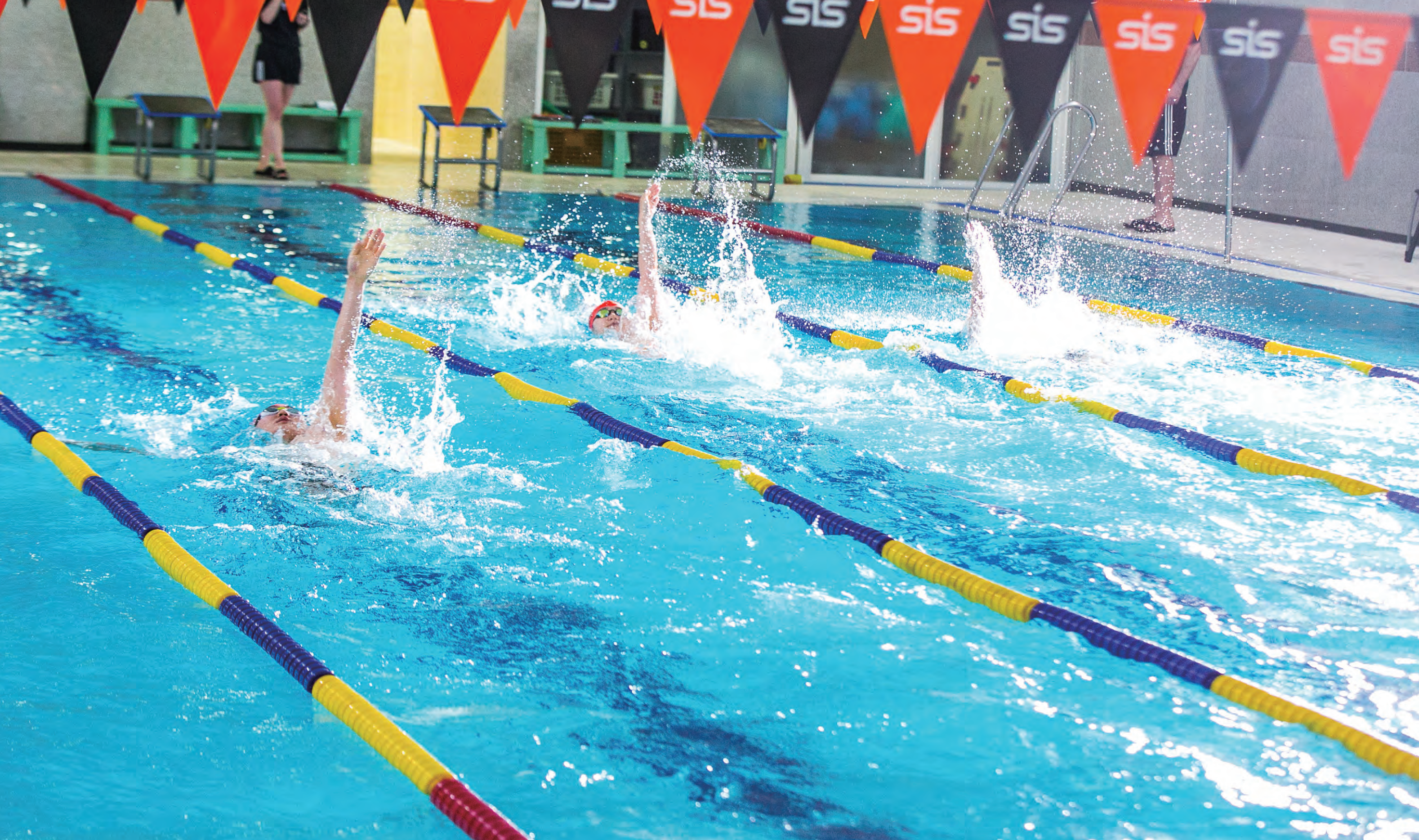


“Donut”
Serim Kwon (6)



Pink Cadillac
Audrey Kim (6)

From Middle School



The Positives of COVID-19

Agnes Schuppel
ES & MS Assistant Principal

For over one full year now, the world has been turned upside down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It's easy to fall into the trap of giving attention to all the trouble and challenges that have been faced during this time, however, instead, let's take this opportunity to focus on some of the positive aspects and changes the COVID-19 experience has brought into the lives of the SIS community. When looking carefully and deeply, one can see that this unique time has been filled with countless positive changes.

Technology and Collaborative Skills- The COVID-19 situation thrust the school into the world of online and distant learning. This was a completely new experience for everyone, however, teachers, students, parents, administration and staff members immediately accepted the situation and rose to the challenge. Online distant learning helped strengthen and unite the SIS community from the beginning as teachers collaborated and shared new learning styles with one another. Compassion, understanding and an eagerness to help others has been evident throughout the entire COVID-19 journey.

Climate Change- Improved air quality is another positive experience COVID-19 brought, because for the first time in many years, Korea had beautiful skies on a regular basis. This was surely not the case before COVID-19. There have been times in the past when students remained indoors at recess due to the poor air quality. The possibility of reversing the course and becoming proper stewards of the environment has been shown.

Pace of Life- COVID-19 absolutely forced the world to slow down. This slow down brought some people much needed reflection time to appreciate both the big and small things that have been taken for granted for years, maybe for one's entire life. Travel, spending time with friends in large groups, and moving about freely are privileges easily taken for granted.

The Importance of Family- COVID-19 brought families together in a new and meaningful way. As families aimed at protecting themselves, people were forced into small bubbles. This provided opportunities to spend more time together, share family meals and truly rely on each other for everything.

Relationships and love- Several years ago, as my father neared his death, he reminded me that, in the end, the only thing that really matters are relationships. It is my hope that growth and life's lessons have taken place from this experience, however my greatest hope is that priorities have been recalibrated and in moving forward, SIS can focus on what really matters-love.

“When looking carefully and deeply, one can see that this unique time has been filled with countless positive changes.”



MS Science Lab Activities During Virtual Learning

Jean Piscioneri
7th Grade Science



The COVID-19 pandemic has forced schools worldwide to move to remote teaching and learning in order to prevent students and teachers from contracting this deadly virus. Many schools have resorted to either hybrid learning or full-on virtual learning. Schools around the world that have gone to virtual learning have faced challenging times. Virtual learning makes teaching daunting for science teachers, who are used to hands-on teaching. It is especially difficult to engage students in laboratory activities, but as the saying goes, “necessity is the mother of invention”. As the school continues to follow a hybrid schedule or full-on virtual learning due to local government mandates, it is imperative that teachers continue to adapt to these schedule changes. Since SIS started virtual learning in March 2020, I realized the importance of creating science activities that involve the use of technology and readily available household materials that allow students to perform science lab activities at home that simulate what is done in the classroom. It is indeed very challenging to keep students engaged in science especially at home. Frequently used online teaching strategies, research, note-taking and class lecture are not enough to keep students engaged.

In one of my 7th grade units on Cells and Heredity, students were introduced to cell parts and their functions as I created a simple lab using a chicken egg and other household liquids from home. This simple experiment allowed students to use a chicken egg membrane to model how certain molecules can pass into and out of cells by osmosis. As the 7th

graders explored how different liquid molecules can pass through the egg’s membrane, this lab activity allowed them to take what they learned about cell parts and relate it to the different domains of science such as structure and function, one of NGSS cross-cutting concepts.

In hopes of keeping the lesson on cell parts and functions relevant to the most important subject of the day which is the coronavirus, I found a very compelling hands-on activity from a great science resource called Exploratorium. I tasked my students to demonstrate how soap can inactivate the coronavirus membrane following the steps and learning resources presented by staff scientist, Julie Yu. Julie Yu’s work focuses mainly on helping teachers to bring inquiry-based science learning to their classrooms. For this particular activity, a few modifications were made. Instead of demonstrating the concept to the teacher, students presented to their parents, grandparents, siblings or cousins using readily available household materials in explaining the concept more effectively. The demonstration was documented in a video. Knowing that there were 62 science demonstrations taking place in homes across Seoul, despite this COVID-19 pandemic, brought satisfaction as a science teacher. Despite uncertainty, and constant changes in our daily or weekly schedule, science lab activities at SIS continue to be implemented effectively through flexible creativity and focusing on the possibilities rather than limitations.

Farewell Message from Art DeFilippo

Art De Filippo
ES Principal



Dear SIS Family and friends,

This year I am embracing retirement. I realize that it is time for me to move on at the end of the school year in June. As much as I am sad to leave everyone and Korea, I am especially excited to spend more time with my grandchildren and my family in Tucson, Arizona.

This year served as a reminder to me that; when we come together, believe in each other, incredible things will happen. Throughout my time here from 2009 to 2021 the SIS family has always been an inspiration to me. I am proud of the excellent work we have accomplished together and our work has improved the lives of countless others.

During my 12 years of service here, I have grown and flourished. I have learned much from the other administrators, hard-working teachers, our students and parents. I have never worked with such a special group of people like all of you. Thank you for the last 12 years. After all, it's not often when a team of coworkers can brighten a person's life, day after day. I wish everyone all the best in the years to come. I know the next year the Elementary Principal, Brian E. Byrne has a true heart for children and will be an inspirational role model.

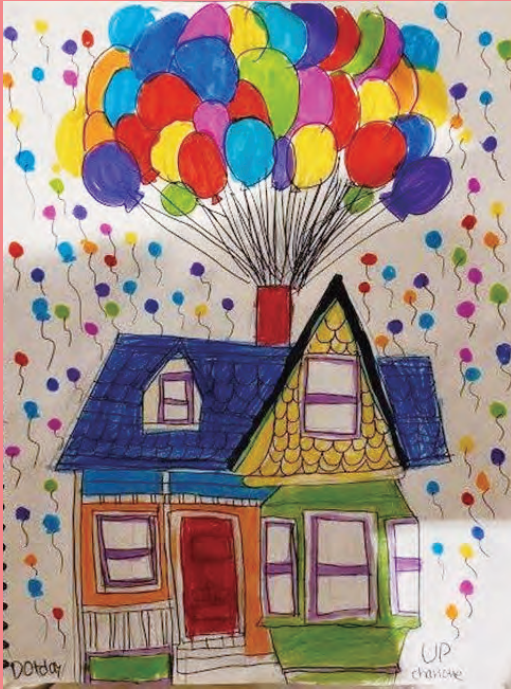
William James once said, "The greatest use of a life is to spend it on something that will outlast it." I believe that we have done excellent work here at SIS and I'm proud of what we have accomplished together, and I want to thank you all for letting me be a part of your team. I am looking forward to finishing this year strong together! By and far, teaching is one of the hardest and emotionally draining professions out there. Hopefully, after giving my heart to thousands of students throughout my career, I look forward to the journey that lies ahead.

*Best,
Mr. Art*

**To the world,
you may be one person,
but to one person
you may be the world**

Timeless Art

Up (Created for SIS Dot Day)
Charlotte Chung (4)

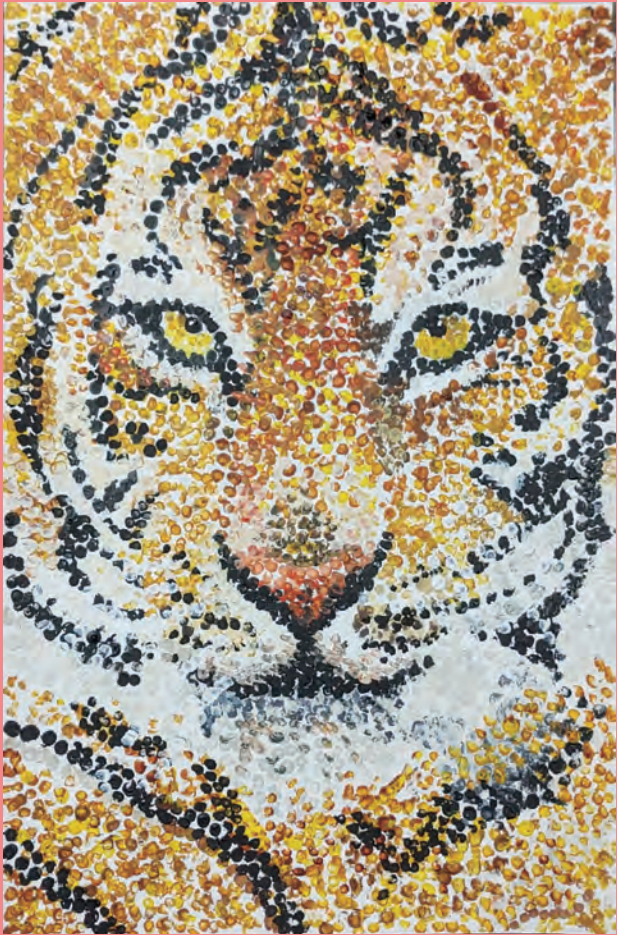


Soohyun Jang (2)

Kaylee Cha (SK)



Jaeyi Jeong (1)



Tiger
(Created for SIS Dot Day)
Lauren Lee (5)



Jian You (3)



Joseph Chung (Pre-K)

From Elementary School



Building Community, Connections & Learning

Johanna Schooley
ES Librarian



Learning, connecting and the building of community took a different twist this year as world events forced educators to think, plan and instruct in ways never before considered. This included how the SIS ES Library remained an “open” and active hub of learning.

As the pendulum has swung from virtual learning to in person and back again, students were never without opportunities to have fresh library books. Although students might not have been able to walk in and freely “shop” the shelves, the library doors were never “closed” to them. The Tiger Book Shuttle allowed patrons to request books and have them available for pickup. They could request either a specific title or make a more general request and a member of the library team “shopped” the shelves. The books, after having been sanitized, could then be picked up outside the ES Library or through Curbside Pick-up, depending upon whether students were learning in person or virtually. Students also have access to over 1,000 eBooks that they are able to checkout 24 hours a day.

Creating opportunities to bring the Elementary School community together to celebrate, connect and learn as one has been an important focus for the ES Library. The year began by collaborating with the ES Art Department to Celebrate Dot Day as a school. It was kicked off with a Virtual Assembly to watch a reading of *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds. Students attended via Zoom from home, joining teachers who were gathered in the school auditorium. The entire school community, no matter their location, dressed creatively in Dots to celebrate the day. Students then created their own Dot Art during Art class and their creations were placed into a Virtual Dot Art Gallery, which was unveiled during our second all ES Virtual Assembly two weeks later.

In October the Elementary School began a Virtual Authorator in Residence program, connecting and working with author/illustrator David Biedrzycki. He Zoomed in every few months to work with the entire student body in a series of writing and illustrating workshops. Workshops have been held by grade level and have been tailor made to directly impact each grade’s student learning. From Mr. Biedrzycki students have learned the writing and editing process and have been able to apply some of those techniques into their own writing directly after working with him. Our youngest students were even able to provide Mr. Biedrzycki with specific story elements - characters, setting, and problems and help him to create an original story just for them.

The learning, connection, and memories students have of working and talking with Mr. Biedrzycki, a published author, is something they will carry with them throughout their elementary school years and beyond.

While how the SIS ES Library has operated throughout this year may have been different, our mission has remained the same - to support the SIS as a community of passionate readers, collaborators, critical thinkers, inquirers and life-long learners who connect and contribute to the world around them.



Creativity from the ES/MS Art Classroom

By Kim Elisa Adams

Director of School Development



Nikki Sandschaper teaches elementary and middle school art at Seoul International School. Her husband Jesse teaches Spanish and learning support and she also has a son attending SIS. Nikki says SIS is her first international school, and she absolutely loves it.

“The students here are so curious and committed to becoming better at everything they do. As young artists, they create joyfully and are eager to try new things. I have found that teaching at an international school gives me an opportunity to work with students who come to school with supportive families and interesting experiences. They are committed to their education, and I can focus on how to be their best teacher.”

As a student, Nikki was most interested in creating art, not necessarily teaching it. In college, she started taking on internships and jobs in arts organizations and realized she was really drawn to the empowerment of education and community arts. Nikki says, “My own art education experiences had always been so important to me, but I hadn’t really considered myself a teacher until a life-changing experience in Brazil volunteering as an English and art teacher caused me to pursue my path as an educator. Upon my return to the US, I immediately started pursuing my teaching career.” Nikki has been teaching for almost 15 years and having won awards herself, a few of her favorite projects are the Cleworth Architecture Legacy Project (CAL) where she partnered with a Fentress Architects, an elite design firm in Denver, for multiple years to collaborate on projects with students, many of which were award-winning. Also EPIC Arts in which she partnered with the Redline Art Center to host many resident artists to create art projects that respond to student-created ideas about social justice and where their work was displayed in a topnotch downtown gallery space.

Nikki taught Elementary through High School in several different schools in Denver. She was on district-level arts leadership, was a museum educator and curriculum developer, and worked with many community arts organizations in different capacities. “Truly, I love teaching art at every level for different reasons, and SIS students are an absolute joy to teach.”

Nikki Sandschaper did a mask design contest during COVID-19 and there was also an SIS student, Teresa Chang that won a Scholastic Award, which is a prestigious international art competition. SIS also had several middle school artists featured in The EARCOS Triannual Journal both last year and this year, Won-Gyeom Yang and Jihwan Alex Lee (See Timeless Art from Middle School).





The Support of the SIS Transportation

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development



For any organization to run smoothly and efficiently, there is a backbone of people behind the scenes, giving daily support to the operation. This can definitely be said of the bus monitors, bus drivers and those in charge of the department, Mr. Kwak (supervisor), Mr. Deok Cheon Lee (Deputy Supervisor) and Mr. Jae Hee Lee (Assistant Deputy Supervisor). Monitors start their day at 6:30 am and work as late as 5:00 pm. When asked what describes their main duty, the monitors replied, "Safety for the students in school and on the bus". Furthermore, all bus monitors believe the school buses are an extension of school, not limited to transpor-

tation itself. SIS should provide a fun and safe learning environment, so all school buses are the places where it should begin and end. With this sense of mission, all related transportation officials, including Mr. Kwak, prioritize the safety of all students in every circumstance.

Gyeonggido Provincial Office Contact Tracers and Sujeong-gu Community Health Center has recognized SIS for its excellence in the COVID-19 response and the Transportation Department has played its part in this. Monitors receive orange passes from students which are submitted to the nurse and check every student's temperature to prevent any unexpected event. Drivers sanitize buses twice or three times daily when there are after school activities. Since September 2020, monitors have manually recorded each student's daily seat in order to expedite tracing if any symptoms occurred. Transportation then went digital, with monitors inputting information every morning and after work. Monitors perform temperature checks throughout the day and supervise the Orange Room on rotation. Monitors enforce rules during recess, ensuring students limit the number gathered and they keep their social distance. While a student requires a verification, the nearby student and the monitor are only required to quarantine under the careful protocols. Monitors also helped coordinate the HS, MS, ES, Library Drive-thru.



Mr. Yoo Sang Ho
Dedicated driver for 19 years

When asked, "How do you see the transportation department going forward?", the monitors shared how SIS was prepared for this outbreak and are confident the school will meet future emergencies with success, when other diseases might appear. Since bus schedules changed during COVID-19, drivers joined forces with the General Affairs Department under the direction of Mr. Cha and Mr. Kwak and began assisting with numerous projects in beautifying and organizing the SIS campus. Mr. Yoo, Sang Ho, is the longest bus driver at Seoul International School and although he originally worked as a public bus driver, he says he really wanted to work for an international school, so he applied to SIS. He has seen major changes over the years with updated campus facilities and SIS increasing to 20 drivers. When COVID-19 first became an issue, he was worried about being a carrier and took every precaution very seriously. Mr. Yoo, who drives bus "N" believes a lot of the success of the drivers

in transportation is due to the strict standard of only hiring drivers with at least 5 years' experience. In his 19 years, he says the SIS Transportation Department has had no major accidents that have caused death or injury to any students. Due to skillful driving, he recalls the school only having a few minor bumps in 20 years. The SIS Transportation Department has continued to be the backbone in student safety, even during this time of COVID-19.



Seizing An Opportunity With SIS “Nudges”

Sungji Yoon
School Nurse



Experts say that the coronavirus pandemic is a serious crisis that is likely to further accelerate the change of the times. At the same time, one can learn from history that a crisis can also be an opportunity. Fearing the unknown can get in the way of seizing an opportunity. The SIS community must not be afraid, but rather consider the coronavirus situation as an opportunity for leading change, with an optimistic attitude. “The pessimist finds difficulty in every opportunity, and the optimist finds opportunity in every difficulty,” said Winston Churchill. Even in uncertain situations, if one approaches it optimistically, the course can be changed. SIS should go through the corona pandemic by looking in different directions and optimistically exploring various paths. Small changes can lead to big results. “nudging” refers to a way of inducing people to make better choices through gentle intervention without coercion.

To overcome the corona situation, SIS used “nudges” in various ways. One good example was the pretty mask design contest during the ES art class in which children who had difficulty wearing masks, could become familiar with the masks. Students couldn’t come to school and were forced to meet in online classes, but by wearing a mask designed with the school’s logo, SIS was able to solidify the spirit of the school and become united. It was so meaningful at the 2020 graduation ceremony when all graduates together wore special masks with specially designed tiger patterns. Instead of stressing that students socially distance themselves, the school put stickers on the floor and on the chairs to induce and promote students to social distancing on their own. Hand sanitizers were provided visibly through-



out the school campus, so students and staff could wash their hands frequently. One of the most recent attempts to encourage submitting an online Orange pass, which verifies temperature and lack of COVID-19 symptoms of SIS staff, was to offer a coffee coupon in a daily lottery drawing among those who submitted the Orange pass each morning.

Seoul International School continues to develop strategies of ‘SIS nudges’ that can preserve the autonomy of choice but also induce employees and students to make smarter choices. It is essential and often more productive to induce action without strict orders or instructions. Small “nudge strategies” creating change is a welcomed proposal by anyone in the school community. The participation and collaboration of many people makes bigger changes and bigger outcomes possible. SIS is pursuing a school that adapts well to the trend of the times and can adjust to rapid change, climbing the current to advancement. There is optimism that when the coronavirus disappears and SIS has overcome this adversity, a more developed and state-of-the-art SIS will be discovered.



The Impressive SIS Corona Task Force

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development



Teachers and students get the discouraging message that they must get tested or go through quarantine, but is the SIS community aware of the network organization that was established at Seoul International School in response to the sudden emergency it faced last year? Distance learning began at SIS due to the spread of COVID-19 starting February 25, 2020. The Task Force Team (TFT) was formed in March 2020 and the first TFT meeting took place on March 3rd. TFT COVID-19 response team members were originally formed by recommendations from department heads. On July 27th, 2020, Mr. Shin was appointed as head of the Task Force Team and has been assuming the responsibilities for this position throughout this whole ordeal. TFT meets every Tuesdays in order to check the COVID-19 response and share any related

work and protocols. When there is any change in the GOE's (Gyeonggido Office of Education) protocol due to an increase in numbers diagnosed with COVID-19 or a case diagnosed at school, an emergency meeting among the Leadership Team is convened.

The TFT members are not experts in terms of disease prevention. Hence it was a challenge to develop a COVID-19 response manual by following the protocol of KDCA (Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency) and Ministry of Education. Members of the TFT include Mr. Bum Shik Shin who is the head, Mr. Joonbae Lee from IT and Ms. Seunghye Hong from the Counseling Office who both served as secretaries, Mr. Kwak (Transportation), Mr. Inho Lee & Ms. Hyesun Lee (General Affairs), Mrs. Roekyung Yoon (HOS Office), Ms. Joo-ha Serena Park (Marketing & Communications), Ms. Hye Yong Min (Interpretation/Translation Specialist), Ms. Ju Young Lee (Business Management Office), Ms. Kyejin Yu (Accounting Office), Ms. Yoon and Ms. Choi (School Nurse Office). Each member collaborated, putting in tremendous effort to guard the safety of the SIS community and create the best environment possible for education. Efforts included COVID-19 prevention response work, prevention equipment and material purchases, as well as developing the protocol. A trip was organized to the COVID-19 Testing Center for all the faculty when the new requirement was mandated. Ms. Min was there at the center helping teachers with translation.

Mr. Kwak in the Transportation Office says he supervised preventive regulations in the bus and department staff, tracking routes when infections occurred and transporting students when unexpected events happened. Mr. Kwak says the greatest achievement of the TFT was "solid unification due to the hard times". Ju young Lee, as part of the team, had the responsibility of working at the COVID-19 Emergency Operation Center (office) and when any confirmed cases occurred, answered the calls. She would contact parents to encourage getting COVID-19 tests and would receive their test results. She also monitored the "close contact" students during their quarantine period. Mrs. Lee says it was a great experience to learn how to solve difficulties and get better in facing COVID-19 situations when confirmed cases occurred. "Learning and experiencing are totally different",

says Mrs. Lee "I know it would be the best if we had no confirmed cases on campus. However, we have shown that we can implement what we have skillfully practiced for, without confusion. I'm so proud of SIS."

SIS Response



▶ youtu.be/L5yMckQR7xA

The Task Force Team is doing their best to enhance the infectious disease prevention management system at SIS through reflecting on the know-hows and information of the past year to prevent diseases similar to COVID-19. COVID-19 Task Force Team will diligently continue in its proactive response until we are "Beyond COVID-19"





Matt Mazzola
& Amani

Jesica &
Morgan Miller



Starting a Family During COVID-19

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development

The joys of pregnancy can be influenced by surrounding circumstances and this is what two members of the SIS community discovered when faced with the COVID-19 pandemic. Jesica De La O., middle school social studies teacher and MUN director, who gave birth to Maximo, now five and a half months old, shares her experiences as well as our HS art teacher Matt Mazzola's wife, Amani, who is pregnant and due in June. Both women share with us the challenges and the unique situations attributed to pregnancy during this pandemic.

Amani says she was in constant fear and worried about the virus all the time. She had miscarried twice since moving to Korea and feared a third miscarriage, as she had to be on medication and also be extra careful. She worried about catching the virus due to frequent hospital visits and use of public transportation. "Matt was such a great husband during this time. He was patient with my mood swings, helped with house cleaning and took care of extra expenses." Amani has no comparison, but definitely believes COVID-19 added more stress to her pregnancy. She feels the greatest challenge was keeping healthy but also socializing. The one thing Amani feels she would change was the ability to see family and travel.

Jesica and Morgan Miller who teaches AP Economics, Government and Politics, and coaches Varsity Girls Basketball have been at SIS for 5 years. Jesica, upon the advice of other mothers in the SIS community, chose to deliver at a private birthing center located in Gangnam. "I had a wonderful experience giving natural birth at the clinic and the care I received there from the doctor, midwife and doula was excellent" According to Jesica, the SIS teachers and community at large have been a huge source of support for her family! Her 8th grade teaching team stepped in during the final weeks of her pregnancy to help prepare Jesica's substitute for her long maternity leave, the middle school teaching team prepared a surprise baby shower on her last day and after delivery, a meal train was organized by the Sunshine Team. "We've received hand-me-down clothing and toys from the community for our son, and a number of teachers have offered to babysit Maximo when needed. It's really been wonderful to be the recipients of such a supportive community."

Jesica was about four weeks pregnant when the COVID-19 pandemic hit South Korea and initially was very concerned due to such little information about how the virus spreads or how deadly it was in those early days. They were unable to travel back to Oregon during her pregnancy as planned. "When we return home to Oregon this summer it will be the first time our friends and family will have the opportunity to meet Maximo" Apart from concerns about the COVID-19 virus, Jesica has concerns about Maximo being tested for COVID-19 in the U.S and twice while they are in quarantine here. "Having a COVID-19 test isn't a pleasant experience and much less for a baby."

An Alumni and Nurse Shares Her Story

Helen Yoshihara
Class of 1979



I attended high school at SIS from 1975-1979. I was the second graduating class in 1979 while SIS was located on Konkuk University Campus. At SIS, my name was Diana Ramirez. My married name now is Helen Yoshihara. I was fortunate to have attended SIS during the early years when our principal was Edward B. Adams. I still have fond memories of my high school years.

After graduating from SIS, I got a job working as a secretary at a trading company in Seoul. I later became a flight attendant for several years. I returned to continue college in New York, and graduated from Hunter College with BSN in which I pursued a nursing career. I married a Japanese American and relocated to Southern California.

Today, I have one son attending Boston University as sophomore. I worked at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center as a registered nurse from 1997 to 2005. I currently work as an Infusion RN. I am an entrepreneur as well. I own a Coffeeshop and I am also working on launching two restaurants this year. As a healthcare professional, I am briefed weekly by my employers on the latest CDC (Center of Disease) updates on COVID-19 in regards to Corona Cases, deaths, and prevention protocols.

The pandemic has created both a public health crisis and an economic crisis in the United States. The pandemic has disrupted lives, pushed the hospital system to its capacity, and created a global economic slowdown. As a nurse, I have been in a position to educate the patients on the importance of wearing masks, COVID-19 prevention, social isolation and identify signs and symptoms during the pandemic. Since all my patients are immune compromised with low immune systems, they all were well quarantined at home and abided by the laws of lockdown and social distancing

with masks on. The Pandemic instilled fear in the patients and as such, they did not allow their families or grandchildren to visit them. It was very difficult for the patients and their families to go through the disconnect period. It took courage and patience for both parties to abide by the laws imposed on everyone last year.

In my personal experience working with patients as an infusion nurse, I had one 92 years old patients who was COVID-19 +, and he was treated with antibiotic and immunoglobulin at home. There were not enough rooms and space at the hospitals. The doctor ordered patients not to be admitted to the hospital for care due to concerns that the patients may be exposed to more hospital acquired diseases. The patients and I work as a partner to wear masks during my visits to their homes. I would wear a gown and face shield. This year, the lockdown is gradually lifting as reports of COVID-19 death counts are reduced. The best way to prevent COVID-19 is to wash hands frequently, continue to wear a mask and maintain social distancing until the disease is controlled and without risks.



From Changes to a Glimpse of Hope

Leilani (Joan) Oana
SIS 1979

Two and half years ago, my idyllic life in Seoul ended abruptly in accordance with the Yongsan Relocation Plan. I was one of the last-standing group of teachers at DoDEA schools on Yongsan base to move to Camp Humphreys. Camp Humphreys is in the seaport city of Pyeongtaek and as its name implies it boasts a landscape that is atypical to Korea – flat. Once a quiet seaport town with endless stretches of rice paddies, Pyeongtaek is now a thriving city of high-rise apartments and shopping malls. It is also a home to Samsung Electronics Campus and of course, the USAG Camp Humphreys, one of the largest US military bases in the world.

USAG Camp Humphreys has currently a combined population of approximately 39,000 Department of Defense service members, contractors, civilians and their respective family members. It is a self-sustainable town with all the amenities and facilities that are reminiscent of a township in the US. Located on one end of the base is my school, Humphreys Middle School where I work as an educational technologist.

The adjustment to new town and new workplace was rough enough. But what I didn't anticipate was the advent of a global pandemic which we now know as COVID-19. If there was such a thing as a crystal ball so that I could have seen my future, I might have just hopped onto the ride into the retire-



ment sunset when the Yongsan schools closed. As the COVID-19 raged, HMS flip-flopped between the in-person and remote modes of instruction. At the zenith of the pandemic, the USAG Humphreys operated at HPCON (Health Protection Condition) level of Charlie Plus. Under Charlie Plus, the USFK affiliated personnel and family members assigned to Camp Humphreys are prohibited from engaging in any activities outside the base such as eating at the local restaurants or simply getting a haircut. Although the HPCON level was lowered to Bravo, Seoul remains off limits to personnel assigned to Camp Humphreys.

Although HMS has re-opened as the number of COVID-19 cases in the peninsula started to ebb, the school had to embrace a new set of new normal procedures. Everyone wears a mask. All students carry portable barriers made from plexiglass. Students are asked to sanitize hands and sanitize anything that they touch. The library books must be quarantined for a couple of weeks before they are put back into circulation. Social distancing is now the buzzword in and out of the school. Surprisingly, the staff and students have adjusted well to the "new normal."

However, there is a glimpse of hope. Since December of last year, USFK started to provide inoculation services. Just last month, I was fortunate enough to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Although it is unclear whether my body has gained immunity, I am hopeful that we are inching towards a closure. I have a vaccination certificate to prove it. It has been six months since I have been to Seoul and two years since I have seen my daughter who lives in the US. These two are on the top of my long list of things to do when we finally declare independence from COVID-19.

Joan Oana lives with her husband who is a retired civil engineer. She has two children; her son, Sang Yong, is an engineer, living in San Francisco. Her daughter, Michelle, is a neurocritical physician. Joan attended SIS as a student and also worked here as a Math teacher. Both her children, Sang and Michelle have also attended SIS.



SIS Parent Voices Perspective on Virtual Online Classes

By Kim Elisa Adams
Director of School Development



Jane Hwang
Class of 2000

Nobody can deny the challenges to faculty and staff this year at SIS due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but let’s hear from a parent and alumni how she experienced the situation. Jane Caroline Whang, SIS class of 2000 has two children attending the school. Jane says both of her children had the same reactions when they were told they couldn’t go to school. “Then can we go tomorrow? I like going to school.” Every time they were told they were allowed to be back on campus, their faces lit up. But there were challenges that Jane had to face during this ordeal. When told her children were going online the following day, her entire schedule needed last minute changes. As a working mom, she considers professionalism and responsibilities extremely important,

however her priorities are her children like any other family, and so she cannot say classes, going on-line, did not affect her. Her fourth grader had no issues with online classes, but her first grader needed her to stay somewhere in the house, so basically she was locked down as well.

“I would say the challenges I faced were actually internal issues. Questions begin to float in my head: Is he really learning? Why can’t he stay focused? Aren’t they being overly exposed to the computer/ipad? Eventually these issues might result in shouting and scolding, and so trying to maintain my “sanity” might have been perhaps one of my biggest challenges” said Jane as she was smiling!



Jane could really see how teachers put in more time and effort into this virtual learning. She says she could hear non-stop talking from teachers and students and also teachers trying different ways to make the virtual learning more interesting and “fun,” so students don’t lose focus. She was impressed in how students were able to organize surprise birthday cards for their classmates and how much input they put into Spirit Day. She was also impressed with how children are now naturally adapting to technology.

“Eventually all this is actually helping and teaching them to use and cope with the future use of technology.”

When asked what she thought parents and students learned the most through this experience, she said, “From this on and off experience, children and parents are really learning how valuable it is to be able to go on campus to learn and meet teachers and friends.”

We asked Jane what specific things did SIS do that she was thankful for and this was her response.

“There are many things I am thankful for. Specifically, I am thankful for the quick actions the school has taken. Of course, not everyone may agree but despite all the diverse opinions on how actions should be taken, I strongly feel SIS is really on top of making the hard decisions. As someone who is also working in a similar environment, it is really difficult to make decisions that are considered the best for the majority and the following backlashes and financial losses. There was one time when my son was completely fine in the morning and right when he rode the school bus, the bus monitor contacted me saying my son was saying his head hurts and that he felt warm. His temperature was taken and was slightly below 37 degrees, but still he was taken straight to the Orange Room (nurse’s office) and I decided to take him home. Although it really was nothing, the protocol the school and staff followed really impressed me.”

A Year of SIS Activities SY2020-2021



August	HS	Volleyball, XC, Tennis Season
September	ES	Soccer Boosters
	ES	Grade 4/5 Soccer
	MS/HS	SKYMUN Conference (Virtual)
	MS	Soccer and Cross Country Season
October	HS	AQT KAIAC Quiz Tournament at SIS (Virtual)
	HS	KIMEA National Conference at SIS
	HS	KAIAC Forensics Tournament at SIS (Virtual)
	HS	KAIAC JV boys and Girls Tournaments
	HS	Cross Country Invitational @ SIS
	HS	Freshmen Late Night
	HS	KAIAC Cross Country Meet at SFS
	ES	Grade 4/5 Flag Football
	HS	KAIAC Tennis Tournament at TCIS
	HS	KAIAC Boys Volleyball Tournament at SIS
	HS	KAIAC Girls Volleyball Tournament at YISS

November	HS	Basketball and Cheer Season
	MS	Swimming Season
	HS	SEOMUN Conference hosting by SIS (Virtual)
	HS	KAIAC Forensics Tournament at SIS (virtual)
	HS	National Honor Society Leadership Late Night
	HS	GIN Conference (virtual)
	MS	MS Swim Jamboree at SIS
	HS	KAIAC AQT Quiz Tournament at KIS
	HS	School Production: The Nutcracker
	HS	History Bowl Competition (Virtual)
	HS	Ambassadors Caroling at the Hilton



December	ES/MS/HS	Winter Concerts (Virtual)
	HS	HSSC Leadership Retreat (Virtual)
January	HS	HS Collaborative Clubs Charity Project
	HS	KAIAC Forensics Tournament at SIS (Virtual)
	HS	DMZ Exhibition
	HS	World Math Championships (Virtual)



February	MS	MS Table Tennis and Volleyball Season
	ES	Grade 4/5 Basketball
	HS	Soccer, Badminton, and Swim Season
	HS	AQT Quiz Tournament at KIS (Virtual)
	HS	BEIMUN MUN Conference (Virtual)
	MS, HS	National History Day (Virtual)
March	HS	History Bee (Virtual)
	HS	Habitat for Humanity Teacher Raffle
	HS	KAIAC Forensics Final at SIS (Virtual)
	HS	History Bowl Competition (Virtual)
	HS	PI Day Exhibition
	HS	GSISMUN Conference (Virtual)
	HS	NAHS Memory Project Fundraiser
	HS	Korea Science Olympiad at YISS (Virtual)
	ES	Basketball Boosters
	HS	World Math Championships (Virtual)
	MS	MS Volleyball Jamboree
	MS	MS Drama Audio Production

April	HS	KAIAC Swim Meet
	HS	KAIAC Girls Soccer Tournament
	HS	KAIAC Boys Soccer Tournament
	ES	Battle of the Books
	ES,MS, HS	Spring Concerts
	HS	KAIAC Badminton Tournament
	MS	MS Girls Basketball
	MS, HS	SKYMUN Conference (Virtual)
	HS	AQT Quiz Asian Championship (Virtual)
	HS	AQT KAIAC Quiz Championship at SFS (Virtual)
	MS	MS Honor Orchestra Festival at TCIS
	HS	HFH Fashion Show
	HS	AP Art Exhibition
	HS	UYSC/CSC Talent Show (Virtual)
May	ES	Grade 4/5 Swimming
	ES,MS, HS	Spring Concerts
	MS	MS Boys Basketball
June	HS	NHD Final in Washington DC (Virtual)



Class of 2021

College Enrollment

Art Center College of Design	1	Georgetown University	3
Brown University	2	Georgia Institute of Technology	1
Carnegie Mellon University	3	Hardin-Simmons University	1
Case Western Reserve University	2	Harvard University	2
Columbia University	1	Hong Kong Univ. of Science and Technology	1
Cooper Union	3	Johns Hopkins University	3
Cornell University	2	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2
Dartmouth College	1	Mount Holyoke College	1
Duke University	1	New York University	8
Emerson College	1	Northeastern University	4
Emory University	1	Northwestern University	2
George Mason University - Seoul	1	Otis College of Art and Design	1
George Washington University	1	Pratt Institute	1

Rhode Island School of Design	1	University of Pennsylvania	1
Rice University	2	University of Rochester	2
School of the Art Institute of Chicago	1	University of Southern California	5
Stanford University	4	University of Toronto	1
Tufts University	2	University of Virginia	1
University of California, Berkeley	6	Vanderbilt University	1
University of California, Irvine	4	Washington University in St. Louis	2
University of California, Los Angeles	3	Wellesley College	1
University of California, Santa Barbara	2	Wesleyan University	1
University of Chicago	2	Wheaton College	1
University of Detroit Mercy (BS/DDS)	1		
University of Hong Kong	1		
University of Notre Dame	1		



