

SUMMER 2022

RISSUE

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL MAGAZINE NR. 6

**TED
TALKS**

**THE WORLD
IS YOUR OYSTER**

**LANGUAGE
HERITAGE
committee**

**YEARBOOK
2022**



ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL

Bogdan
Şuşnea



Message from the Editor-In- Chief: Bobby

I would like to express my gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this sixth edition of the RISSUE magazine and introduce you to what we have been working on behind the scenes here at Rotterdam International Secondary School. As an instrument for students to acquire transferable skills, the production of each magazine edition has fostered critical thinking abilities and the application of knowledge in a broad range of contexts. While unprecedented events have induced a sense of gratefulness for access to education, students have displayed engagement with our community, by sharing reflective opinions, captivating stories, and meaningful experiences.

In this issue, the qualities of an increasingly multicultural student community are acknowledged through an exploration of the Language Heritage Committee as a community-based opportunity to proliferate diversity. The incredibly crucial – and often under-recognised – importance of Ms. Marsina's and Ms. Halima's painstaking efforts will provide readers insight into the preparation of nutritious meals at the canteen. To conclude with the persistent strive for open-mindedness, a discussion on meritocratic ideals, social systems and inequalities has been proposed by the editorial team in the context of educational curricula.

From the dedicated writers and photographers to the committed teachers and professional publishers, I would like to thank each and every student and educator for generously committing time and effort to the production of this magazine. Without the valuable assistance of Ms Yvonne Ricketts, the completion of each edition would not have been possible, and I would like to appreciate her commendable dedication and continuous commitment not only to the accomplishments of our team but to our community as a whole. Although the Hall of Fame marks the departure of the Graduating Class of 2022, our alumni will sustain the key values and principles advocated at RISS, whether their career pathways entail higher education, employment, or simply embarking on the unknowns of the future.

I would lastly like to thank the whole school community for their assistance and support. I look forward to the next edition of the RISSUE magazine.

Bogdan Şuşnea (Bobby), Student Editor-In-Chief



**ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
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SCHOOL**



By Dr. Gilbert-Sáez

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL:

It is always a pleasure to write for our RISSUE. This time it is all the more special as this is the last edition of the academic year, which gives me the opportunity to acknowledge, reflect on and appreciate the complex yet rewarding year we have had. We have enjoyed a slow sense of getting back to normal which is, of course, very welcome but it is also worth remembering that there are a few things that will not return to what they used to be – our approach to hygiene for example.

“To have our school gates open and make our time at school special, enjoyable and safe. We will all get through anything if we are in this together”

Looking back, it was evident that the path ahead was not clear in August 2021. Who knew what was going to happen?! However, slowly but surely, things got better and we made sure we were taking the positive steps needed to ensure we could be together as a community within the school premises. We kept our promise – “To have our school gates open and make our time at school special, enjoyable and safe. We will all get through anything if we are in this together”. As always, good communication becomes a superpower in times of need, and this ensured we all came together in one way or another to accomplish all that was required of us to ensure the ongoing progress and achievements of our students.

Getting everyone together back in school was one thing; getting everyone back out again to enjoy a wide range of exciting and educational experiential learning opportunities was something else! I hope you can stop, look back and really appreciate the wide range and number of outings that have taken place this year and how rewarding it has been for our students and children to enjoy experiences that are not only full of learning but also highly social too, especially after having spent so much time staring at their screens! I must thank our teachers, who have worked tirelessly to create these truly memorable opportunities for growth and participation that are so needed in our times. After all that our young people have gone through it is so important that they are encouraged to relate to others and learn to build and rebuild relationships that are solid and confidently managed.

At RISS, we love face-to-face interactions and all the benefits they bring, but social media will always pose a challenge for us in this respect. Online, there is no expert curation and our children may well be at the mercy of circumstances and information (written, oral or visual) that is unmanageable for some of them, even more so the young-

er they are. The school will continue working to support families here, as we know the home environment plays a crucial role in ensuring that children move from being ‘digital natives’ to becoming ‘digital literates’ and we will ensure that opportunities are created in school to help.

The international context affects every school, but it impacts a truly international school like RISS all the more vividly. To move from a global pandemic to a war on our European doorstep is unconscionable and I cannot – and the school will not – ignore the impact this is having on our community. Our commitment will always be to support the whole community consistently, whatever the make-up of that community.

In more uplifting news, our new programmes RISSRose and RISS Reach are living up to their promise of delivering the kind of learning that genuinely fosters transdisciplinary connections through a skills-based approach with the critical thinking that our students need in an uncertain, complex world. I had the privilege of listening to our Grade 6 talking about topics such as the circular economy, sustainability and even how to prepare a healthy meal! This is the knowledge they need now and in the future, as they take up the fight for a better world. I was touched and humbled by how hard our teachers and students have worked to make a success of these new initiatives, approaches that we know will make their time at RISS all the more memorable.

My thanks, finally, go to our RISSUE team who bring so much together every term to highlight the very best of what our school, RISS, is about. It is clear from every page that they are so proud of their school, that it means so much to them and that they are proud to show it in the best possible light. And oh boy, don't they do it with style.....! Please enjoy this edition of RISSUE.



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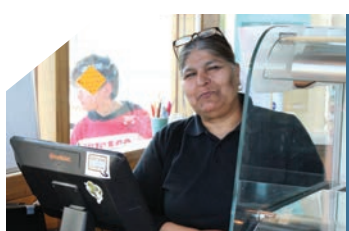
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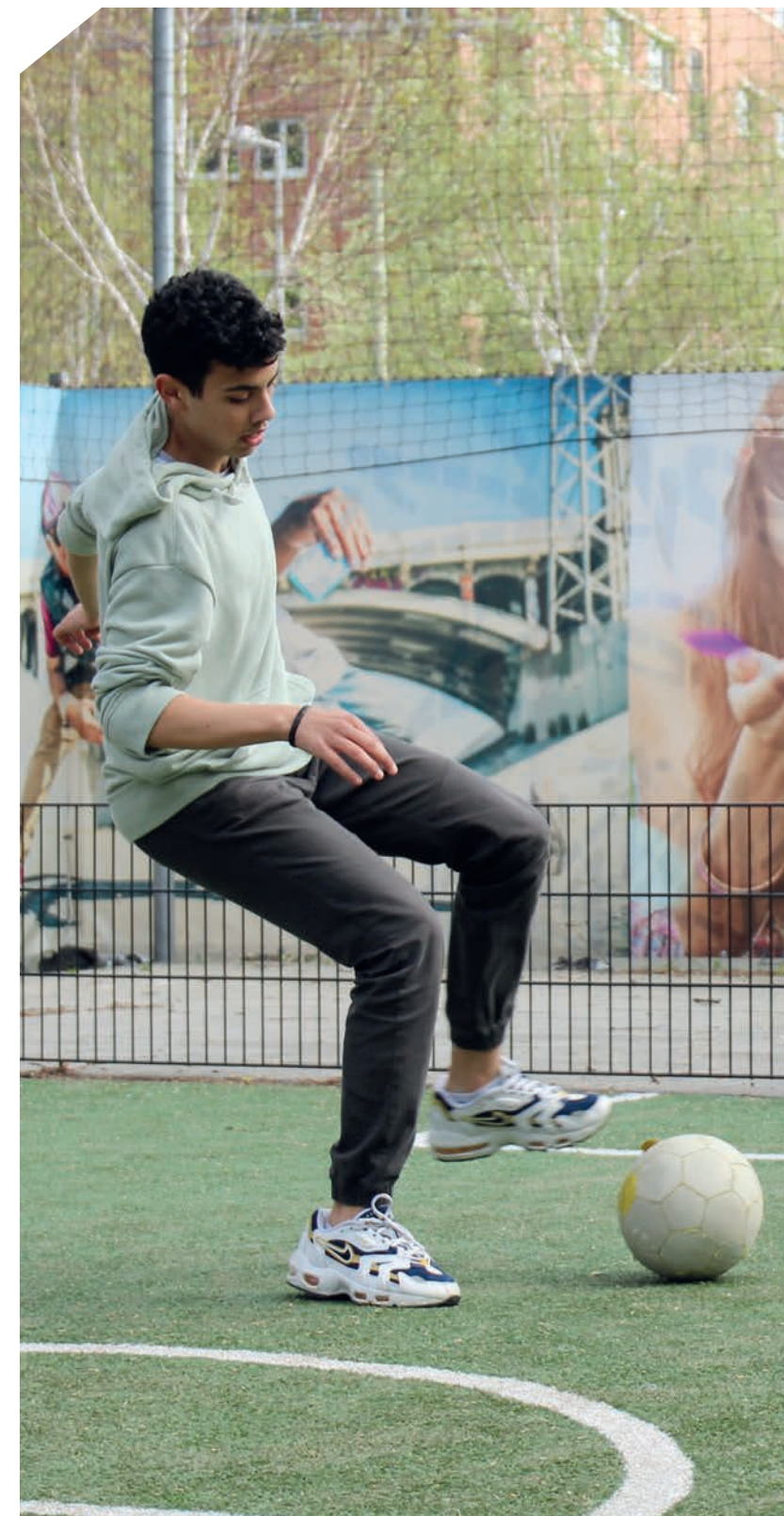
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COLOPHON

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Do Schools Kill Creativity?



Ken Robinson was a British author, speaker, and international advisor on education in the arts to government, non-profits, education, and arts bodies. He insisted that creativity can be taught if students are given the necessary opportunities, encouragement and mentoring.

By Aysegul Bildiren

We will explore one of his TEDx talks named *Do Schools Kill Creativity?*, which has had over 21 million views on YouTube, with our school's English B teacher and head of Language Department Mrs. Libert, in order to relate the ideas expressed in the speech to our school system and explore Mrs. Libert's opinions of the matter as a teacher!

Robinson makes his entrance by talking about how he believes everybody has an interest in education which – he observes – is an area that society finds important, such as other aspects like money or religion. He also mentions that he works in education, hence, we will go through what this speech offers us, together someone else who works in education; a teacher at RISS.

■ May I ask you to introduce yourself to us, please?

Mrs. Libert: I am an English teacher at RISS and also the head of the Language department.

■ The title of the TEDx talk is: *Do Schools Kill Creativity?* What are your initial thoughts/opinions about this question, taking into account the public school system in the Netherlands and the US?

Mrs. Libert: In some schools this may be the case, but I don't think that is the case at RISS. I believe RISS teachers do teach creativity, but that using the word 'schools' is misleading, as it is too generalised. Remember, 'creativity' comes in different forms. You can be creative in how you ask questions, which teachers do all the time. You can be creative in how to answer a question as well. Creativity isn't always about creating a piece of art or a nice meal, it is also thinking outside of the box, and that is exactly what teachers do at RISS.

Robinson explains how we – the government and as a society – educate children for the purpose of preparing them for the future.

■ Do you think our school system prepares students for the future? How do they do this? What do you think is the best way to prepare your students for the years ahead of them?

Mrs. Libert: I have a lot of former students who come back to visit me and they all say that one of the biggest reasons they are successful in their university careers is that they had an IB education. They are used to working in groups and collaborating. Other students without an IB background don't have any experience working in group settings. You have to work collaboratively in the real world and the IB prepares its students for real-world situations. You need to know how to resolve issues and this experience helps you reflect and solve interpersonal problems.

Robinson thinks the unpredictability of our future is extraordinary, since no one can know what kind of major changes will happen in our world in five years. By linking this fact with the idea that all children have a tremendous capability for innovation, Robinson remarks that every school has a misplaced hierarchy of subjects and that this plays a big role in destroying creativity in children. He says, "Creativity is as important in education as literacy and we should treat it with the same status." Then he states that every school on earth has the same hierarchy, where mathematics is at the top, followed by languages and the humanities, but that arts are always at the bottom. Everywhere on earth.

■ Taking into account that this TEDx talk took place in 2007, do you think this hierarchy of subjects has remained the same? What distinguishes RISS from other schools in this particular topic?

Mrs. Libert: Aah, again, his idea of creativity is not necessarily my idea of creativity. I think we fundamentally see this in different ways. He is looking at this more generally, whereas I look at it more holistically. People learn differently. Look at Escher, whose artwork is very much inspired by mathematics. I also don't think RISS looks at Art and Design as the bottom rung. It is actually one of the most challenging subjects taught at RISS and I tip my hat off to students who take it.

The British educationist continues with how this hierarchy makes children focus on only one side of children's brain more and more as they grow up, which is a big concern taking into account what Picasso once said: "Every child is an artist. The problem is to remain an artist once they grow up." In this education system where there is a set limit to children's capacity, Robinson adds that it also nourishes a fear of being wrong, making mistakes. In a modern business world, people stigmatise mistakes and the national education systems are run in the same way. "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original," he believes, which is one of the most remarkable quotes in the given talk.

In this education system where there is a set limit to children's capacity, Robinson adds that it also nourishes a fear of being wrong, making mistakes. In a modern business world, people stigmatise mistakes and the national education systems are run in the same way. "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original," he believes, which is one of the most remarkable quotes in the given talk.

■ **Do you agree with what Robinson said about how everyone needs to be prepared to be wrong in order to be creative? Do you think students sometimes feel uninspired because they're scared of making mistakes?**

Mrs. Libert: I feel that everyone, no matter what age, learns from their mistakes and that these mistakes make them an overall better person, as well as more educated. I believe that making mistakes or 'failing' is the best way to learn. Sure, it's human nature not to want to make mistakes, but if you are kind to yourself, you pick yourself up, dust yourself off and then next time, you do better. It's all about resilience.

Robinson, later on, explains the reason behind this hierarchy and why our education system is based on the idea of academic ability. He gives two main aspects as an answer: job opportunities and how the notion of intelligence is dominated by academic abilities mostly required by universities. This makes him question the education system that children are put in, and also the importance of these necessities compared to the creativity the children have. He finds it profoundly wrong that parents discourage their children's creativity, occupation, interest or passion for a topic because they are viewed as too insignificant for the education system, and also because of a lack of related job opportunities. Robinson also strictly advises that we radically change our view on intelligence, since how the schools examine intelligence restricts creativity.

■ **How do you view intelligence? And do you think parents should rely on schools' perspective about the hierarchy of subjects for the children's future or that they should support their children's passion regardless of the inevitable effects in the long term (such as low job opportunities, insufficient value in universities, etc.)?**

Mrs. Libert: There are many kinds of intelligence. So this is a rather subjective statement. You may have people who are more geared towards music, but also mathematics is necessary to be a good musician. An actor needs to know literature in order to understand a character's motivation. An artist needs to know almost all subjects in order to have a wide perspective of the world. As a mother myself, I have always supported my children's passions. If they wanted to go into science, great, do what you need to do to follow your dreams. The same can be said if one of my children wanted to be an actor. In both cases, I still wanted my children to have an overall education so that they could make sound decisions in ALL FIELDS. It's all about having a well-rounded education. If a student has a well-rounded education, then they are well-rounded individuals with open minds to all possibilities.

BIGGEST THANKS TO MRS. LIBERT FOR HER PRECIOUS TIME AND FOR GIVING HER VALUED OPINIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW FROM A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE!

At the end of this talk, Robinson shares his solutions and recommendation for all of the shared problems when it comes to how the education system restricts children's creativity. "I believe our only hope for the future is to adopt a new conception of human ecology, one in which we start to reconstitute our conception of the richness of human capacity. Our education system has mined our minds in the way that we strip-mine the earth for a particular commodity. And for the future, it won't serve us." He adds: "We have to rethink the fundamental principles on which we're educating our children. Because we may not see the future, but they will."

Looking at these thoughts from a student's perspective, this talk completely shifted how I view the education system and, most importantly, made me realise that academic achievement is a complex concept created for students based on an unbalanced hierarchy of subjects – not only in schools but sometimes in society as well. So I personally conclude that any area for which one has passion and creativity IS valuable and significant – no matter how the schools view it. So, do you think it is worth trying?

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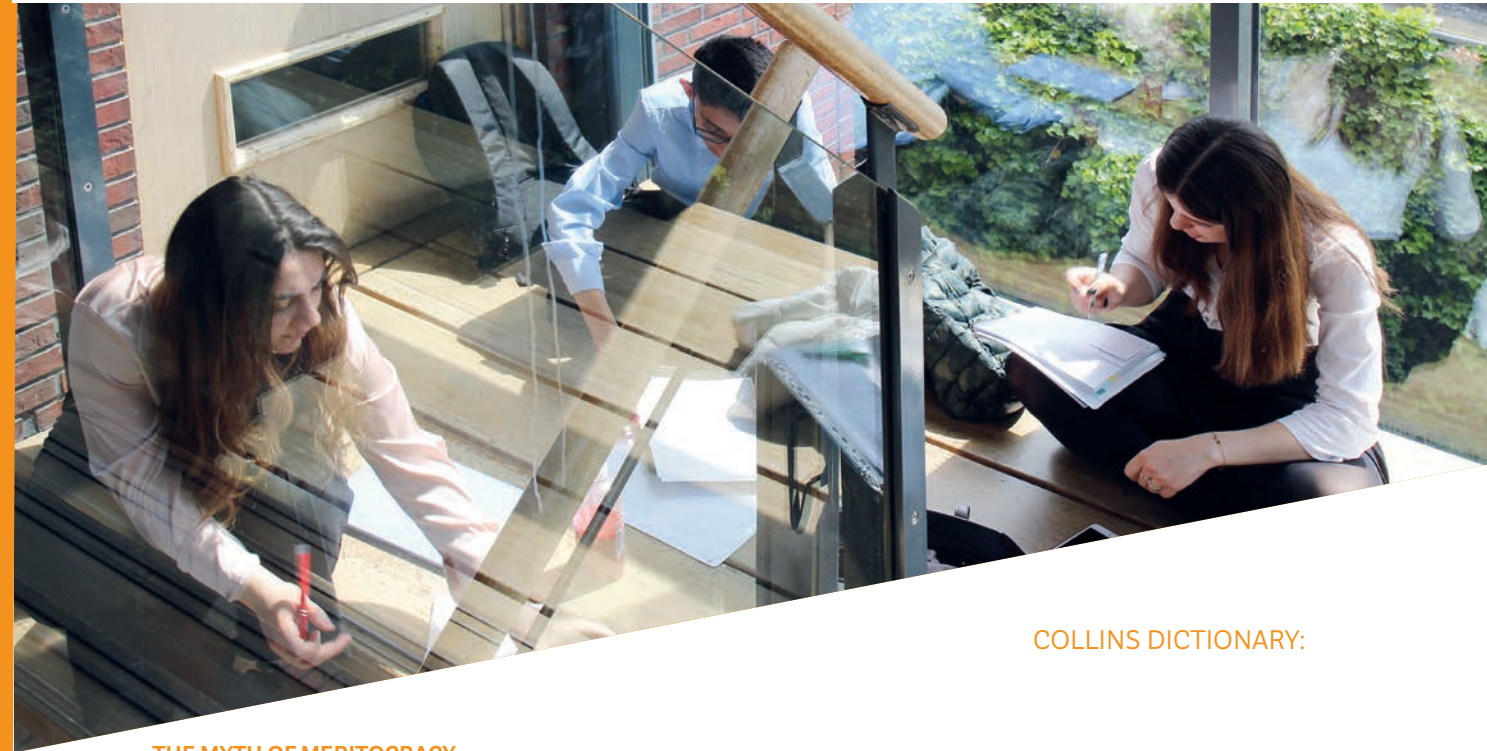


If You Work Hard, You Won't Succeed

THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER. THE SKY'S THE LIMIT. IF THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

Often we are told that success is a choice. We hear of 18-year-old self-made millionaires, brilliant innovative philanthropists, overnight popstars. And of course, the classic rags to riches stories. More and more, the stars teenagers look up to are our own age. It can be greatly inspiring or awfully depressing – as our limitations are often determined by the environment we live and grow up in, our heritage and economic status. Things far beyond our own control. But why is society still obsessed with individual outstanding success? Is it ultimately harmful to adopt such a philosophy?

By Clara Mediavilla Varas



THE MYTH OF MERITOCRACY

Many people think that, ideally, people should be rewarded according to merit: their contribution to society and personal achievements. Everyone recognises that inherited wealth is not a measure of one's own success. This is the basis of 'meritocracy'. This term or idea has existed for many centuries but was only coined in 1958 by the sociologist Michael Dunlop Young in his dystopian, political book *The Rise of Meritocracy*. As the Collins dictionary defines it, "A meritocracy is a society or social system in which people get status or rewards because of what they achieve, rather than because of their wealth or social status." It is marketed as a brilliant way for people to climb the social ladder where everyone begins on equal footing.

Yet this system has critical flaws. In our current capitalist society, factors outside our own merit hugely influence our eventual success. To deny this is to deny reality. The meritocratic philosophy ignores things like the gaping wealth divide or age-old systems of discrimination, which limit class mobility, regardless of individual work ethic.

Still, there's an unwillingness to recognise the absence of meritocracy in our society. So-called 'self-made' billionaire Elon Musk was actually born into a family that benefited from and exploited Apartheid-era mines in South Africa. This money allowed him to buy Tesla – not 'found' Tesla as is widely claimed, since he bought the title 'Founder of Tesla.' These things are not unheard of: affluent people who deny their inherited assets and resulting easier access to wealth.

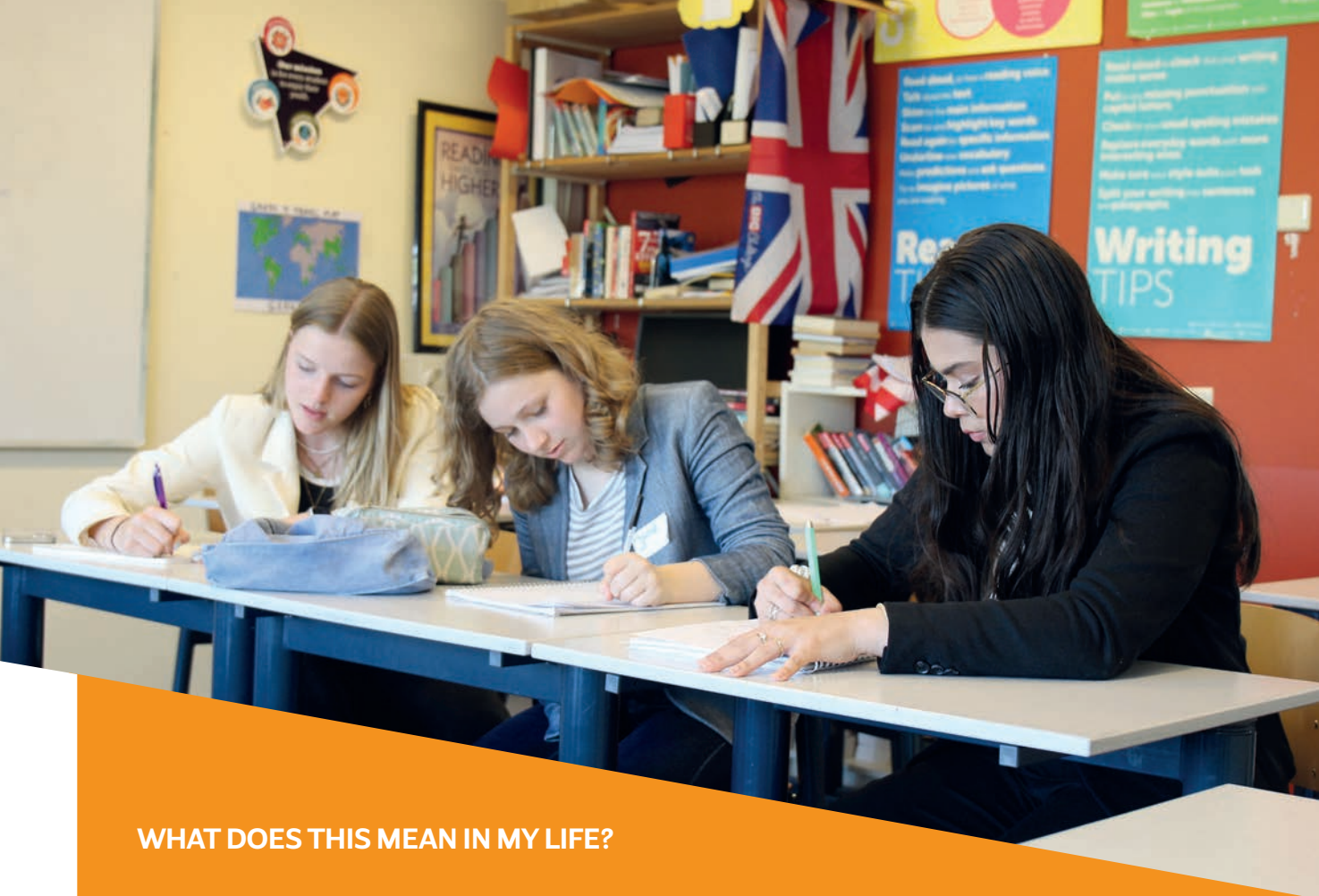
We hear of the likes of Donald Trump with his father's investment of a million dollars (New York Times says \$60.7mil). Or 'self-made' billionaire Kylie Jenner, starting out with her immense fame to build up Kylie Cosmetics. In fact, according to UFE's report, roughly 40% of the 2011 Forbes 400 list (that is to say, the richest 400 people in the world) had "inherited a sizable asset from a spouse or family member".

The US, known to many as the symbol of capitalism and entrepreneurship, has been struggling with a deep wealth inequality for a long time. We all know that pie-chart, in which the majority of the population has an astonishingly small slice of the pie. Despite the so-called 'American Dream', many hard-working families live without food on the table.

COLLINS DICTIONARY:

'A meritocracy is a society or social system in which people get status or rewards because of what they achieve, rather than because of their wealth or social status.'





WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN MY LIFE?

Of course, as a teenager, there's nothing much you can do if you were born into wealth or not. There is only the recognition of privilege. Us RISS students are benefiting from semi-private education, which obviously costs money. It is such things that boost us later in life, as schools with extra funding have more access to better resources, teachers, technology, etc. It will not change your grade from an F to an A*, but it is also not a myth that private schools have the environment that creates the type of support that children can jump from later on.

It is wealth that allows people to pay for private tutoring, for the newest laptop, even for a house large enough to provide a calm studying environment. Also, some children may have to take care of siblings while both their parents work, or they may even experience neglect or abuse. These things are also widely tied to a person's socio-economic standing.

In my opinion, we should be more aware of the environment we are living in. No one lives in a bubble in which their own work completely and solely correlates to success. It is time to view yourself as part of a community, where our social conditions are not necessarily due to individual failure or success.

There is a desire to believe that our society is a meritocracy – however, more than anything, it means you remain staunchly in the same position. It is not only highly unlikely someone with low economic status to achieve great upward mobility, meritocracy also means you view other's condition as a by-product of their own work. A homeless person on the street has become a symbol of laziness and poor work ethic, rather than a product of their environment. A rich person in the top 1% who exploits their workers into dire economic conditions such as those of the homeless man is now 'self-made' or deserving of their immense wealth. This belief in meritocracy prevents us from viewing society as an interconnected web of people, in which some operate based on privilege, while others do not. More than anything, it allows you to be content with your current conditions as you believe they are the fruit of your own individual labour.

In reality, our society has systems of racism, patriarchy and – for most western nations – colonialism and imperialism deeply ingrained. Belief in a meritocracy allows people to turn a blind eye to the things that uphold systemic poverty under the guise of viewing everyone as equals, even though factors such as race and gender have very real impacts on success. For example, things such as sexist stereotypes of 'weak' women, or racial profiling and prejudice in the workplace, may prevent you from getting a promotion or a new job.

The idea behind being aware of the obstacles in society is not to prevent you from having ambitions, but rather to help you recognise the reality we are born into. Ultimately, of course, you can work hard and achieve your goals and 'success.' But only through the dismantling of systems of oppression will someone within a society be able to have full social mobility. In reality, our society has systems of racism, patriarchy and – for most western nations – colonialism and imperialism deeply ingrained. Belief in a meritocracy allows people to turn a blind eye to the things that uphold systemic poverty under the guise of viewing everyone as equals, even though factors such as race and gender have very real impacts on success. For example, things such as sexist stereotypes of 'weak' women, or racial profiling and prejudice in the workplace, may prevent you from getting a promotion or a new job.

The idea behind being aware of the obstacles in society is not to prevent you from having ambitions, but rather to help you recognise the reality we are born into. Ultimately, of course, you can work hard and achieve your goals and 'success.' But only through the dismantling of systems of oppression will someone within a society be able to have full social mobility.

As we grow up and try to realise our plans and aspirations, we will realise that the wealth of Jeff Bezos is not realistic – it is, in fact, impossible. We are not on a level playing field, which is also to say that there are also people who are worse off.

We should be grateful for the things granted to us at birth and make accurate and nuanced judgements about the success of others. A billionaire may have 20 cars, but if they can't even account for it themselves, what does it even matter?



"The course results in the development of both theatre and life skills; the building of confidence, creativity and working collaboratively."

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“Panini for the Young Lady!”

Being a student requires lots of time spent studying instead of going out and keeping active or even focusing on proper eating habits.

So why is having a healthy lifestyle so important?



By: Ksenija Petrakova

One way to ensure that our bodies are in good shape is by making sure that enough healthy nutrients, such as vitamins and proteins, are consumed. These nutrients are important as they increase brain functions and keep the body healthy, meaning that fewer days of school will be missed due to sickness and the students will also be more attentive in class. Due to our increasingly industrialised society, food is being made on a larger scale. This means pesticides might be added to the crops in order for them to grow faster so that there is always enough product for the consumers (us). The chemicals in pesticides are found in almost all the food that we eat. In the long run, too much exposure to these chemicals can have an effect on the child's development, such as the rate at which their brain and bones develop. As a result, a close eye should be kept on the types of food children eat as a part of their daily diet. This is where the school canteen comes in.

It is essential that canteens ensure that they provide healthy alternatives, in order to not only make sure that the students are eating all the necessary nutrients, but also to make them get into the habit of eating food that is better for their bodies. If canteens only provide sweet sugary foods, the students will not be able to focus properly in class, because of the sugar rush their brains get; but even after that, it will be difficult for the students to focus as they go through a sugar crash. This means that, in the end, most of the day in school is spent with the student not paying much attention to what the teacher is saying and what content is being covered. All this can be avoided if the canteen provides food that has a good balance of nutritious and tasty, that the students want to eat, so that will still be able to concentrate well in class.

Yet, it is easier said than done, especially when it comes to choosing healthy alternatives. Some of the main reasons why people find it challenging to opt for healthier alternatives is because it is very difficult to stop eating the food that is packed with unhealthy substances, as we are used to eating it every day and like the way it tastes. Furthermore, food that is organically grown tends to be more expensive, which makes us to not necessarily want to spend money on it, especially when there are cheaper alternatives out there. Our school canteens, together with promoting healthy eating habits, also promote environmental sustainability. This is done by making sure that instead of plastic spoons,

wooden ones can be bought by students when they forget their cutlery at home. Additionally, all around the canteen, posters are put up to increase awareness about what we can do to save the environment and why it is important to do so. This is further supported by the recycling bins that are placed in the canteen to constantly remind students to properly dispose of their garbage.

In order to be able to achieve all of this, our school canteen has to be effectively managed. This is done through an organised and fast system of ordering and serving food, whereby the food is displayed inside clear cases that can be opened by the students and staff to take out prepacked food such as a sandwich or a cookie. Moreover, clear communication between the canteen staff and students is an essential part of having a functional canteen such as ours. Students are able to voice their opinions about the food being sold, allowing for changes to be made accordingly, so that more people are satisfied and want to buy the canteen food.

The canteen is not the only way our school promotes a healthy lifestyle; RISS has a number of physical activities clubs such as tennis and running, all of which play an important role. The sports clubs that are organised by the school allow students to interact with their classmates, even students from other grades, while simultaneously keeping their bodies active. This then improves their mental and physical state, as exercising is known to relieve stress. For extra motivation to actively take part in these activities, the school has opportunities to participate in competitions held by other schools.

For further insight into what it is like to be part of a canteen that promotes healthy eating, an interview with Ms. Marsina was conducted.

■ What is your role at the canteen here at RISS?

To make all the students happy while also keeping their bellies full.

■ How long have you been part of the canteen team here at RISS?

I have been part of the canteen team for five years already.

■ What does a day in your life in the canteen look like?

Without students, there is no work and no fun. Every day, I get to decide what food is served. After that, to get ahead with my day, it is important for me to know how many students there are, so that I can make enough for everyone.

■ What are your favourite parts of working here at RISS?

RISS is rather different from Dutch schools since it is an international school. It's very nice to work in this school where you can talk to everybody; the teachers, the students and other staff members.

■ What is the easiest/hardest food to prepare?

It is rather difficult to know since that is my boss's task; if the students want lasagna then I have to tell my boss to make an order for lasagna so that he can prepare it. In the canteen, I only make sandwiches and other small things. So, overall, it is not very difficult.

■ What are some of your favourite memories which you have made here at RISS?

There are many favourite memories, most of them being that no one wants me to ever leave the school. Two years ago, my boss was over here since I was sick, and one of the students told me that he did not buy anything for two weeks, and was waiting until I came back.

■ How does the canteen provide alternatives to accommodate different dietary needs?

If I know that someone is allergic to a specific type of food, or is even lactose intolerant, before I prepare the food, I can easily take this into account since we have everything here.

In conclusion, having a healthy lifestyle can be achieved through having a proper dietary plan and also making sure to keep active. This is what the school aims to help with, by selling healthy food in the canteen and organising sports clubs.



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What is the Language Heritage Committee?



By Ellie Venetikidi

The Language Heritage Committee is a club that has been in our school for many, many, many years. The leader of the club is English teacher Ms. Libert, and every year she elects passionate Grade 11 students who are willing to help her to organise and execute the Language Heritage Day. This day aims to help foundation course students nurture and embrace their own culture and mother tongue, as well as all the different languages that they learn in school, such as Spanish and French. On this day, foundation course students must choose to perform something, for example a play, a poem or a song, either individually or in their language classes. Once the choice has been made, they spend hours and days practising their performance so that they can execute something extraordinary.

Getting started on the Language Heritage Journey



This year, five Grade 11 students, including myself, were chosen by Ms. Libert to help with the organisation of this significant day. It was a privilege to be part of such a club, because it's great to be given the opportunity to help young students connect more with the languages that they speak. Studies have shown that when students connect with their own language and other languages, they are much more likely to feel more confident in themselves and have a higher self-esteem. In addition to that, it helps young children to develop their personal, social and cultural identity and also helps them expand their critical thinking and literacy skills.

In order to get to know the foundation students better, my group and I had the opportunity to spend some hours at the Junior Campus where we got the students to practise, practise, practise, until their performance was mastered. When the performances reached outstanding levels, my group and I filmed the entire performance! The whole execution was an immense success! We were, and still are, very grateful for this amazing outcome!

We Are All in This Together!

Of course, it's not just the students who are part of, or work towards, making this day a success. Teachers also play a major role! Our dedicated teachers are the ones who assist the students throughout all their practice sessions, giving them compliments, tips and tricks on what they did well and what they can do to improve.



Interview with Ms. Janneke Schellekens

I was asked by the RISSUE team to interview some of the teachers who were part of this astounding and long-lasting journey. Therefore let me introduce to you Ms. Janneke Schellekens who teaches both Spanish and Dutch! Below you will find the interview questions and answers! Enjoy!



■ **Is this the first year that you have prepared your students to participate in the Language Heritage Day?**

Yes!

■ **Did you enjoy preparing your students for this day? If yes, why? If not, why not?**

Absolutely. It was a lot of fun to see the students so concentrated and to hear them read the Don Quijote chapters together.

■ **Do you think that your students were enthusiastic about performing for the Language Heritage Day? If yes, why? If not, why not?**

Honestly? At least a part of the students were excited about it, and they were very patient, even after the third rehearsal! Even the students who found it hard to concentrate were doing their best. I do think the experience itself has been valuable for all of them, even if they do not realise it themselves ;).

■ **Do you think it's important that the school organise special events, like Language Heritage Day? If yes, why? If not, why not?**

Definitely. Special events bring colour and variation! I think it is important to have a variety of special events in different areas (sports, culture, arts, music, etc.) so that all students can participate in things that they like, and they can experience something new.

■ **Do you think that it's important for students, especially those going to international schools, to keep up with, and practice, speaking their mother tongue?**

Yes. Speaking one and the same language for communication is very handy, but I do think that speaking your mother tongue helps you connect with other parts of your identity; your cultural background, family values, memories that you experienced in that specific language.

■ **Do you think that the students who speak their mother tongue have an advantage over those who don't? E.g. when it comes to learning other subjects, or other languages; or when it comes to being more confident in themselves (self-esteem); or when communicating with others?**

I do think that it helps to have one language in which you are very confident and know how to express yourself without having to think too much about it. But I think that can be your mother tongue, or a different language in which you are very proficient.

■ **What is your own mother tongue? Are you able to speak it? If yes, then do you think that this has affected you in any way as a person (in terms of communication abilities, confidence and self-esteem, etc.)? If you don't speak it, then would you like to learn how to speak it? If yes, why? If not, why not?**

My mother tongue is Dutch, and I do speak it at a native speaker level. I absolutely feel that language and identity are closely related. Different characteristics of mine come forward more in one language than in the other. Even though I speak five languages, Dutch remains the language in which I can talk about my feelings with most ease.

■ **The Language Heritage Committee is mostly about mother tongue, but it's also about the languages that the foundation students are learning in school: What language do you teach to the foundation year students?**

Spanish.

■ **Do you think that it's important that students learn the language that you teach? If yes, why? If not, why not?**

Por supuesto! Learning Spanish can open countless doors: studying or working in a Spanish-speaking environment, making new friends, travelling, learning about history, culture and music. I know this applies to learning any language, but Spanish is the most beautiful one, of course!

■ **Some students in the Language Heritage Committee performed in their own languages, but some performed in the languages that they learn in school. If your students performed in the language that you teach, then do you think this activity (performing for the Language Heritage Day) has made them better or more confident speakers in the language?**

Yes! It was nice to connect the performance for Language Heritage Day to the Unit that we are working on currently, and in which we were going over the alphabet and pronunciation of Spanish. It made the students more aware of how to pronounce certain (combinations of) letters, which is great!

It's important that we all, as a community, reflect on cultural and linguistic diversity – as this will help us all understand and be able to respect the different perspectives that people have about various things. This is why it's great that the RISS offers so many different language courses, such as Spanish, Dutch, French, German and Chinese. Learning languages is very beneficial as it helps to enhance students' communication skills and enriches their worldview. In addition to that, Spanish, French and Chinese are some of the most spoken languages in the world, therefore learning them will be beneficial for the students' adult life.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE CAREER-RELATED PROGRAMME (IBCP)

The IB curriculum is constantly evolving and trying to find new ways to prepare students for the outside world, be it university or the labour market. As a result of this, a new programme has been developed, the international Baccalaureate Career-related Programme. Our school was given the opportunity to be part of this programme for the new upcoming school year, which is why an interview with Mr. Clint Marshall was conducted to get more information about the IBC.



■ What is the International Baccalaureate Career Programme?

The IB Career-related programme (CP) offers academic study and practical hands-on experience. It is for students who wish to focus their attention towards the study of business and either move directly into work in their chosen field or further studies after RISS.

■ When will it be introduced and which age group will it be targeted towards?

2022/23 - Sep 2022 first class

■ In what ways is the Career Programme unique for students?

The CP is unique in that it provides a practical approach to learning, whereby students focus their attention and learning towards a career-related programme (Business).

■ How is the Diploma Programme different from the Career Programme?

Due to the blend of academic and professional study, the programme is suitable both for students with a particular career interest (Business), and for students who do not yet have a specific career pathway in mind.

■ Do you think that it's important for students, especially those going to international schools, to keep up with, and practice, speaking their mother tongue?

Yes. Speaking one and the same language for communication is very handy, but I do think that speaking your mother tongue helps you connect with other parts of your identity; your cultural background, family values, memories that you experienced in that specific language.

■ Why should students take the Career Programme and who should take it?

The programme is open to all students and should be seen as another opportunity for finding their own pathway in education. Students are given this choice and we hope this will ensure they find something that they are passionate about.

■ How does the Programme prepare students for life after school?

The programme is specifically designed to prepare students for life after RISS. They will learn skills and develop their knowledge through hands-on, real-world learning experiences. It will help them:

- grow in self-confidence and self-awareness
- develop the skills and qualities employers seek (flexibility, resilience, and the ability to communicate clearly)
- become effective learners, who can work both independently and in a collaborative environment
- think critically and creatively
- be internationally minded and globally aware.

“The International Baccalaureate® (IB) Career-related Programme (CP) is a framework of international education that incorporates the vision and educational principles of the IB into a unique programme specifically developed for students who wish to engage in career-related learning.”

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANISATION

By Ksenija Petrakova

■ How will the Career Programme be implemented here at RISS?

The programme will consist of three DP subjects (Maths/English/ Language). Students will also be required to complete the other core components – Service Learning/Reflective Project/ Language Development.

■ What aspect of the Career Programme inclined RISS to implement it?

The idea of introducing a new stream of education that offers students further choices when it comes to the direction they take in their studies. We are able to offer it to students already at RISS and those outside of RISS.

■ How well-recognised is the Career Programme in terms of further education?

The IBCP was initially started in 2006 and has rapidly grown to now be taught globally in over 30 different countries and hundreds of schools. The IBCP is widely recognised by both governments and private educational institutes and offers students a

viable alternative for moving into further studies after RISS. The IBCP here in Netherlands is recognised by the government and will allow students access to universities of applied sciences.

■ What is your message for the first group of students taking the programme at RISS?

I would like to say welcome to the IBCP. I am excited to be here to support and guide you on your journey through the programme and your time at RISS.

Thank you to Mr. Marshall for his detailed responses and his hard work in getting this opportunity for the students up and running. We look forward to seeing how the IBCP programme grows and develops here at RISS.



YEARBOOK 2022

"We would also like to celebrate the following students who unfortunately did not send us information but are an essential part of the graduating class 2022!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THEM ALL!"

Riad Aslanli, Sibel Aghayeva, Quentin Peyrou-Lauga, Layla Halawa, Ezgi Aslan, Kousha Namvar, Bente Voskamp, Karin Zheng, Yunfei Jin, Quentin Frisch, Sahira Gruis, Aryan Singh, Roza Milicic, Mina Alkhalil, Chris van Adrichem



LEON DRANSFIELD
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?
Prost

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Free Periods

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Foreigners



SAPHIRA AZOUGAGH
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?
At least I won't have to cry myself to sleep anymore

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Getting to meet new people

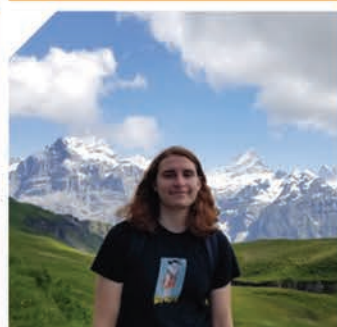


GEDEWON DEGU
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?
I like Free Periods

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
The Free Periods

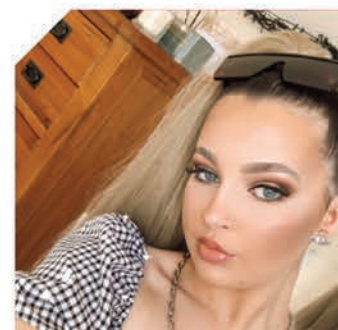
What will you miss the most after graduating?
The Free Periods



ALEX TOZAKOGLU
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?
Humble yourself

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Teachers and friends

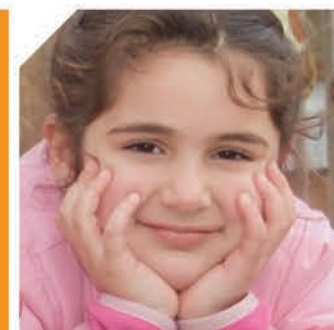


MEG MARGINSON
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?
My therapist know all your names

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Mates

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Burger day



NUR ELKADI
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?
"Sorry, I tend to process traumatic events with bad jokes." - Ant-Man

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
TOK with Ellie and Shreya (ft. Mr Mottram)

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Friends, frees and field trips



**FINN THIJMEN
ABRAHAM LEENDERT
BOUTKAN**
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?
Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
The trip to ram ranch with the boys

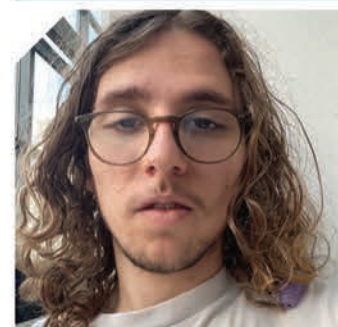
What will you miss the most after graduating?
The many great school trips



ELLIE HWANG
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?
"Good morning." "Ellie, it's 3 in the afternoon."

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
IAs making me cry at 4 in the morning, hearing "I didn't start yet either", crawling under the gate because we got locked in school after 5PM, lessons outside when it was sunny for like a week max, the people

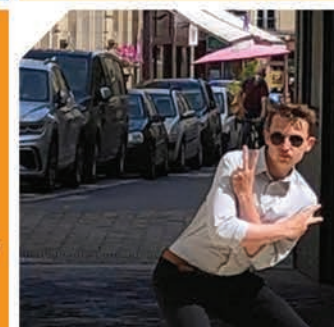


DARIO ARGENTIERI
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?
"I don't do it for the money. I've got enough, more than I'll ever need. I do it to do it."

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
CAS Baking

What will you miss the most after graduating?
My mates and some great teachers, Ms Priego and Mr Muller in particular



FELIX FRIESE
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?
According to legend, , 3 and e are supposedly not the same thing. Despite having taken two years of math HL, I remain sceptical.

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Mrs. Garcia's math class! It was a really fun place to be.

What will you miss the most after graduating?
My HL classes, friends insulting my work, Mr. Mottram's life lessons and of course our lunch lady, Ms. Halima!



MAAS KALIS
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?
yeah dude

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Foreigners

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Foreigners



**VINCENT ZWINKELS-
VALERO** - GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

Recipe for canned happiness: Take a glass jug, and put 3 to 4 drops of gasoline into it. Then put the cap on,

and swish the gas around so the inner surface of the jug is coated. Then add a few drops of potassium permanganate solution into it and cap it.

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Foreigners



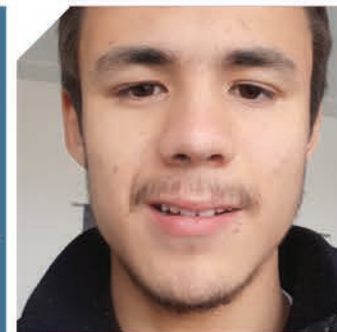
CHRIS VAN LONDEN
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

"If idiots could fly, this place would be an airport"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Kousha's family reunion

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Tuesday mornings



NAOKI YASAKA
GRADE 12E



What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Being able to participate in different CAS activities

What will you miss the most after graduating?
The House events



PIETER TESZELSZKY
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?
Oil be boomin'

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Sleepless nights and loyal friends

What will you miss the most after graduating?
The teachers, the community and most importantly, the boys...



ANNA SAKURADA
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

Dedication, hard work and steadfastly defending your views are the surest ingredients for success.

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
The Extended Essay and the Art Exhibition

What will you miss the most after graduating?
I will miss my friends.



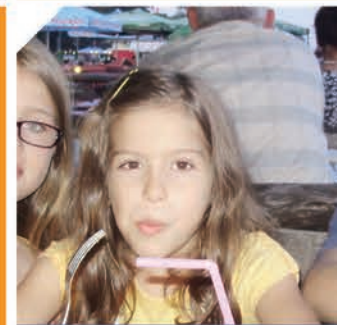
BENTE KLEIN
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

The grades you get for this paper does not define you but where they lead you to will

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
anything where food was involved in - > a special shout out to Mr. Alberts :)

What will you miss the most after graduating?
A bit of everything

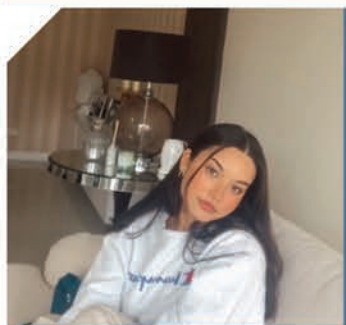
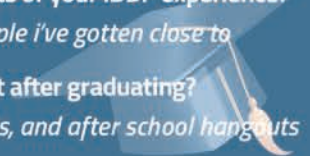


LEDA PARPORA
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?
omg my birthday is so soon

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
tutorial classes and the people i've gotten close to

What will you miss the most after graduating?
certain teachers, free periods, and after school hangouts



MEL SILVA
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?
"I swear I'm nice"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Meeting new people

What will you miss the most after graduating?
My friends



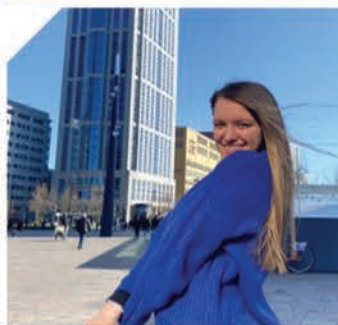
CLAIRE MASSOULLE
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

"Once you start skipping classes there's no going back"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Free periods, smoking breaks and rumours about me

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Gossip sessions, the only 3 people I like and the canteen lady



CHARNI DU PLESSIS
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

The IB was almost as insane as the spelling of my name on Starbucks cups

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Burger Day

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Ms Halima



SHREYA SINGH
GRADE 12B

What is your senior quote?

"Guys, it's almost my bedtime" - me at 19:30

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?
Finishing

What will you miss the most after graduating?
Seeing my friends every day and the school trips!





CEYDA GURSOY
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

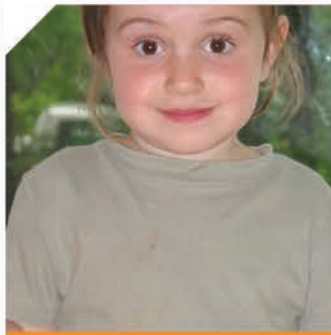
"I should've chosen A-levels"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Free lessons and online school

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Friends, eating noodles with Nabihah, Emily's weird hugs, Samira's nice hugs, Saphira saying "are you ookaaayy sweetie??"



ELEKTRA KATSIKIS
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?

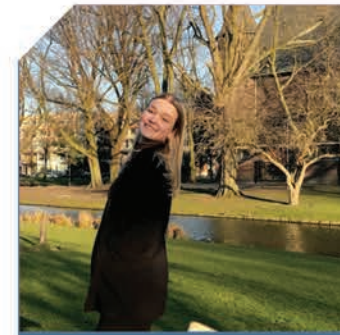
"Your life is not miserable enough." -Ms. Priego

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

The character development

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The downstairs bathroom



ANNICK VAN LUIK
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?

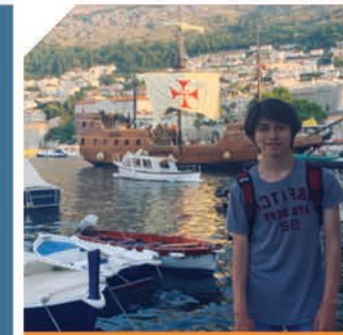
"Live, love, laugh"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

The art exhibition, business classes, breaks, and free periods in the library.

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Seeing friends and teachers every day



CHRISTOPHER SHIAO
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

"Suffer now. Enjoy later."

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Finally getting a good night's sleep after months of all-nighters...

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The students and teachers who brought a smile to my day in the most stressful moments.



JONA VAN BERKEL
GRADE 12B

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Honey boo boo and Bunky

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Asking teachers all the right questions



PAULA SALA SOLE
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

"Nah we're not together we're just friends"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

The memories we all made.

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The little moments.



KYLA NÖLLING
GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

"did you cry" "yes"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Getting to know people



SHREYA HALDANKAR
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

"Yes, Shreya, this is a mandatory question."

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Learning to balance everything

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Friends



SOPHIE MERTENS
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

"I'm about to throw up"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Late night discord calls



JUAN KRISTIAN SCHOTEL - GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

"Ignorance is bliss"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Experiencing Riad, Jona and Bursdays.

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The people, those who taught me, talked to me and took care of me. A theatre sized reservation in my heart for them.



AMALIA VILLACÍS MIRANDA - GRADE 12E

What is your senior quote?

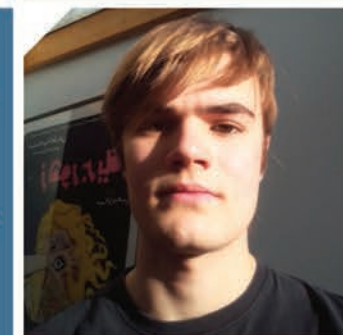
"I'm looking in my brain and it just says file not found" - Lin-Manuel Miranda

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Character development

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The people. Not just people I talked to, also people I didn't. Seeing them around was kinda comforting.



BENNO MAREK HULSING - GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

"Thankful my parents didn't give me some headass name like Bartholomew"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Visiting ram ranch with my fellow classmates

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The legend, Mr. G



ENGY KHALED
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?

"When is this due"

What will you miss the most after graduating?

My friends



**SERGIO GARCIA
BRAVO - GRADE 12C**

What is your senior quote?

*"Partido a partido".
Fight until the final whistle.*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Spending quality time with friends

What will you miss the most after graduating?

My friends and teachers



NABIHAH ZAHEER
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?

*"I swear I'll attend my
classes from next week",
"School's ending next week,
Nabihah"*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Attending ALL of my chem HL lectures :)

What will you miss the most after graduating?

*Taking ages to decide where to sit and have lunch,
the 14-second-microwaved cafeteria cookie,
being an absolute total delight during math...*



NIGEL POINAPEN
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

*"Nah, I don't even like her
like that..."*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Learning about Kousha's family adventures



**SAMIRA CESAR
ANTONIO - GRADE 12A**

What is your senior quote?

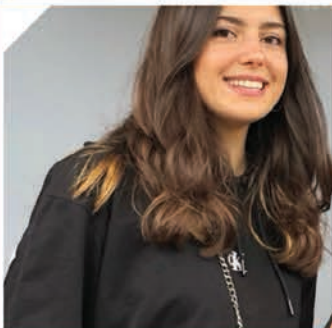
*"Are the green couches
taken?"*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

The green couches

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The green couches and Mr. Alberts



SUDE BOZCAL
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

"I'm not being sarcastic..."

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

"Oh don't worry, I also haven't started"



**ISABELLA CAMACHO
MELGOZA - GRADE 12D**

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

*Getting to know people
from all over the world*

What will you miss the most after graduating?

The art room



CEREN KOCAK
GRADE 12D

What is your senior quote?

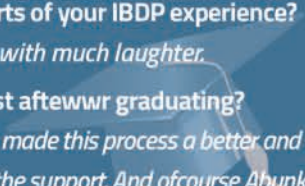
*"It's a moo point. It's like
a cow's opinion; it doesn't
matter. It's moo."*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

The friendships I have built, with much laughter.

What will you miss the most after graduating?

*The awesome teachers which made this process a better and
smoother one by giving us all the support. And ofcourse Abunkii!*



EMILY MA
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

"99 excused absences"

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

finishing everything

What will you miss the most after graduating?

friends and nabihah



RARES POPA
GRADE 12C

What is your senior quote?

*"I am become Death, the
destroyer of worlds"
J Robert Oppenheimer*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Math classes and spending time with my friends

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Playing pool in the flex room



THOMAS FRISCH
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

*When you face a problem,
just sleep*

What will you miss the most after graduating?

*I'll miss Mr Alberts' classes,
Geo HL is underrated.
I'll miss 12A for sure,
we had great moments together.*



SINEAD HATMA
GRADE 12A

What is your senior quote?

*Everyone's replaceable,
not me though
y'all be easy*

What are your favourite parts of your IBDP experience?

Gossip with Miss Haleema, Charni and Meg!

What will you miss the most after graduating?

Horror movies every Tuesday double free.





MESSAGE FROM THE
DEPUTY PRINCIPAL:

By Ms. Lani du Plessis

Dear Graduates of 2022 and SchoolCommunity

In the cycle of a school year, it is always a tad bittersweet to see a cohort of students – with all of whom we, as staff and school, have walked a sometimes winding and intricate road of learning, developing and growing – leave their school career and step into the exciting challenge of the rest of their lives.

As graduating cohort of 2022, you have had an unusual last few years of your school career – you have missed your IGCSE exams and school trip, and you were subjected to lockdowns, quarantines, and now a looming war on our doorstep – and yet despite that, you are a group of resilient students whom we confidently can send out into the world, to intrepidly go and make our earth a better place for all of us.

On the last school day, we celebrated your educational journey by looking at pictures of your first day at school – and we marvelled at the journey you have been on. These past 12 years, you have learned so much about becoming a successful student, but besides basics such as reading, writing, maths and thinking, you have all turned into delightful human beings. We hope some of our approaches towards inculcating you with our school values – like taking responsibility for your own learning and choices, respecting yourself, your environment and the opportunities you are given and having the courage to continue and do what at times feel undoable due to personal and practical obstacles – will be there to support you throughout your life. Building relationships however, is a crucial value which you not only benefited from in the past years, but which you should nurture explicitly in your future. We cannot do it alone because it takes a community/family/school to raise a child and ensure they enjoy their youth. Your tutor and teachers and staff in school have all invested time, energy, care and passion to support you as you developed yourself and became a kind, principled and academically successful person. We do this because we care and believe in you. Please continue to foster your relationships with others, as that is what helps us get things done and enables us to enjoy our existence.

As our graduates of 2022 leave RISS on their journey, we will miss you, and you are always welcome to come back and show us how you have grown and changed. Like you, RISS as a school is also changing; we are introducing new programmes like the CP, to ensure that we also remain relevant and able to offer our individual students what they need to succeed.

The world we are sending you off into, is currently not a safe and uncomplicated place – we have now inescapably felt that pandemics, ecological disaster, looming war and upheaval are realities of almost unprecedented scale that are threatening our existence as we know it. I would like to urge you to use the core values of RISS to help guide you as you navigate this world and change it into a better place for us all. It takes only one person to effect great change. We are rooting that each of you will be that person.

As a literature teacher, I always find solace in other people's ideas, and I would like to leave you with a poem written in 1921 by Anna Akhmatova, a Russian poet, who wrote about the difficulties of living and writing under the shadow of terror and repression. The poem is as fresh and relevant today as it was then. She celebrates the hope that remains in the devastated world, and it is this sense of "miraculous" that I wish you to foster and focus on when you leave us.

Everything is Plundered...

Everything is plundered, betrayed, sold,

Death's great black wing scrapes the air,

Misery gnaws to the bone.

Why do we not despair?

By day, from the surrounding woods,

Cherries blow summer into town;

By night the deep transparent skies

Glitter with new galaxies.

And the miraculous comes so close

To the ruined dirty houses –

Something not known to anyone at all

But wild in our breast for centuries.

*"It takes only
one person to
effect great change.
We are rooting
that each of you
will be that person!"*



By Eva Noorduijn Burgers, DP coordinator

To the graduating class of 2022!

I have not known you long, as I joined RISS in August 2021. My first impressions of you all were how friendly and polite you all are, using “sir” and “miss” and responding likewise to “good morning” and “good afternoon”.

Unfortunately, I did not teach any grade 12 classes this year, so I was unable to get to know you as my students in French or TOK. However, I did have the opportunity to interact with some of you over internal assessments, predicted grade forms and CAS. For some of you, those conversations were not perhaps the most cheerful or joyous. However, I hope that you can saw these moments as learning opportunities and that you felt supported. School is the time to make mistakes and these experiences will be of enormous help to you if you learn from them!

As the year went by, I got to know you better. The mock examinations gave me the opportunity to see you as a whole cohort, learn all of your names, understand more about your culture as I studied your choice of languages, and appreciate your interests as I observed which other subjects you chose to study.

During the uploading of your internal assessments, I learned even more about you: your fascinating choices of mathematics investi-

gations, your field work in geography and ESS and your research questions for the sciences. It was interesting to read why you chose these topics, where you found your information and how you set out your written work. Entering your predicted grades gave me an idea of your academic profile and during some conversations, I was privileged to learn which further studies you hope to pursue.

From a distance, I have observed you and, from a distance, I have learned something about each and every one of you. I do not expect you to remember me, for I have played such a small part in your secondary school life. This is the 23rd cohort of grade-12 students I have accompanied during their final exams. Each year and each cohort has been special – whether I taught those students from grade 6, whether I supervised an extended essay, whether I viewed their visual arts exhibition, or whether I supervised their CAS experiences. However short the time period, you have still made an impact on me. I leave you now with a quote by Christopher Robin, talking to Winnie the Pooh:

“You’re braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, smarter than you think”.

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Teacher comments:

■ LYNN LIBERT

First of all, I am very proud of all of you. I have known some of you since you were in Foundation Course and IG-CSE. I have seen you grow in maturity and in height (because eventually you all become taller than me). To my Language Heritage Committee, Claire, Paola, Quentin, Ceyda, and Anna, thank you for taking your CAS project so seriously and doing such a great job during a pandemic. I am proud of each and every one of you.

Of course, I have a special place in my heart for my English B students. Aryan, you have been my student since grade 6. Yunfei, Engy and Karin – you also have been my students for a long time. I am proud of each and every one of you and your accomplishments. Roza, you brought an insightful energy into our lessons, and I appreciate your keen mind. Leon, you are also an excellent addition to our class and brought a positive vibe into all our classroom, always asking great questions. Gedewon, it was always fun to see if you would arrive on time on Tuesday morning's first period. On a serious note, you were our calm wind in the storm and always kept us grounded. Karin, you started speaking more toward the end of grade 12, yahoo!!!! And finally, Engy, I see great things coming your way. You have grown in maturity over the years and have embodied International Mindedness like no other.

■ JAUN-MARI MORAAL

To my grade 12 A&I students, Good luck! My wishes are twofold. First, I would like to say good luck on the exams. You have worked hard for two years (some a little less), and now the time is here to show what you are worth.

Study hard and do your best. Secondly, your journey to adulthood has begun. This is the best time of one's life, so enjoy it! Maybe wait until after the exams, though. I really had good times with you, I enjoyed all the jokes and fun times. You forget that you are doing a job when you work with students like you. P.S.: Don't forget to charge your calculator.

■ KENNETH MULLER

This year's graduating class started their International Baccalaureate studies the same year I began teaching at RISS, and I was fortunate to be one of the year's tutor teachers. Being new at a school, whether you are a student or a teacher, can be daunting, challenging and stressful – but it was not.

The Class of 2022 not only warmly welcomed me, but also helped me to learn many of the important RISS ropes; consequently, my induction into this fantastic place was smooth and positive. I can only hope that I reciprocated sufficiently. I told an anecdote at the graduation breakfast that is true and worth repeating. A few weeks back, I was joking with some grade 12 students in the library, telling them how bitterly I resent their youth and optimism. After I said that, I could not help thinking back to my first visit to RISS. I was in Ms. Du Plessis' office, and I noticed the mission statement; it is short and powerful and important. It later occurred to me that the RISS mission is exceptional, because it works in reverse too. It is my job to do my best to ensure that students enjoy being young – and in the process, this group of students made me enjoy being not so young. That is quite an accomplishment, for which I am grateful... and it makes me smile as I write this.

■ YLVA MUILWIJK

Dear graduating class of 2022, Another year gone by, my fourth year at RISS. Four years ago, I started at RISS teaching a new course: Coordinated Science. I taught many of you, seven periods a week. Now you are the graduating class, together with a great influx of new students, and it is great to see so many of you taking Multiple Sciences the IB and doing well in it. I have seen you grow, as RISS has grown, and I hear many exciting plans from you for the future. You are the ones that make our lives at RISS so interesting: you

make us nervous when you still haven't done what we know you should do to succeed, but you also make us laugh and feel proud. One special mention to my Friday afternoon Physics HL class period 8+9: the timing was not optimal, but you always made the lessons worthwhile and even fun, so that I ended up going home with a smile on my face! I wish all of you the best for the future!

■ MARCO DESSI

Graduating class of 2022, it has been my absolute pleasure to watch you develop as people and TOK lovers. This is a huge step toward your future, and I cannot wait to see what becomes of it.

I hope you will all come back and tell us, visit our school again, and, more importantly, tell us how many times you have asked a to what extent question and laughed about it. If you do not understand this joke, you have probably failed TOK. May the TOK force be with you ,

■ NURIA PRIEGO GARCIA

In 2015, I arrived in Rotterdam from Barcelona. New country, new school, and a lot of changes. One of my classes that year was the Grade 6 students. A group of wonderful children who were new to the school, like me. Together with them I learnt a lot, and I hope they learnt some Maths with me too.

Since then, I have been lucky to be always involved in teaching that promotion, and today I am so proud to see them leaving the school as Graduated Grade 12! All the best in your future guys, don't be afraid of making mistakes, because remember, every mistake is an opportunity to learn something new. And please, don't forget about us, come to visit us and explain to us your adventures, I will be glad to hear from you! May the force be with you my little padawans!

■ SCOTT PHILLIPS

As the great Mohammed Ali once said about education, "If they can make penicillin out of mouldy bread, they can sure make something of you!" His bio-inspired words seem reasonably appropriate for your departure from the RISS/DP experience. I hope, in some way or another, you feel we've pushed your minds, even while occasionally comparing them to funky bread.

I also hope the sentiment rings true for all of you, even those of you who dared not venture into bio. The teachers and staff here certainly worked hard for you, but in the end, you earned the right to walk the graduation stage. There's no more pressure now that IB is [nearly] over...just go and make something of yourself! Along the way, always remember the people that helped get you there. Congratulations!

■ RAFAEL MORENO ADELANTADO

Dear class of 2022, I met some of you when you were daring six graders who wanted to change everything in the school. And in a blink of an eye, you finished the IB. In the meantime, new faces, (too) many changes, not many trips and two years to remember.

We have given each other a few headaches these past years, but I will always keep some funny (and stupid) memories that make sense only to us: pepino de mar, I'm a map, chicken in the corn, the Mexican weather report, Begoña y Juanita, 'suggesti-

ons', breaking the pool cue (yes, it was me), the ice cream and my unsuccessful speech in Utrecht... Good luck on your exams! (nope, you won't be as lucky as in IGCSE... you are writing exams this time!) To my Spanish grade 12 class: Os deseo un poco de suerte (no os hace falta mucha) y perdón por torturaros con mis historias e interminables explicaciones (fue vuestra culpa por preguntar).

■ MARGARETHA VAN ROOIJ

Dear grade 12s, It was a pleasure teaching and guiding you. You proved to be a resilient group that dealt with difficulties in a compassionate way and with a sense of humor. You are ready for your next adventures. You will be missed. Take care of yourselves, of one another, and stay in touch!

But first: finish those exams: you can do it! To my tutor group grade 12E: thank you for being so supportive of one another, and of me. You are kind, caring and up for big challenges. Go into the exams well-prepared and confident. I'm already proud of each one of you. To my Dutch class: bedankt voor jullie inzet, gezelligheid, energie, sprankelende aanwezigheid en jeugdige onbezonnenheid. Zet 'm op! / Haal alles uit de kan!! / Ga ervoor! Jullie kunnen het! Take care and don't be a stranger.

■ MISS VAN CROESDIJK

Dear students of the RISS, looking back on the year, I want to say: thank you! I enjoyed seeing and hearing your enthusiasm, creativity and even your complaints because that is part of life as well. For me, working at the RISS feels like I am part of a diverse and kind family.

I am happy to see that you are all contributing to that, respecting others and being curious about the world and other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. After another challenging year, I hope you will enjoy your much-deserved summer holiday. Let's see each other again after summer! See you soon,



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Clara Mediavilla Varas of Rotterdam International Secondary School gained the highest mark in the world for Cambridge IGCSE English First Language (0500) in the June 2021 examination series. The award recognises the talent, dedication and commitment of Clara, and the excellent team of English teachers who have supported her learning journey.

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