

# Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 35 | 2023-2024



**inter-community  
school zurich**

EST. 1960



The Inter-Community School is committed to providing a supportive and enabling learning environment in which all members of the community are challenged to achieve their individual potential, encouraged to pursue their passions, and expected to fulfil their responsibilities.

# Welcome to Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 35 | 2023-2024

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# Snapshots

Looking back over the last few months at ICS

**ICS Inter-Community School Zurich**  
 Published by Hootsuite • March 5 at 11:39 AM

"It has been exhilarating weeks in the life of our school as we centred our return to the semester on the launch of The Saathi Project, welcoming to our campus Acharya Lama Karma Sangbo (AKS), Principal of Shree Mangal Dvip School - Education for Himalayan Children (SMD) and Shirey Blair, the Director of, and Fundraiser for, the School.

This project is unique to our school and exists in a space of service, of learning, and of leading, the space that we want all of our children to experience and to grow from.

Approved by the Board of Trustees at the commencement of the academic year, The Saathi Project is centred around three tenets: education, experience, and enterprise."

- Lucy M. Gowdie, Head of School (Spotlight, 01 March 2024: <https://www.icsz.ch/.../cs-spotlight-the-saathi-project>)

#TheSaathiProject #ProudlyICS #OurKindOfEducationICS



**ICS Inter-Community School Zurich**  
 Published by Hootsuite • February 18

Last week, our February Focus Day on #Wellbeing was an enriching experience full with different activities for our Secondary students from Grade 6-9.

A huge thank you to our Grade 11 students for their incredible support and supervision throughout the day!

#ICS2sneakpeeks #ICS2Secondary

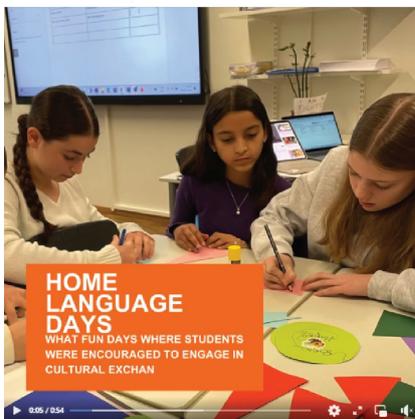


**ICS Inter-Community School Zurich**  
 Published by Hootsuite • March 11 at 1:38 PM

Home Language Day was a great success! The event highlighted the diversity of languages in our community, fostering cultural appreciation and linguistic diversity.

Students were encouraged to engage in cultural exchange activities, such as sharing traditional foods, participating in cultural games, or learning about music from different countries, and more!

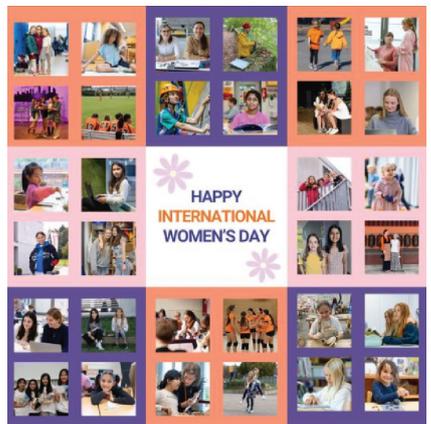
#WeAreICSZ #ICSZcommunity



**ICS Inter-Community School Zurich**  
 Published by Hootsuite • March 8 at 2:55 PM

Happy International Women's Day! Today and every day, let's celebrate the strength, resilience, and uniqueness of every woman around the globe. 🌍

#InternationalWomensDay #WeAreICSZ



**ICS Inter-Community School Zurich**  
 Published by Hootsuite • February 7

🏊‍♀️ ISSL Swim Meet Gala hosted by ZIS 🏊‍♀️

Incredible weekend for our ICS Tigers! Primary School, Middle School, and High School swim teams dominated their competitions, clinching top spots overall.

- 🏆 Primary Team Results – 2nd Place Overall
- 🏆 MS Swim Team Results – 1st Place Overall
- 🏆 HS Swim Team Results – 1st Place Overall

#StudentLifeICSZ #GoICSZ #ICS2Tigers



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
3,165 followers  
17h

Another unforgettable Quiz Night at ICS with fantastic outfits, delicious bites, and brain-teasing questions. But the real highlight? Your incredible generosity!

Together, we've raised CHF 18'000 towards our goals: a New Generator, Grade 11 Science Lab Equipment, Traditional Dance Attire, and Staff Uniforms for our sister school Shree Mangal Dvip School (SMD) in Nepal. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed!

If you missed out, but would still like to donate, head to our website for more information:  
<https://lnk.li/vQ7C9Spv>

#TheSaathiProject #ProudlyICS #OurKindOfEducationICS



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hoosuite February 24

Last Friday, the Middle School Robotics Club students were invited to visit the Robotic Systems Lab at ETH Zürich. This unique opportunity allowed them to experience first hand what it is like to work as a researcher in the field of robotics. A big Thank You goes out to the Magneko, SpaceHopper, and Floating Robotics teams for demonstrating and explaining their work, and answering the many questions of curious young minds!

#StudentLifeICSZ #ICSZFieldtrips #ICSZneakpeeks



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hoosuite February 22

What a season it's been! Congratulations to every ICS athlete and coach for their dedication and hard work. Let's also not forget our amazing host families – your support makes all the difference!

We've got some exciting hosting opportunities coming up this season:

- 15 – 17 May: Co-ed High School Tennis
- 24 – 26 May: Middle School Boys Volleyball

Here's to a new season start – Go Tigers! 🐅

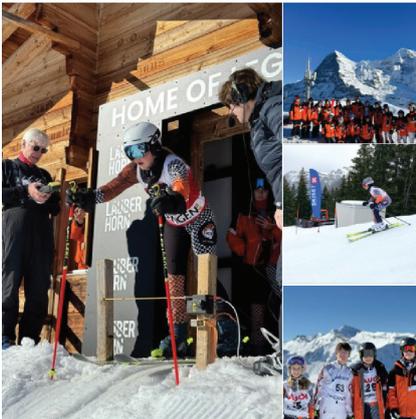
#ICSZAthletics #ICSTigers #ICSZCommunity



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hoosuite February 1

Last week the ICS Ski Team travelled to the Berner Oberland area, to the beautiful mountain village of Wengen, to compete in the European International Schools Ski Race (EISSR). Arriving on the heels of the FIS Ski World Cup which took place only the week before, our ICS racers had the amazing opportunity to "test their mettle" on the world-famous Luberhorn Run.

#StudentLifeICSZ #ICSZAthletics #GoICSZ



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hoosuite February 20 at 12:00 PM

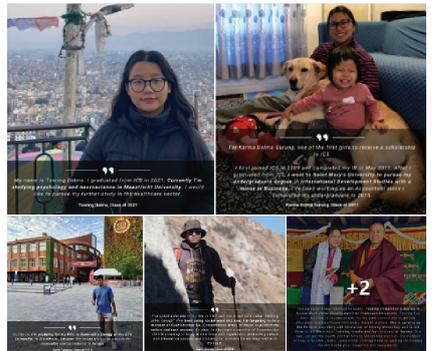
Discover Inspiring Journeys and Career Paths: from SMD to ICS and Beyond

Every child deserves access to education, no matter how remote their location. Shree Mangal Dvip School - Education for Himalayan Children (SMD) serves the needs of children who come from some of the most vulnerable places – the northern villages of the Nepal Himalayas.

We are grateful to have welcomed over 25 SMD students at ICS over the years, where they bring their unique perspectives and enrich our community.

Together, let's support education for every child, everywhere.

[www.icsz.ch/community-life/saathi-project](http://www.icsz.ch/community-life/saathi-project)  
 @TheSaathiProject #ProudlyICSZ #OurKindOfEducationICSZ



**ICS** ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hoosuite March 4 at 9:01 PM

Last week, Grade 8 German classes visited the Kunsthaus Zurich where students immersed themselves in the world of art, participating in a guided tour conducted in German with some English translation provided.

The focus of their exploration was on the concept of beauty, as they delved into artwork spanning various periods and styles. Through this experience, they gained a deeper understanding of how beauty has been perceived, interpreted, and represented throughout history.

#ICSZneakpeeks #ICSZfieldtrips #ICSZSecondary



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# Flying to the Moon

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By **Lucy M. Gowdie**, Head of School

In Education, as in all organisations, strategy drives the direction of a school. It is the place we can never rest in, for it is the very thing that drives us to be better, and that demands we achieve our goals.

I was long ago reminded that a strategy without a plan is just a wish, and I am not one to exist in this most uncomfortable space.

In January, the Design Team worked to bring together seven months of our community's thinking of shared ideas and possibilities for our future. It was a rewarding weekend of reflection and of rigour that we look forward to sharing with our community soon.

Our strategy will not be wishful thinking, it will be embedded in a plan that is purposeful and powerful. It will articulate goals that the school aims to achieve, and outcomes that enhance the educational offering for the students of our school.

There is a vast difference between setting, measuring, and achieving a goal, and we know this as much in our personal lives as we do in our professional ones.

Our commitment is to focus on what we believe matters in education, and fly towards this with an unrelenting belief in the commitment of every member of our community.

Though we may be relatively small as a school, we are ambitious in our thinking, and so it is our strategic plan known as Zum Mond Fliegen, that will see us attempt to fly to the moon.

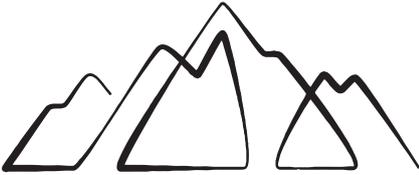
Our strategy will honour our commitment to the IB and will see us delve into the learning journey of every student; coming to a place of understanding, of knowing how we can leverage our long established and exceptionally taught IB Programmes, for the betterment of every student.

I look forward to sharing with our community soon, the design of our launching pad; the very thing that will enable us to fly to the moon.



*“A journey designed to build on the identities, competencies, and capabilities of our young people so they may impact the spheres of society that they exist in with empathy and compassion, our flight path will see us delve into the system of education itself and centre our trajectory on innovations in education that span ethical intelligence, sustainability, technology, and service.”*

The Saathi Project™



# The Saathi Project

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By **Lucy M. Gowdie**, Head of School

End of February was an exhilarating week in the life of our school, as we centred our return to the semester on the launch of The Saathi Project, welcoming to our campus Acharya Lama Karma Sangbo (AKS), Principal of Shree Mangal Dvip School (SMD) and Shirley Blair, the Director of, and Fundraiser for, the School.

This project is unique to our school and exists in a space of service, of learning, and of leading, the space that we want all of our children to experience and to grow from.

Approved by the Board of Trustees at the commencement of the academic year, The Saathi Project is centred around three tenets: education, experience, and enterprise.



Each stands as a commitment by both schools to engaging in that which matters most – opportunities for both staff and students, and our families to learn.

**Education** speaks to our inter-cultural commitment to learning – that our teaching fraternities can grow from and with each other. We plan to leverage technology and hybrid learning to engage with our colleagues in Nepal in teacher training and development opportunities. We also plan for teacher exchanges and volunteering experiences.

**Experience** speaks to our commitment to experiential learning – that our students may journey to the Himalayan Mountains and experience life in the villages from which the students of SMD come. It speaks to opportunities to learn what life is like at high altitude and to bear witness to the majestic mountain range that encases Nepal.

**Enterprise** speaks to our commitment to sponsorship and to fundraising, advocacy and to equity – it is a tradition of our school that we provide learning opportunities for our students in Nepal, and we will continue to do this.

With over 20 years of shared history, our schools have united to design a roadmap for hope that enables all students within our schools to learn empathy, lead change, and look to the future with positivity.



*“The arrival of AKS and Shirley on our campus, and the commitment we have to each other, marks the official commencement of The Saathi Project, and our ambitious aims to change the world together – our way.”*

# Embracing Challenges:

## Real-World Examples of High-Quality Learning at ICS

by **Nathaniel Atherton**, Primary Principal

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Recently, I highlighted our school's commitment to High-Quality Learning (HQL) and unpacked our school's aspirational definition into five key principles - learning that is transformative, inclusive, joyful, challenges embracing and fosters authentic connections. Today, we delve into how these principles come alive through the actions and projects of our students and educators.

We will highlight the five principles of the definition by exploring three examples of high-quality learning in the **Primary School**:

- **A Kindergarten 2 and Grade 4 Storytelling Collaboration**  
As part of a Kindergarten 2 storytelling unit, K2 students used stop-motion video animation to capture narratives as emergent authors. As our students managed both the skills of writing and technology they were aided by our Grade 4 students.
- **A Grade 1 Readers' Theatre Performance**  
Readers' theatre is a practice schools use to build fluency and voice in young readers. Our Grade 1 readers have developed readers' theatre productions as part of their guided reading programme. At this week's assembly, a group of Grade 1 learners shared a production of Robin Hood.
- **Our Grade 5 PYP Exhibition**  
PYP Exhibition is a year-long project in which learners inquire into Global issues connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The students are currently preparing artwork to help to communicate their findings related to the issue.



## **Transformative Learning in Action**

Grade 4's collaboration with Kindergarten 2 (K2) students on their storytelling unit exemplifies transformative learning. By assisting K2 students in capturing their stories through stop-motion, Grade 4 students not only applied their technical skills but also stepped into the role of teachers, facilitating a rich, creative process. Liana in Grade 4 shared, "It was a unique experience which I won't forget anytime soon. We usually don't get to work with little kids, but on that project, we did and it was like we were the teachers." This project empowered both the younger and older students to think differently and act as change agents within their learning community.

## **Inclusivity at the Heart of Learning**

Every Friday at ICS, students are invited to share their learning at our assemblies. In February, the Grade 1 reader's theatre performance at the K2-3 assembly celebrated inclusivity through literature. A group of Grade 1 learners took the opportunity to perform in front of over 100 of their peers, this initiative valued each student's voice and contribution, creating a sense of belonging and community. The joy of sharing their growth as readers and their excitement underscores the inclusivity of giving every student a stage to shine and be heard. As Evan in Grade 1 shared before the production began, 'We have been preparing this presentation for weeks, we are excited to share!'

## **The Joy of Learning Through Challenges**

The joy of learning, even through challenges, was evident in Grade 4's support of K2's storytelling project. Despite facing moments of frustration, as Grade 4 students noted, the older students found joy in navigating these challenges to ensure the younger students' ideas were faithfully and creatively expressed. Yannick in Grade 4 explained that feeling of excitement, "It made a feeling in your tummy that you needed to make it good and it included all their ideas." This project illustrates how engaging with difficulties can result in a fulfilling and joyful learning experience, driven by commitment and empathy.

## **Embracing Challenge: The Learning Pit**

Grade 5's year-long inquiry, The Exhibition, embodies the essence of embracing challenges. Tackling global issues, students engaged deeply with complex problems, demonstrating resilience and perseverance. Supported by their teachers and mentors, they navigated the "Learning Pit" of self-directed research and creative expression. This process not only prepares them for real-world complexities, but also instils a sense of accomplishment and readiness to make a positive impact.

## **Authentic Connections: Learning with Real-World Impact**

Connections abound at a community school like ICS and all three examples highlight that sense of connection. In the K2 and Grade 4 collaboration our Preschool learners begin to build connections with older learners and the Primary School they will soon transition into. Our Grade 1 learners built a connection with their audience through an engaging arts presentation and our Grade 5 students are making connections with our local and global communities as they prepared for our PYP exhibition in March.



Through these examples, we see the principles of High-Quality Learning come to life at ICS. Each story reflects our commitment to transformative, inclusive, joyful learning that embraces challenges and fosters authentic connections. As we continue to embody these values in our educational endeavours, we invite our community to join us in celebrating and supporting this journey as you celebrate learning at home.

# Parental Engagement and the Value of Grade Level Coffee Mornings

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by **James Penstone**, Secondary Principal

This academic year, we have introduced grade level coffee mornings in the Secondary School; a new initiative aimed at enhancing our educational community's cohesion and success. Hosted by our Grade Level Leaders, these gatherings provide a unique platform for parents to engage directly with the fabric of the school, fostering a shared approach to our students' educational journey.



The role of Grade Level Leaders, developed over the past four years, has evolved to include not just student support but also extending this support to our parents. These recent coffee mornings have received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with parents and staff alike valuing the opportunity for direct communication and collaboration.

But why does this matter? Research underscores the significant impact of parental involvement in education. Engaged parents contribute to higher academic achievement, enhanced student motivation, and improved social-emotional outcomes, as evidenced by a comprehensive review by the American Psychological Association and insights shared in Education Week. Our coffee mornings serve as a strategic avenue to bolster parental engagement, creating an environment where parents can exchange perspectives, offer solutions, and importantly, build a supportive network.

As we look to the future, we are considering increasing the frequency of these coffee mornings, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement and responsive education. We have been seeking feedback from participants for enhancing their future format, with a central theme so far being that parents particularly enjoy opportunities to air and share perspectives and questions openly. Working together, we hope not only to enhance our children's educational experience but also to lay the groundwork for their lifelong success and well-being.

*“Unique to these mornings is the chance for parents to hear from various speakers, offering insights into topics specifically relevant to each grade level, thereby enriching the educational dialogue between the school and our parent community.”*



# Belonging at ICS

by **Alice Aschwanden**, Policy Officer (Safeguarding and Compliance)

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Over the past 12 months at ICS, we have been on a journey of questioning, discussing, researching, defining and articulating what it means to belong at our school. We wanted to go beyond creating a single 'inclusion' policy and develop a truly unique, rich and innovative approach to belonging, one that would capture our commitment to being leaders in this space. Central to our thinking was this important question - how does it really feel when you belong somewhere? Is it that you are included? Is it that you feel respected? Is it that you can be yourself? Is it that you connect with other students and teachers? Is it that you feel not only accepted, but celebrated?

Our findings were not surprising - it is all of this. And even more. Through a series of consultations with Primary and Secondary students, parents and staff members, I filled notebooks with people's thoughts on what it meant to belong at ICS, and what actions led to that feeling. I also discovered what stops people from feeling like they belong, and what we as a school can do to prevent those feelings from taking shape. From the youngest student, right through to the most experienced staff member, the message was consistent - a stable, lasting sense of belonging is one of the most important ingredients to a thriving school life.

The first decision we made when starting this work was an important one. We decided to focus not on inclusion, as most organisations do, but on belonging. Why? Because belonging(ness) is the ultimate conclusion of inclusion done well. Belonging(ness) is more crucial to mental health and wellbeing than inclusion, and it speaks to a collective feeling. Inclusion involves efforts and behaviours that can be fostered by the school to promote equal opportunity for all - belonging is what results when this is done properly.

And so it is with great pride that we are bringing to life the words and thoughts of our community through the new ICS Belonging Directory. Currently in its infancy, the Directory is a suite of policies and frameworks that underpin our practices related to belonging. They articulate the actions and behaviours we expect of our students, staff and parents, and provide guidance on how to create and maintain an environment where everyone feels welcome, safe and free to be themselves. They remind us that when we put belonging at the centre of all we do, every person in our school community benefits. The journey has only just begun, but it is with great excitement that we look toward our future and the possibilities that await us when belonging comes first.





# Battle of the Books

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by **Anne Labussière**, Secondary Teacher Library

## What is the Battle of the Books?

Every school year The Battle of the Books (BOB) is in full swing from November to March. This exciting reading competition involves students in Grades 6 through 8 and is part of the ICS Extra Curricular Activities.

Teams are composed of 3 to 4 members who agree to read 7 books together. The SGIS librarians' group has carefully selected the BOB books from the collection of books featured in the Golden Cowbell Award.

The BOB-ers meet once a week at lunchtime for fun activities such as quizzes, team logo creation and craft activities. They also enjoy the privilege of eating lunch with their teammates in our welcoming Secondary library.

BOB fosters cross-cultural connections within the international school community of Switzerland. Indeed, the competition culminates in a rip-roaring final event where the winning team from our school competes against the top teams from ISZL and ZIS. Each school takes turns in hosting the Finals.

## Reading for Pleasure

BOB is a wonderful initiative that instills joy for reading in our Middle School students, preparing them to become lifelong readers and learners. Reading for Pleasure is an essential skill that enhances academic performance and is associated with wellbeing benefits by reducing psychological distress.

Students have the opportunity to explore a wide range of genres including fantasy, science-fiction, realistic fiction, graphic novels, mystery, and non-fiction. However, they are allowed to share the reading load among their team members based on their individual preferences and proficiencies. In today's digital world, it is important to highlight the value of Reading for Pleasure, which is exactly what the Battle of the Books programme aims to do.

## ICS values

BOB promotes the core values of ICS, such as caring and belonging. It nurtures a supportive community atmosphere and fosters camaraderie among the students. It also offers a platform for students who embrace a passion for reading to be recognised and celebrated!

*“BOB allows everyone to be competitive and make new friends. It brings everyone together in a fun way.” -  
Andrei (Grade 6)*

The library staff ensures students feel comfortable and included in their teams. Respect and a spirit of friendly competition make BOB a successful programme. Also, the wonderful commitment of the Grade 6 level leader, Mr Bradley (aka our BOB Master of Ceremony) and the support of the teaching staff contribute to the cohesion and motivation of the group all along the way. Since last year, teachers have also jumped in with their team, “The Dog Ears” to challenge the students’ reading stamina during two “Kahoot” sessions of Students vs Teachers.

*“Reading is a vital determinant of a student’s growth in language skills and ability. The more they read, the more they learn. Teachers modelling the act of reading is essential in influencing students. We must “walk the talk.” But, most of all, taking part in the friendly competition is just good fun!” - Mrs Crook (Alegría Lead Teacher and member of “The Dog Ears”)*

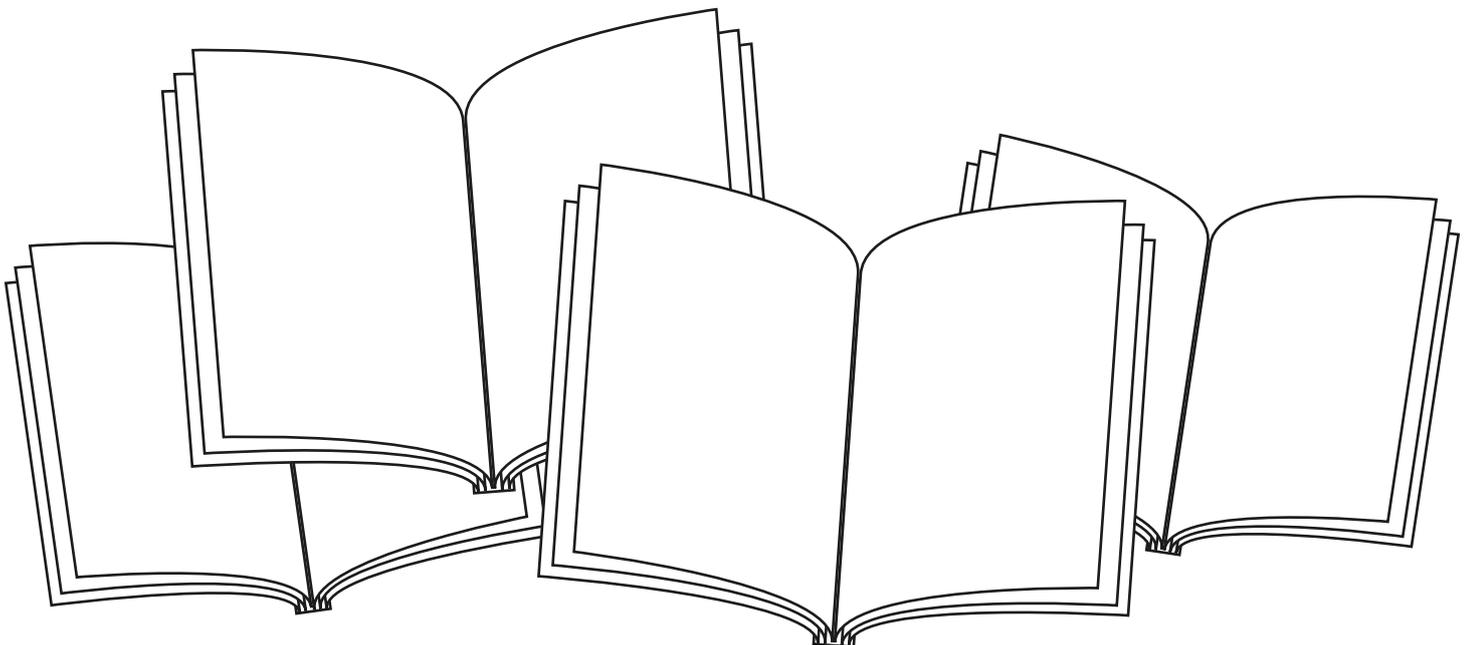
## Multilingualism

BOB values multilingualism and encourages active involvement from students of diverse language backgrounds. Many of our BOB members do not speak English as their first language.

Martina (Grade 6), who attended an Italian-speaking school in Italy, entered our Alegría programme in August and is now exploring English literature.

*“I always liked to read in Italian and I always exchanged books with my friends. I didn’t have a library in my old school. So now, I come every day. I am doing BOB because I usually read comics and this is a great opportunity to read something else, not only graphic novels. We are doing Kahoot and Blooket. I am competitive, so I like it. This is the first time I read books in English. With BOB, I have also made friends.  
GO PIZZA POWER !!!!!!!!!!!!!”*

Next year BOB will celebrate 20 years and ICS will host.  
Go BOB-ers!





# Umwelt und Nachhaltigkeit, Environment and Sustainability

22

by **Peter Morton**, Head of Department for Secondary Language Acquisition

Over the past few months, our grade seven German students have had the chance to visit the Umwelt Arena, Spreitenbach, as part of their language studies.

During three separate trips to the environment arena, located on the outskirts of Zurich near IKEA, students have deepened their knowledge of humans' impact on the environment as part of our unit of inquiry focused on sustainability.

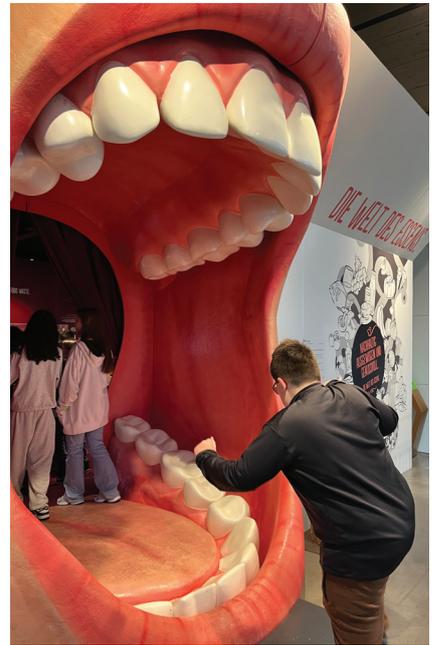
Students loved the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom and made the most of the interactive exhibitions, focussing on a whole range of topics such as renewable energy, responsible consumption, recycling and sustainable transportation.



Our young people were given a motivating tour of the Umwelt Arena by local experts, who shared many practical tips for sustainable living in the modern world through engaging multimedia exhibits.

With 45 different sustainable topics to discover, experience and interact with, the Umwelt Arena is a destination worth visiting regularly to appreciate the breadth and depth of this fascinating topic.

The highlight of the trip for many was the chance to test-drive a range of electric and human-powered vehicles, such as tandems, bullet-bikes, Segways, pedal karts and scooters.



# Student Quotes

Russell

*“Meat is not sustainable. I think that we should eat other things which are more sustainable.”*

Gabe

*“It was pretty cool. I enjoyed the electric-car simulator.”*

Ion

*“I learned that (to produce) one kilogram of meat requires 5000 litres of water.”*



Jessica

*“It was really fun. The tour was really helpful to raise awareness of recycling... sustainability.”*

Archer

*“It went really well. My favourite things was the mouth tunnel. I might eat a bit less meat, and I’ll also try to buy locally.”*

Teisa

*“That was actually really fun... It showed the different things that we recycle and how much we waste in a year. That was a bit shocking because 706Kg of waste is a lot for the average person. I thought that I could use less and reduce that number. Honestly, I think that the main thing is recycling, so I think that I should start recycling much more.”*

Willem

*“I learned that cheaper meat is usually less sustainable. So if your family has the money to buy more expensive meat, it’s better for the environment and more sustainable.”*

Jun

*“It was very interesting to see the impact of what we do on the environment. Overall, it was really fun. The main thing I learned was probably when we went through the mouth tunnel, and we looked at the impact food consumption has on the environment. I’d probably start eating less meat and try more vegan options.”*

Isla

*“I mainly learned about what humans and some animals do to the environment. I also really enjoyed the day and the variety of different activities. It was really cool that it was all in the same building.”*



Lia

*“I thought it was really fun and an interactive way to learn about sustainability in German. A fact that I learned was that if you recycle a can it can save 95% more energy than if you throw it into the trash can.”*

Maia

*“It was good. It was really fun. I really liked the parcours area, especially the double bicycle, when Isla and I nearly fell off.”*

# ICS Zurich Paves the Way for Collaborative Environmental Action

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by **James Penstone**, Secondary Principal

March marked a significant milestone for the ICS community and our partner institutions, as we successfully concluded our second annual Environmental Symposium. The event, a testament to our commitment to sustainability, saw over 80 students from local and international schools come together at the Gemeindesaal Zumikon, for a day of learning, discussion, and action.





The symposium was filled with inspiring presentations and interactive workshops led by our three distinguished guests: Lee Howell of the Villars Institute, Annabelle Jaggi representing Eco-Schools Switzerland, and Greg Holder from the Maldives Underwater Initiative. Students engaged deeply with topics ranging from systems thinking to effective communication in environmental advocacy, leaving the symposium with new skills and a renewed passion for environmental stewardship.

In another, related and very exciting development for our community, three of our students have been honoured with the title of 'Fellows' by the Villars Institute. This distinction recognises their leadership potential and commitment to sustainability. These students will participate in an online leadership course, culminating in a summer symposium at the Villars Institute, where they will collaborate with peers and experts from across Europe and beyond.

Parallel to the success of the symposium, we are proud to announce ICS Zurich's recent membership in the prestigious Eco Schools initiative. This global programme empowers students to drive change towards more sustainable practices within their schools and communities. As part of this initiative, our students have embarked on a multi-year project focusing on waste reduction, demonstrating their commitment to making a tangible impact on our environment.

We are immensely proud of what our students have achieved through the symposium and our recently embarked upon environmental initiatives. These efforts reflect our collective dedication to educating our students about the challenges facing our planet but also empowering them to be part of the solution. The collaboration and connection with students from other schools, especially the Swiss schools in our vicinity, added a rich dimension to the symposium. The collective energy and shared commitment of these schools underscore the power of coming together for a common cause.

As we celebrate the success of this inter-school initiative, we look forward to the continued impact of our students' actions and their contributions to a more sustainable future.

# Diploma Programme Visual Arts Exhibition 2024

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By **Shane Lions**, Head of Visual Arts and Visual Arts

There exists the idea in our world that artists are people who drift about, waiting to act on rare moments of divine inspiration. This is a great misconception to which our DP Visual Arts students can testify.

Creativity and technical mastery are skills that require active exercise in the same way an athlete or a musician practices in order to become 'better'. This year there were 16 student Visual Arts exhibitions on display in the Diploma Studies Centre and each of these exhibitions contained objects with significant technical mastery and conceptual inquiry. They represent achievement that is unique within the broader Diploma Programme, for which each student deserves the great praise and acknowledgement that they will receive from our community during their Vernissage.

However, as impressive as these exhibitions and objects are individually and collectively, there is immense unseen learning that reflects the true value of creativity. For every good idea that exists and resulted in an artwork, there may be a myriad of unseen experiments, dead-ends and failures. Our students have not drifted about waiting for inspiration, contrary to romantic perceptions of artists. To arrive at a point to begin a final artwork for exhibition is in itself a great achievement. This commitment to the artistic process is where the work of art takes place. Students

have scrutinised the complex relations between their own intentions, artistic methods and the experience of the audience, which required intense research, technical exercise and critical analysis. Their success is a result of resilience. Our artists are risk-takers. They are disciplined and strive for improvement. The scale and depth of their work are great, not only represented by what can be seen hanging on the wall, but through the immensity of the unseen learning in the artistic process.



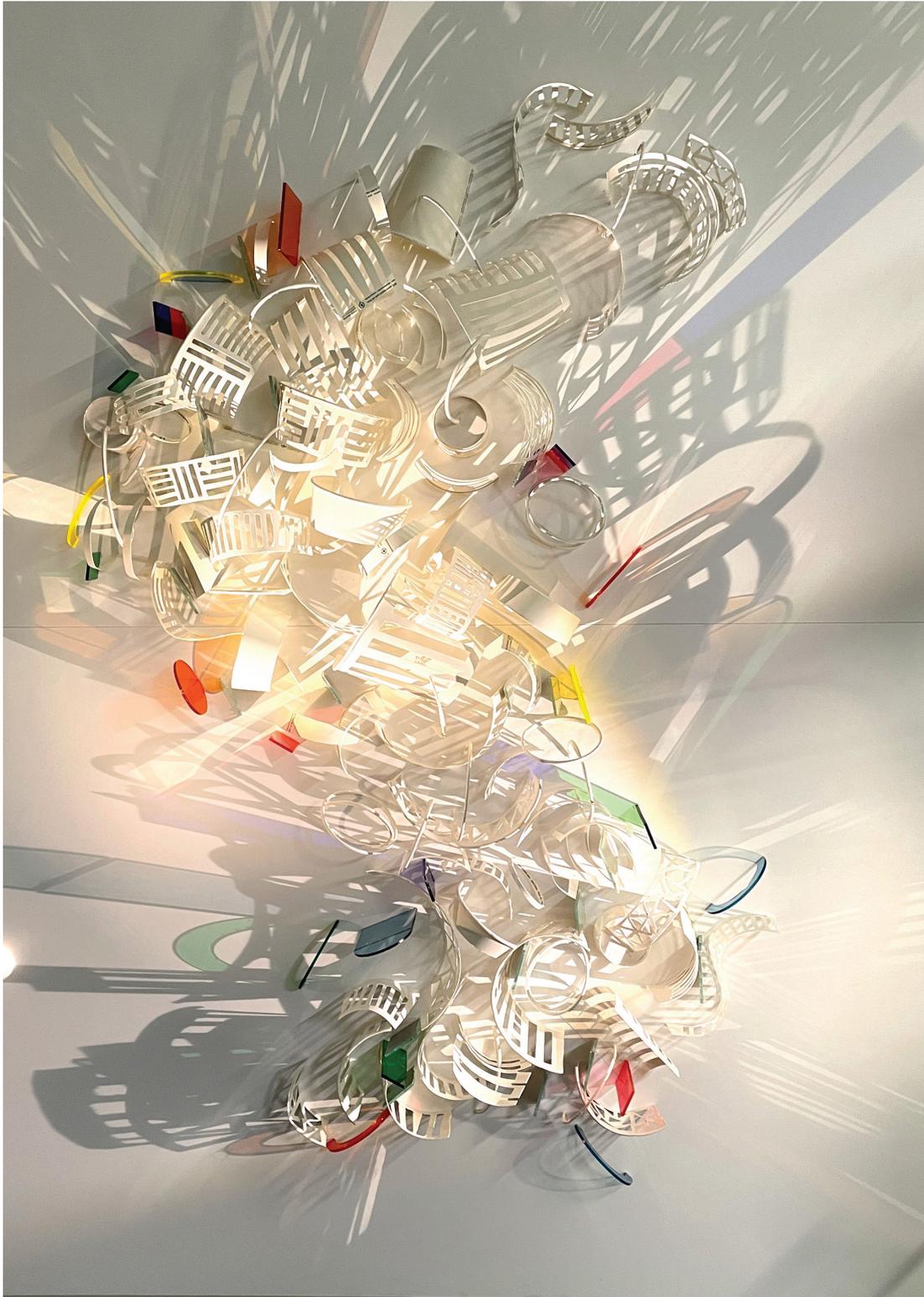
**Lessons I Have Learned**  
*Jirra*



Odisha  
Amelia



Superstizioni  
Silvia



**Shifting Perspectives**

*Victoria*

# Grade 6 Zoo Zurich

## Product Design for Holding a Memory

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by **Conor O'Brien**, Secondary Design Teacher

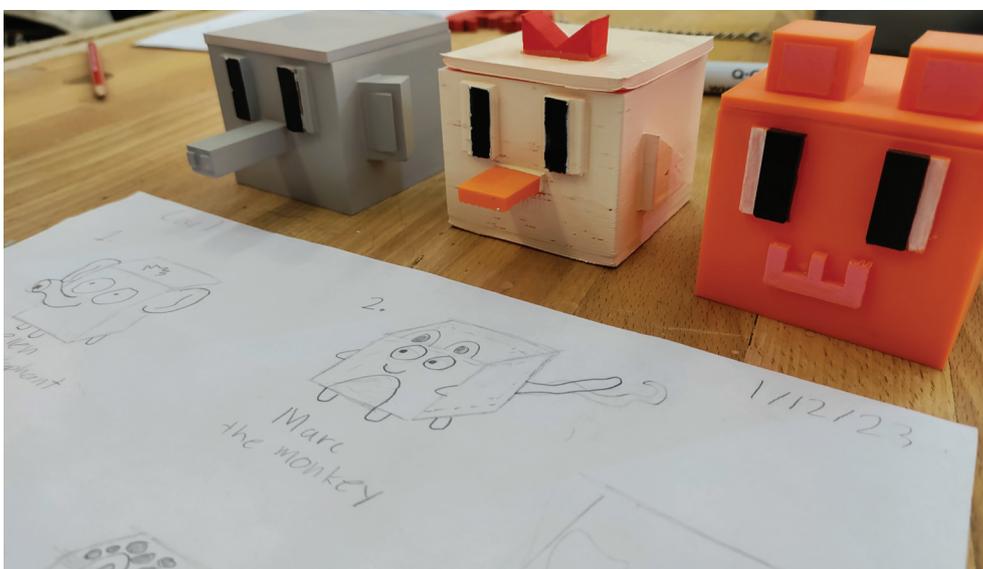
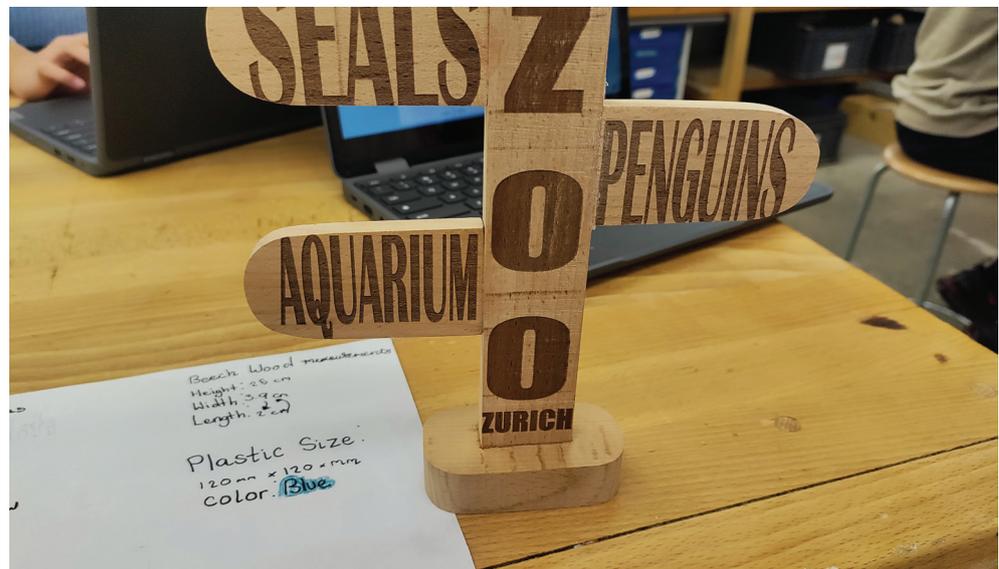
Earlier in the school year, Grade 6 visited the Zoo Zurich to carry out primary research of the whole Zoo, taking into consideration: the layout of the Zoo, the animals in each zoned habitat (keeping in mind the future plans), identifying the textures in the plant life, and everything else that could inspire our project. The designs shared in this article are a result of the students creating a product that can be sold in the gift shop as a way for visitors to hold a memory of their visit to Zoo Zurich.

It is worth noting that all students received the same sized material, one piece beech wood and one piece acrylic plastic.



Emma presented a wooden frame with the addition of a puzzle concept, this took a lot of preparation, with the use of Adobe Illustrator for the wood and plastic laser engraving and cutting, processing her given wood piece into thinner material, and cutting the wood to suit the size of the frame.

Aditi's journey involved the use of the laser engraver for embedding the font into the wood, processing the wood to make it less thick and to create more quantity of wood, chiselling a slot in the base for holding the post, and sanding the final pieces after gluing.



*“I am creating three 3D printed animals for the project related to my Design Project focused on the Zoo Concept: Holding a memory; a rooster, an elephant, a monkey, and a leopard. I am working on them by creating 3D models using tinkercad before we start 3D printing them.” – Carl*

# *Footloose:* A Fusion of Talent, Community and Student Leadership

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by James Penstone, Secondary Principal



In January, the Secondary School production of *Footloose: The Musical* at ICS delighted audiences over three consecutive nights, showcasing inclusivity and community spirit. Uniting students from Grade 6 to Grade 12, the musical stood as a testament to the diverse talents within our school.

Underpinning the production was a strong student leadership presence, from stage lighting to choreography. This year's production also allowed a dynamic range of students to take centre stage, from the leads to those in ensemble roles, creating a powerful sense of community and belonging. The costume and set design facilitated swift transitions and captured the essence of the musical's diverse settings.

The show brimmed with energy and fun, with songs like "Let's Hear It For The Boy" and "Holding Out For A Hero" delivered with tremendous passion. Audience members described the production as both "joyful" and "heart-warming," emphasising its role in bringing the ICS community together. Indeed, a whole host of volunteer staff and parents collaborated with the cast and student production team over the preceding five months to bring this extravaganza to fruition.

The performance had it all - from dancing and humour to romance and politics. A particularly poignant moment occurs when Ren McCormack, portrayed by Youp C., privately challenges Reverend Shaw Moore, played by Axel S. He implores the Reverend to reconsider the ban on dancing, a cherished activity for the town's youth. This powerful dialogue underscored the importance of intergenerational understanding and reconciliation, as well as recognising the value of younger community members in decision-making processes.

*"Indeed, "Footloose" as a show certainly embodied our commitment to empowering students, embracing their voices, and enabling them to pursue their passions."*

We are profoundly grateful to everyone involved - students, staff and parents alike.





# Foot





# Loose





# PYP Exhibition

by **Nathaniel Atherton**, Primary Principal

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March was a celebration of learning in the Primary School as our Grade 5 students shared months of work as part of the PYP Exhibition.

The Exhibition, the culminating event of the Primary Years Programme, highlights the best of the IB and its focus on international-mindedness. While globally we are seeing our politicians and thought leaders retreat to polarised views of black and white, our 10 and 11-year-olds have been wrestling with big issues and ideas, authentically living in the grey.

Since autumn, learners have been engaging with pertinent issues connected to the UN's sustainable development goals. Months of questioning, research, analysis, synthesis and sense-making led to this past week's festivities.

Wednesday night, 20 March, was the showcase event when parents had the opportunity to engage with their child's inquiry. During the school day on Wednesday 20 March and Thursday 21 March, the students also hosted a range of visitors from across the Primary School, and from schools throughout Switzerland (from Verbier to Zug).

Visitors had the chance to see how learners had translated their research and thinking into speeches, websites, artistic representations and authentic actions.

This year's Exhibition holds a special place in my heart. Having previously taught the Exhibition and having worked in PYP schools for over 10 years, this year marks the first time I have seen the Exhibition through a parent's eyes and as a family, as my son Levi completed this year's Exhibition. The richness of a project as audacious as the Exhibition is, can permeate the conversations beyond the classroom to families' homes. Flourishing and significant dialogue can be held over the dinner table or potential weekend trips might help learners connect more deeply with the issue they are researching into.

These immersive experiences can provide a level of interest and dedication that enables these young children to be the agents of change that will resolve these global challenges.

As a school, we continue to champion the importance of embracing ambiguity, fostering critical thinking, and nurturing a generation of global citizens who are unafraid to navigate the intricate shades of grey in pursuit of a brighter, more equitable future.





# Transcending Perfection

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by **Sofia Leimer**, ICS Alumni Graduate 2022

Having completed my first semester at a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, I find myself engaging in reflective contemplation on my 13-year journey at ICS. Having attended ICS from 2009 to graduating in 2022, has shaped me in ways I am only starting to understand.

Admittedly, frustrations were not absent from this expedition, as is customary for any student navigating the intricacies of their school's organization. Yet, as I reassess ICS through a lens unclouded by teenage subjectivity, I am profoundly aware of the positive values instilled in me by ICS. These values have not only prepared me for a successful gap year but also laid a robust foundation for starting university.

My final two years at ICS influenced the person I am today most. Initially apprehensive about transitioning from the supportive structure in middle school to a more independent learning environment, I found that ICS's unwavering student support extended throughout 11th and 12th grade. ICS consistently encouraged me to tackle challenges independently, fostering optimism about my potential and nurturing self-resilience. My IB years were not without their share of challenges, particularly as I navigated a shift from my original plan to study medicine. I had to adapt, switch classes, and confront the academic hurdles posed by the realm of IB Chemistry.

Reflecting on that period, I realize that I was afforded the opportunity to learn, within a secure environment, the act of working with challenges rather than against them—a priceless life lesson I cherish today. My IB Diploma years at ICS stand out as a transformative preparation for both university life and the broader world. Witnessing my fellow university peers struggle with time management and essay structuring, and hearing perplexing questions in lectures, I am grateful for having honed effective time management and efficient research skills, foundations I rely on daily.

ICS's emphasis on nurturing its students as complete individuals, fostering growth, and embracing uncertainty position the school as an exceptional educational institution. In today's, competitive world, the spotlight often falls on academic excellence, lauding those with the highest grades and celebrating those engaged in the most extracurricular activities. While ICS places due emphasis on academic achievement, it equally prioritizes student well-being. When my mental health struggles became prominent during the IB Diploma, the support I received from ICS eradicated my fear of embarrassment or judgment.

My teachers and friends consistently reminded me of my resilience and determination to complete the diploma. Though my final score may have fallen below the grade level's average, for me, it transcended perfection, manifesting in the relentless pursuit of personal growth and achievements.

My post-IB year was dedicated to prioritizing well-being and embracing a gap year for self-care. Seeking assistance and undergoing a transformative five-month treatment program for OCD and anxiety in the US, I returned to Switzerland by the summer, a very different individual. I commend those with the courage to seek help, and I find resonance between ICS's emphasis on community, self-advocacy, and support for those facing challenges and the lessons reinforced during my gap year.

Reflecting back, I acknowledge the importance of embracing individual paths without judgment. In evaluating my present happiness and success, a significant part is attributed to acknowledging and accepting my struggles. ICS's commitment to embracing students as whole beings taught me to set goals aligned with personal values rather than external expectations. Today, I understand that comparing myself to others is natural, yet counterproductive; instead, I choose to celebrate my progress and achievements. Being able to say I completed my first semester with a 4.0 GPA is something I never thought I would have been able to, but came to realize that success occurs at different times for everyone.

I am so grateful for the memories I made at ICS and the doors the school has opened, facilitating ongoing connections with peers and staff who played pivotal roles in my life. I am confident that future ICS graduates will leave Zumikon fully prepared for whatever is awaiting them.

# Springtime with the PA

by **Christel Ahlawat**, PA Communications

Another few months before the end of the school and we just cannot believe how fast this year went by!

A few days ago, we had the first edition of our Spring Party, a wonderful opportunity to have fun as a community. This year, the Spring Party was Brazilian-themed and we had the chance to have samba dancers as well as drummers to warm our hearts and the room! After a bit of dancing, more than 20 prizes generously donated by ICS parents were auctioned to raise money for a project of solar panels for our school to get greener and self-sustainable for the future. The auction overcame all of our expectations and we are happy to announce we reached our target! The party resumed after the auction and the crowd had such a nice time dancing, laughing and celebrating! This first Spring Party was a huge success to bring our community together and we are looking forward to another edition in 2025, the theme is still a surprise though...





Times of togetherness are not over as the biggest event of the year is just round the corner: the International Festival. This event will take place on 26 May on the ICS Campus and like every year, there is a lot of excitement around it as we are bustling to organise another unforgettable day for all. Not only is this event the epitome of the year but it is also a wonderful celebration of who we are, a diverse community made of so many nationalities and cultures!

This year, once again, we will have the chance to taste more than 25 different types of food at the different stalls; from French to Indian, Turkish, Romanian, Spanish etc... But that is not it; there will be a lot of entertainment as well with talents from ICS and the Zumikon community performing musical pieces, dances and more. Sports will also be at the centre of the festival with children being able to play soccer, baseball, chess, rugby and lacrosse. The little ones will also be busy with age appropriate activities. Our legendary "Dunk Tank" will happen again as our teachers are lining up to be the targets. And last but not least, the second-hand book sale will be back so that you can also stack up some books for the summer holidays! In a few words, mark down 26 May in your calendar and do not miss the 2024 edition of the International Festival! And do not forget to spread the word, as this event is open to ICS and non-ICS families as well!

Before we gear up to the summer holidays, we hope you will make the most of the remaining few weeks, and keep on spreading the wonderful ICS spirit by making great memories together.



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**Potential, Passion, Responsibility**

● **45**



# inter-community school zurich

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