

☀ Summer 2026

DragonNews

China Trips p.32

Upper School take their learning on the road

Walking a Mile in their Shoes p.82

Grade 4's Living Museum

The Meaning of Growth p.117

A Grade 8's inspiring journey at HIS

Congratulations Class of 2026!





We are

HIS

Community

Diversity

Opportunity

Engagement

Excellence

Purpose

Contents

006	Welcome
06	From the Superintendent
08	Important Contacts
010	Community
11	Events Roundup
32	China Trips
54	Harvesting Knowledge
56	Growing Together
58	The Start of Summer
60	Light Beyond Vision
64	Dragon Scales
70	Learning for a Sustainable Future
078	Lower School
79	Learning to be Social
82	Walking a Mile in Their Shoes
88	Tired Brains, Busy Bodies
91	Young Voices for Change
094	Upper School
95	Singing in Singapore
99	Humans and Nature
102	A Year of Firsts
104	Community Focus
107	Personal Achievement
110	Bright Young Minds
114	Taking Intellectual Risks
117	The True Meaning of Growth
120	Sports
121	Building a Culture of Care
124	Essentials
124	Dragon Fun
125	Class of 2026
126	Connect with Us
127	School Calendar 2026-2027



20 International Day



32 China Trips



82 Walking a Mile in Their Shoes

In Early Childhood Education at HIS, we help prepare young minds for their bright future

Follow us on WeChat to discover why HIS is ranked the best international school in Hangzhou and Zhejiang



Welcome from the Superintendent

Dear HIS Community and Friends,

As we close the 2025–26 school year, we reflect on another remarkable chapter in the HIS journey. From our beginnings in 2002 with just nine students, HIS has grown into a dynamic international community of more than 1,025 learners representing over 55 nationalities. Next year marks our 25th year in Hangzhou, a milestone that highlights our enduring commitment to excellence, the provision of world-class educational opportunities, the strength of our supportive international community, and the vibrant spirit of our Golden Dragons. Celebrations are already being planned to honor this anniversary, and we look forward to commemorating it together. In this edition of DragonNews, we focus on “Reflections” of the year that has just passed.

This year has been filled with achievements across academics, arts, and athletics. Our students excelled in the IB PYP Exhibition, TOK presentations, Community and Personal Projects, demonstrating inquiry, creativity, and global awareness. Theater productions such as Grease, The Yellow Boat, and Finding Nemo Jr. brought artistry and storytelling to life, while the introduction of the Making Music Festival expanded opportunities for interschool collaboration and performance. Visual arts exhibitions and Lower School inquiry units reminded us that every child is an innovator, creator, and leader in the making.

On the playing fields and in competitions, Dragons continued to shine. Dragon swimmers earned personal bests and league records, debaters tackled global issues and received Best Delegate and Best Delegation awards at West Lake MUN, Harvard Model Congress, and other conferences, while athletics broadened with new pathways for Lower and Middle School sports. Robotics, STEM innovation, the Rocketry Club, and service projects further showcased the diverse talents and interests of our students. HIS now offers more than 100 co-curricular activities, clubs, and sports. These enrichment opportunities and accomplishments reinforce why HIS continues to be rated the number one school in Hangzhou and among the top schools in East Asia.

Equally inspiring were the events that brought our community together: International Day, Spooktacular, the PAFA Winter Fair, and the Dragon Run for charity. Families united in support of meaningful causes, diverse cultures were celebrated side by side, and students learned that service and leadership go hand in hand. Our parents’ (and grandparents!) enthusiastic support, from cheering at athletic events to

contributing to PAFA initiatives, has strengthened our learning environment and enriched our school culture.

As Superintendent, I extend my deepest gratitude to our faculty for their dedication, our parents for their trust, and our students for their energy and vision. HIS believes that every child should be included, challenged, and successful. Looking ahead, HIS will continue to expand opportunities, strengthen pathways to top universities worldwide, and nurture the values that make our graduates stand out: integrity, empathy, scholarship, and global competence.

Before we take a break for the summer, I want to congratulate all our graduating seniors of the Class of 2026 with best wishes, great happiness, and success in your next chapter of life. I also want to thank our dedicated teachers, parents, and students for the many wonderful memories we created together. No doubt some of you will be leaving us at the end of this year. I wish you every success and hope you will find your new home as equally warm and caring as HIS. Remember: Once a Dragon, Always a Dragon! For those returning, we look forward to welcoming you back in August for another great year, our 25th year in Hangzhou!

As always... GoooOOO Dragons!!!



Jeffrey R. Stubbs
Superintendent



Important Contacts

Jeffry Stubbs
Superintendent
jeffrystubbs@hisdragons.org.cn

Jeff Hart
Lower School Principal
jeffhart@hisdragons.org.cn

Jessica Johnson
Lower School Vice-Principal and PYP Coordinator
jessicajohnson@hisdragons.org.cn

Rene Smal
Lower School Vice-Principal and ECE Coordinator
renesmal@hisdragons.org.cn

Andrea Stubbs
Director of Admissions and Community Relations
andreasstubbs@hisdragons.org.cn

Filipe Nogueira
Director of Athletics and Activities
filipenogueira@hisdragons.org.cn

Ira Canada
Upper School Counselor
iracanada@hisdragons.org.cn

Ruth Viader
Lower School Counselor
ruthviader@hisdragons.org.cn

Natalio Liares
Aquatics Coordinator
natalioliares@hisdragons.org.cn

Vivian Wang
Upper School Secretary
vivianwang@hisdragons.org.cn

Lily Fan
ECE Secretary
lilyfan@hisdragons.org.cn

Aaron Ayers
Deputy Superintendent
aaronayers@hisdragons.org.cn

Cynthia Wissman
Upper School Principal
cynthiawissman@hisdragons.org.cn

Jason Benton
Upper School Vice-Principal and DP Coordinator
jasonbenton@hisdragons.org.cn

Dave Gates
Upper School Vice-Principal and MYP Coordinator
davegates@hisdragons.org.cn

Danie de Beer
Director of Technology
daniedebeer@hisdragons.org.cn

Simon Ostheimer
MarCom Manager
simonostheimer@hisdragons.org.cn

Emily Blalock
Head of Guidance and University Counseling
emilyblalock@hisdragons.org.cn

Mary Powers
Lower School Counselor
marypowers@hisdragons.org.cn

Cheryl Philp
Aquatics Coordinator
cherylphilp@hisdragons.org.cn

Flora Li
Lower School Secretary
floral@hisdragons.org.cn

Tracy Zhu
Transportation
tracyzhu@hisdragons.org.cn

HIS Main Campus



**In High School at HIS,
we guide the talented
next generation to become
their best selves**

*Follow us on WeChat to
discover why HIS is ranked
the best international school
in Hangzhou and Zhejiang*



COMMUNITY



Babel Film Workshop in Hong Kong

March saw 17 dedicated HIS students visit Babel Film Workshop's 'Hollywood Hong Kong' program, which brings together students to workshop short films. Congratulations to the student filmmakers on their work over three intensive days running around the city, with some of the films later premiering at the Hangzhou Student Film Festival.



Arts Curriculum Night

At the Arts Curriculum Night we welcomed members of our community to get a firsthand experience on what it's like to be involved in the arts at HIS, whether it be visual arts, film, dance, orchestra, band, choir, or music production. Parents were able to participate in lessons, see how students learn, and watch performances from the Kindergarten and Grade 3 and 4 CCA students.



Performance of Hercules

The Lower School Play CCA put on the amazing show Hercules to a rapt audience in the Black Box. The show was a wonderful introduction into theater and the arts, and it gave our younger students the opportunity to perform for our parents, students, and the wider community.



ECE Open Day

Our second ECE Open Day this year was a blast. Nearly 300 parents and children from 90 families joined us. They toured the campus with our teachers and principals, learned about our admissions process, and discovered the wonderful early learning journey from Early Years through Kindergarten at HIS.



HABS Model United Nations in London

In April, a dozen HIS students headed to the United Kingdom to attend HabsMUN. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for HIS students to challenge themselves in a new and competitive environment, engaging with experienced MUN participants from around the world while also taking part in a range of cultural activities in London. Through the experience, HIS students developed key skills in public speaking, critical thinking, collaboration, and global awareness.



DoE International Award Hike

Our Duke of Edinburgh's International Award students went hiking in the wild as they worked together to put their orienteering, camping and survival skills to the test. It was a great experience, and an adventure to remember for all of the students involved.



ACAMIS Student Leadership Conference in Changshu

This year's ACAMIS Student Leadership Conference focused on the theme "Social Innovation: A Change-Making Approach," a framework that challenges students to move beyond ideas and into meaningful action. For student leaders from HIS, that challenge took them 200 kilometers north to UWC Changshu. Throughout the day, student leaders engaged in collaborative workshops, peer feedback sessions, and structured questioning designed to sharpen both their ideas and their leadership skills.



AMIS Choir Trip to Singapore

Our students traveled to Singapore to participate in the AMIS Asian Middle School Honor Choir Festival hosted at the Canadian International School Singapore. The first time ever our Middle School choir students had attended an international festival, our students experienced an entertaining and educational workshop, working with world-renowned choral leaders and students from other international schools, while also getting a chance to explore some of Singapore.



Universities Exhibition

In April, HIS hosted an international University Exhibition to give students an opportunity to meet with more than 10 famous global universities, including Arizona State University, City St. George University of London, and Queen's University Belfast. It was a perfect place for our students to think about their future and hear from the representatives.



Horizon Rocket Club Blasts Off!

At the first ever rocket launch from HIS, student members of the newly formed Horizon Rocket Club successfully fired a rocket into the skies, the result of much hard work and learning along the way. The launch and landing were a complete success, and we look forward to many more future launches from our campus.



Grade 4's Living Museum

In May our Grade 4 students brought history to life at their 'Living Museum' on migration, where they shared their detailed projects on large migrations throughout history. By bringing these projects to life they were able to display the amount of effort and time they put into to learning about these significant moments in history. Great job Grade 4!



Andy Darcy Theo – Author Visit

In April we welcomed famous British author Andy Darcy Theo, writer of bestselling YA book 'The Light That Blinds Us' to meet with Upper School students, where he presented to them about his writing process, inspiration, and answered questions about his hit book series. It was a fantastic experience for our students to learn more about being an author.



Grade 8 Community Project Exhibition

Our Grade 8 students shone at the Community Project Exhibition, with a variety of projects on show. Some visited West Lake, educating tourists on recycling and environmental care, while others mentored young learners, sharing strong study values and global cultures. We're incredibly proud of their teamwork, passion, and effort to raise awareness in our community.



Upper School Music Night

In mid-May, HIS Upper School students held a fantastic evening of musical performances, with the concert a powerful demonstration of student growth, collaboration, and artistic confidence. The progression across grade levels was unmistakable, and the joy our students brought to their music-making was felt throughout the theater.

Grade 5 PYP Exhibition

Grade 5 absolutely excelled at their PYP Exhibition in May. From passionate inquiries to innovative solutions, they showcased incredible learning, collaboration, and agency. Their teachers, parents and the wider community are proud of their hard work and dedication to this culmination of their PYP journey



Visit by British Author Clare Elsom

We were incredibly lucky to have British author and illustrator Clare Elsom visit HIS in April to work with our Lower School students. They were able to hear firsthand about what it's like to be an author and illustrator, see her draw firsthand, and even designed and drew a character with her. A highly valuable and creative experience for our students.



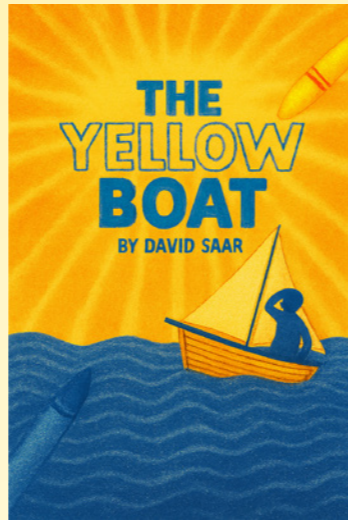
Making Music Festival

The first ever ACAMIS Making Music Festival at HIS was a complete success, uniting talented young musicians from all across China. We were thrilled to host students and teachers from three international schools, collaborating with our HIS musicians to form amazing ensembles. Filled with creativity, teamwork, and pure musical joy, this event truly celebrated the power of young artists coming together.



Upper School Play

In April, HIS presented the story of 'The Yellow Boat', a glorious affirmation of a child's life and the strength and courage of all children. This show was put on by a talented cast of 10 students, eight support crew students, and core faculty. Over two incredible evenings of performances, the intimate audience was treated to an emotionally powerful play that not only tugged at the heartstrings but gave lasting food for thought about how we choose to think of and treat each other. A huge congratulations to everyone involved.



International Day

Over a sunny weekend in late April, we celebrated our annual International Day at HIS. We honored over 50 nationalities, embracing vibrant traditions, unique food, and rich heritage. Our HIS family and friends gathered to connect, share, and celebrate the beauty of cultural diversity. As always, it was a joyful highlight of our school year.



International Day



IBDP Visual Arts Exhibition



Four extremely talented DP Art students showcased their unique perspectives on a range of thought-provoking themes from cultural identity, human nature and morality, to impermanence and decay. A variety of media and art-making forms was on display, including sculpture, painting, photography, and fashion.



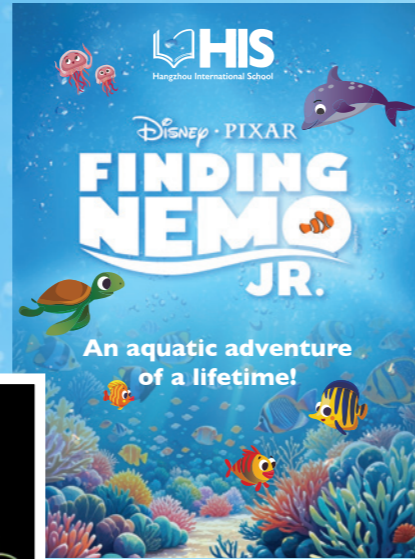
Film Festival

Congratulations to our young and aspiring filmmakers who showcased their work at the 2026 Hangzhou Student Film Festival in April, which welcomed student creators from international schools in Hangzhou and Nanjing. With the theme 'Stories Shape Perception' and a record number of submissions, we celebrated original films, awarded directing, performance, and technical honors, recognized guest school films, and welcomed three industry judges to celebrate our students' amazing talent. Bravo!



Lower School Musical

Congratulations to our talented Lower School students and staff on a colorful and vibrant production of Finding Nemo Jr. Over two evenings in the theater, our young performers brought an underwater world to life with confidence, creativity, and heart.



PAFA Events



PAFA Fitness



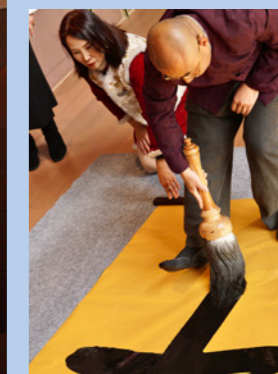
PAFA Kitchen



PAFA Lunch



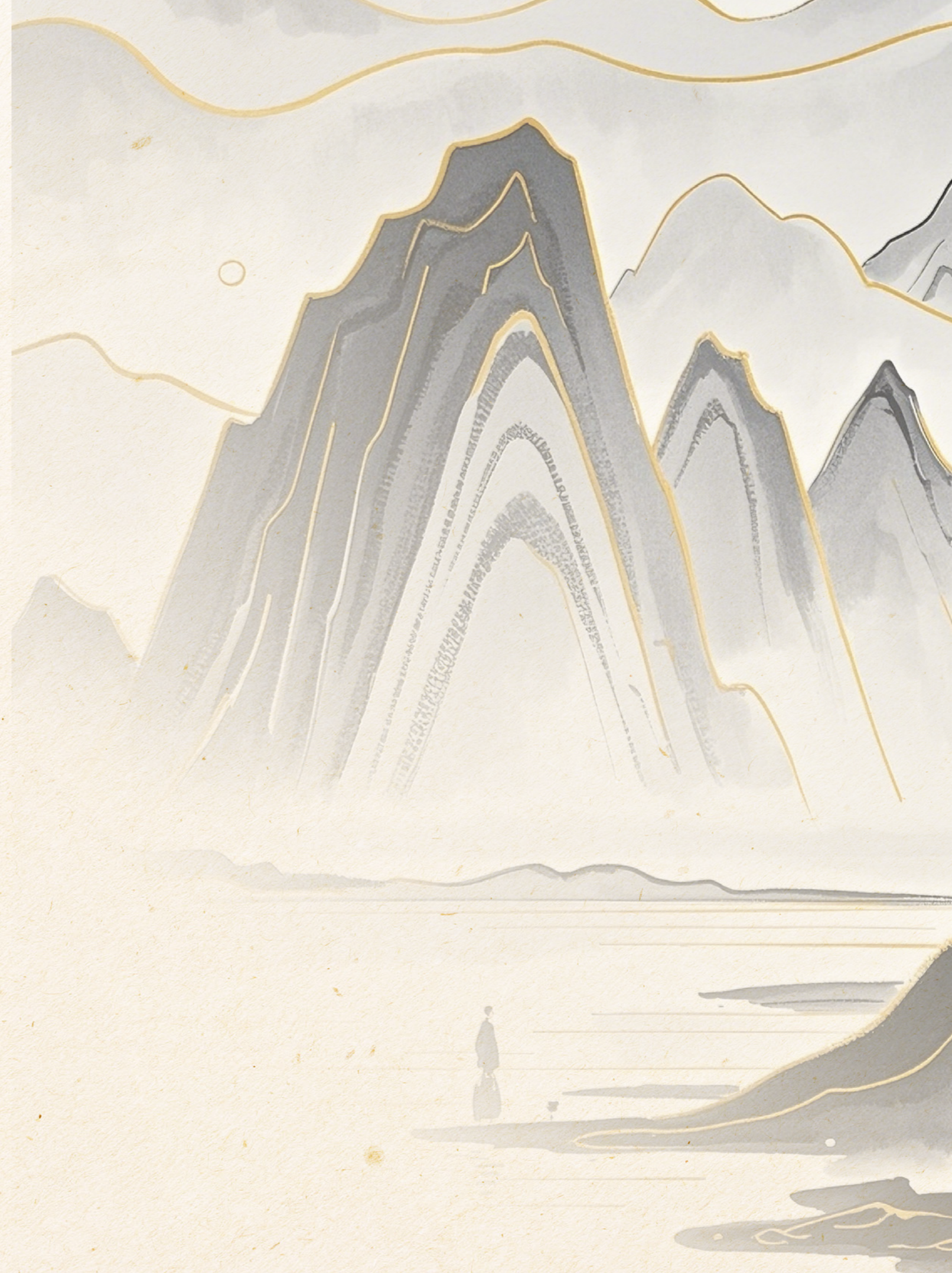
PAFA Book Club





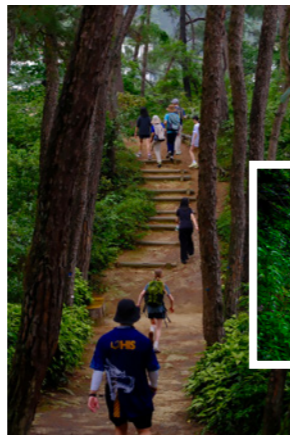
HANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL CHINA TRIPS

Hangzhou International School (HIS) annual China Trips are much more than a journey – they’re a true “week without walls,” where learning comes alive beyond the classroom. From the natural beauty of Qiandaohu (Grade 6) to the karst landscapes of Yangshuo (G7), the coastal culture of Xiamen (G8), the historic charm of Lijiang (G9), and the vast grasslands of Inner Mongolia (G10), each experience immerses students in the richness of China. Through service, adventure, and cultural connection, students deepen their understanding of our host country while building resilience, empathy, and a global mindset – proving that the most powerful learning happens far beyond four walls.



G6 Journey to Qiandaohu





G7 Adventure in Yangshuo





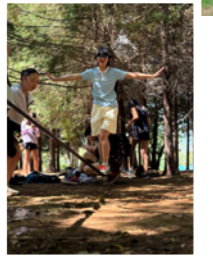
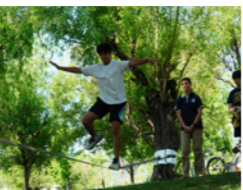
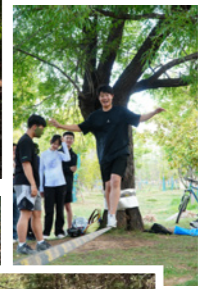
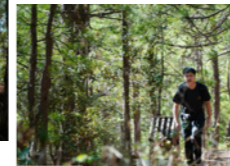
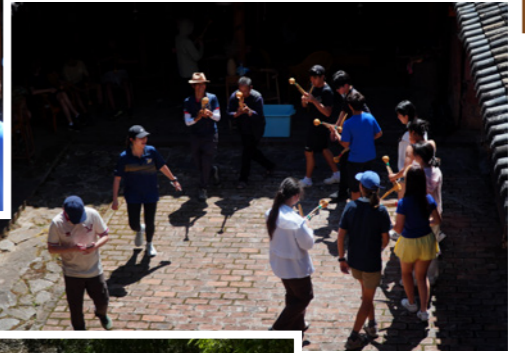
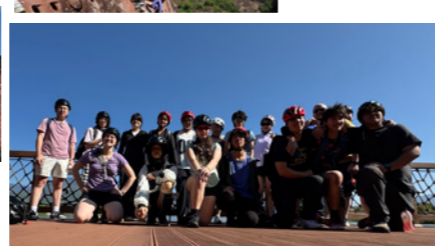
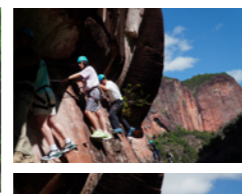
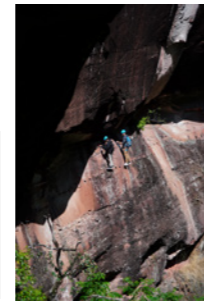
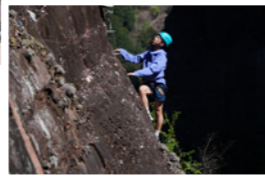
G8 Fujian Experience





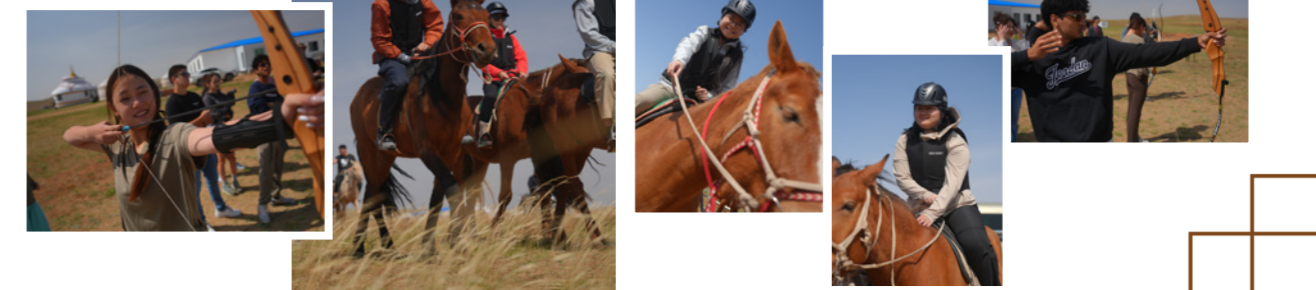
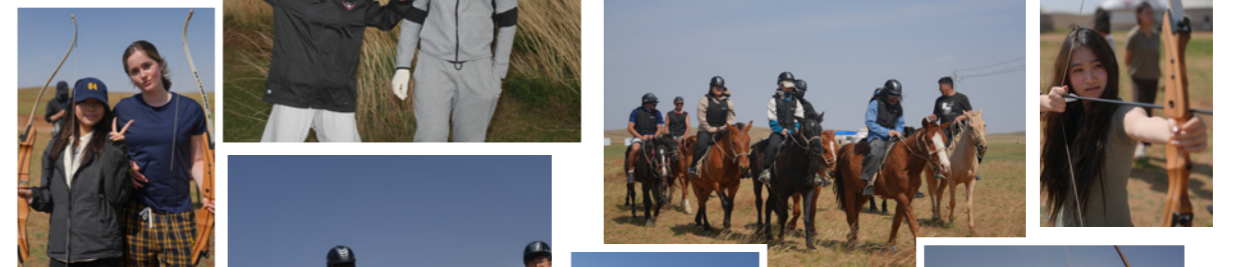
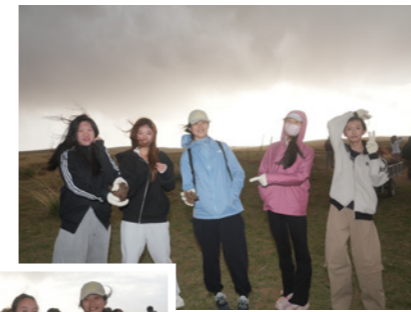
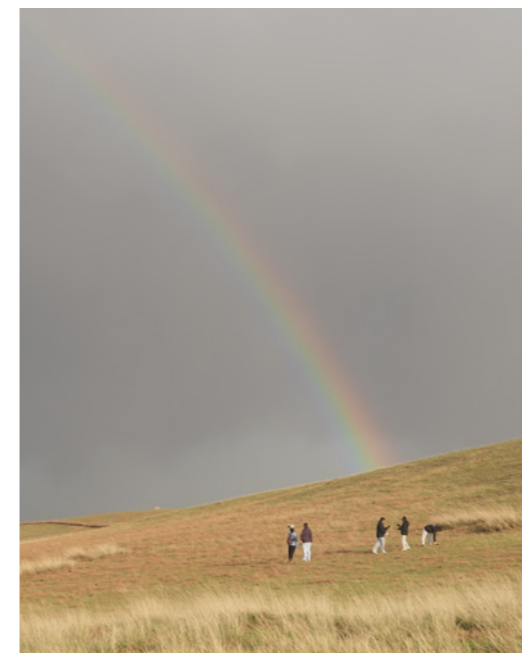
G9 Lijiang Discovery





G10 Explore Inner Mongolia





Harvesting Knowledge

By Lily Zhou

Mandarin Teacher

By Vivian Zhang

Schoolwide Mandarin Coordinator

A visit to Hangzhou's ancient tea plantations provides pleasant pause for reflection



As famed Tang poet Du Mu wrote in his poem, “During Qingming the rain falls in drizzle.”

Qingming is both an important solar term in China and the prime season for harvesting Longjing tea. Living in Hangzhou – home to some of the nation’s most celebrated tea gardens – every year the HIS community has a unique opportunity to engage with a living cultural tradition.

On a sunny Sunday in late March, just before the Qingming festival, teachers and family members from Hangzhou International School (HIS) visited the Shifeng Longjing tea base in Wengjia Village, where they connected with the people, processes, and philosophy behind Longjing tea.



The village is home to Maggie (Hongmin) Yang, a fifth generation tea planter in Longjing, whose family continues to preserve both the ancient technique and cultural meaning.

The day combined hands on practice with reflective learning. Participants began by handwriting blessings for 2026, delicately hung beneath a blooming cherry tree – an act that combined personal reflection with communal celebration.

In bright sunlight and with a gentle breeze, participants donned baskets and carefully hand picked tender Longjing tea shoots on the terraces, learning the respectful movements and attention to detail that makes the Longjing variety so highly prized.



Returning to Maggie’s home, the group observed each step of production – withering, pan firing, shaping, and drying – gaining in-depth knowledge about how subtle variations in heat and timing produce Longjing tea’s celebrated texture and aroma.

More than just technique, the trip emphasized tea philosophy and cultural awareness. Wearing traditional Chinese dress, participants practiced the tea ceremony and discussed tea’s role in Chinese thought as a reflection of philosophy – its links to harmony, mindfulness, hospitality, peace, and ethical living.



Tea culture teaches respect for nature’s cycles, patience in craftsmanship, and humility in consumption. These values resonate with HIS’s educational goals: nurturing global citizens who appreciate cultural depth, and practice thoughtful reflection and observation.


The tea experience fostered deeper cultural literacy: participants left not only with practical skills and sensory memories, but with a contextual understanding of how tea carries social, historical, and philosophical meaning.

This Longjing cultural trip models how HIS can integrate experiential learning, cultural stewardship, and cross cultural dialogue.

“Tea culture teaches respect for nature’s cycles and patience in craftsmanship”



By making friends through tea, sharing knowledge, and reflecting on tea’s philosophical roots, our community both preserves a regional heritage and opens pathways for intercultural appreciation.

We invite students, families, and colleagues to join future trips to Hangzhou’s famed tea fields, where they can taste, learn, and explore the quiet wisdom steeped in every cup. 

Growing Together

By Suresh Dass
Learning Support Teacher



How a new student mentoring program demonstrated the strength of our community



Mentoring is far more than a simple transfer of knowledge; it is a delicate architecture of trust where experience meets curiosity.

This year, our Grade 11 students stepped up to the plate, collaborating with the counseling team to guide their middle school peers through the labyrinth of upper school life. This initiative connects experienced student-mentors with students seeking advice in their academic and personal development.

What began as a formal program quickly blossomed into a vibrant “educative mentoring” experience – a journey where both mentor and mentee grow in tandem, forging bonds that resonated well beyond the classroom.

“It’s about being that reliable presence someone can lean on”



Jed Y: A Safe Harbor

“Mentoring has provided a unique space to connect with a student who might be navigating a tough patch. We’ve built a relationship rooted in comfort, where my mentee feels safe escaping the pressures of school life to talk to someone who truly understands.”

“Whether we’re discussing academic struggles or just checking in on life, our bond has grown into a strong support system. It’s about being that reliable presence someone can lean on.”

Mindy K: Bridging the Gap Through Play

“Stepping into the world of lower school mentoring for the first time, I quickly realized how profound these small moments can be.”

“Working with two energetic 4th grade girls, I’ve found that games like cup-stacking, cards, and drawing are more than just hobbies – they are the building blocks of a friendship.”

“I was surprised by how much I enjoyed taking the lead; seeing them engage so enthusiastically and follow my guidance has been incredibly rewarding. I’m so grateful to the counseling team for creating this opportunity, and I’m committed to making every session the highlight of their week!”

Tanmay G: Finding a Breath of Fresh Air


“I was hesitant at first. After the initial pitch in advisory, I wasn’t sure if mentoring was for me, but I’m so glad I gave it a go. The beauty of the program is its simplicity: every two weeks, we step away from the intensity of the DP grind to simply ‘be’ with our buddies.”

“While the organized activities are great, it’s the spontaneous conversations that I value most. Listening to my buddy’s rambles and curious questions is genuinely refreshing. For me, these sessions have become a vital way to relax and reconnect in a lighthearted, easy environment.”

Diego C: Cultivating the Next Generation

“Many students view high school as a sprint toward a diploma, often overlooking the community we leave behind. I joined the program because I wanted to leave a lasting mark.”

“Watching my mentee transform from a reserved, hesitant student into someone who voices his opinions with confidence has been incredibly rewarding. Drawing on my seven years at HIS, I’ve found a deep sense of fulfillment in guiding the future of our school and feeling truly woven into the HIS community.”

Whether through shared laughter or quiet guidance, these Grade 11 mentors are proving that at HIS, we don’t just attend school together – we grow together. 



The Start of Summer

By Lily Zhou
Mandarin Teacher



Longyin Club initiative brings traditional Chinese culture to some of our youngest students

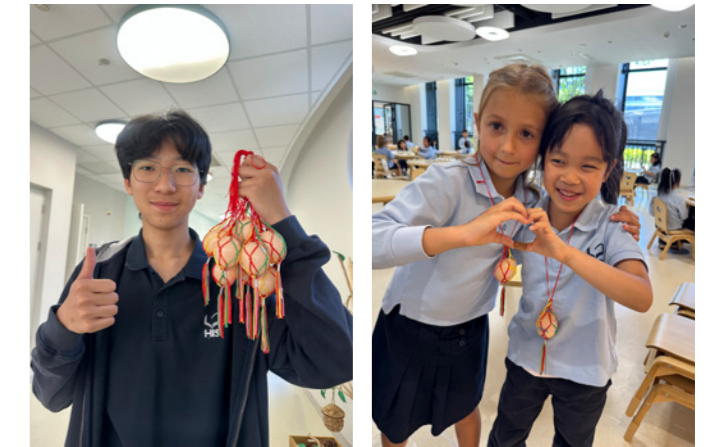


The Longyin Club is a student-led group at HIS that celebrates the remarkable culture of our host country. Over the past year, we have organized many engaging activities for our community, including the Mid-Autumn Moon Gazing Festival and the Chinese New Year Temple Fair.

In China, May 5th marks Li Xia, the solar term that signifies the arrival of summer. It is traditionally celebrated through cultural activities, and this year the Longyin Club organized a special event to bring these meaningful experiences to our ECE (Early Childhood Education) students.




“Everyone grew together through participation and shared enjoyment”



First, our high school student leaders introduced the kindergarten children to the origins and traditional customs of the Li Xia solar term, helping them develop a deeper understanding of the cultural background associated with this major seasonal milestone.

Afterwards, the children held their handmade Li Xia eggs and enthusiastically took part in a fun egg-and-spoon game. The entire event was filled with laughter and happiness, and it concluded successfully in a warm and cheerful atmosphere.

Next, each kindergarten class had the opportunity to express their creativity by coloring eggs in their own unique ways, highlighting both the charm of traditional culture and the joy of childhood artistry.

During this event, our high school student leaders gained valuable experience, while the kindergarten children gained new knowledge and hands-on experiences. Everyone grew together through participation and shared enjoyment. We look forward to organising many more events. 



Light Beyond Vision

By Adela C, Joy Z and Yu-Chen W

Grade 11 students

The story behind an HIS student initiative to help those with visual impairments



“We believe even a small voice can bring warmth”



Sometimes, we don't realize how important our senses are until we imagine what life would be like without them.

For people with visual impairments, experiencing the world can be more challenging. That's why we created "Voice Atlas 听墨书斋", to bring warmth, knowledge, and hope through our voices.

As HIS student leaders, we believe that helping people in need is meaningful and can help make the world a better place as global citizens.

From CAS Project to CCA

Before starting the CCA, we completed a two-month CAS Project. In this project, our role was to help with communication between two partner schools.

We worked with a club from Hangzhou No. 14 Middle School, so we needed to communicate between their team and ours.

From choosing a partner school and discussing the cooperation, to deciding on the topic, planning tasks, and keeping both sides on track, we improved our teamwork and communication skills.

Through this process, we gradually became more responsible. For example, we helped organize tasks for both teams and followed up on the project progress. We also needed to communicate with different people and adjust plans when unexpected situations happened.

These experiences strengthened our leadership and organizational skills and taught us how to coordinate people and keep the project running smoothly. Overall, this experience helped us grow both personally and as team members.

Although the CAS Project ended, we still wanted to continue this work and bring warmth and support to more people. So, we decided to start our own CCA together with other students who shared similar goals.

In October 2025 we came up with the idea of creating our own CCA to continue helping people with visual impairments. After several weeks of planning and preparation, our CCA "Voice Atlas" ("听墨书斋") officially started on 11 November. We chose this name because we wanted to share warmth, knowledge, and hope through the power of voices.

Starting this CCA was a big challenge for us. It was a new club, so we needed to build everything from scratch.

Before, we only joined clubs that were already set up, so we didn't realize how challenging it could be. The process was harder than we expected.

We needed to communicate with teachers and brainstorm about how to make the club more interesting in order to attract more students and run it successfully.

Building Our CCA

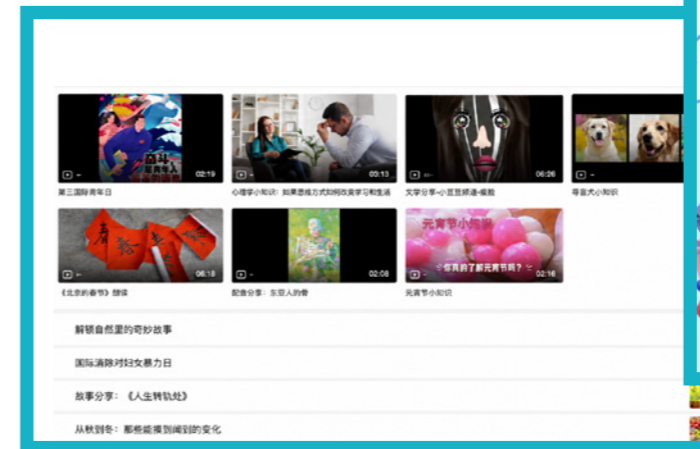
Voice Atlas operates with a clear and steady workflow. For example, members who are responsible for content creation and audio recording complete and submit their work every week by Saturday.

Our video production team then creates videos based on the audio materials, finally, other team members take charge of content review, account management and the official uploading on BiliBili.

We started completely from scratch and explored step by step. At the beginning, we only uploaded simple audio recordings on BiliBili because we had very little experience with video production. However, the results were not as successful as we hoped.

After spending some time learning how to use BiliBili as content creators and practicing video editing, we gradually moved from simple audio recordings to posts with pictures and text, and finally to fully edited videos.

Our video production skills gradually improved and our presentations became more professional and attractive with each attempt.





“To bring warmth, knowledge, and hope through our voices”

Through continuous practice, we made clear progress in both teamwork and content diversity. Our content gradually expanded from story dubbing to literary sharing, popular science, psychology knowledge, and even interviews.

During this process, members learned from each other, communicated actively, and gained new ideas and inspiration through discussion and cooperation.

In the future, we will continue to improve and optimize our video production and uploading process to make our work more professional and sustainable. We learned a lot about account management, communication, and script writing.

Looking back, we grew from a team who knew almost nothing about video production into people who can now independently manage and develop an online account.

Growing Recognition

Our CCA has developed steadily over the past few months.

During the Winter Fair, we set up a booth to introduce our project and explain how we support people with visual impairments. We prepared posters and audio recordings to encourage more people to learn about our CCA and raise awareness about helping people with disabilities.

Although the results were not perfect, it was still a meaningful experience because more people got to know about our project and understand our goals.


Through this activity, we also improved our communication skills and became more confident when introducing our ideas to others.

For us, helping people with visual impairments is something we truly want to do. We are very glad we joined this initiative because it allows us to help more people in need. We also hope that our efforts can bring warmth and support to others.

We would like to welcome more students to join us in the future. Even a small action or contribution can make a positive difference in the community.

Looking to the Future

Looking ahead, we will visit Yang Lingzi School, a school for students with visual impairments. This will give us a chance to step into their world, understand their needs and find better ways to support them.

We believe even a small voice can bring warmth. If you also want to help others through your voice, you are always welcome to join us. 

Thank you to Ms Lexie Liu, Ms Lily Zhou, and Ms Vivian Zhang for their support with this project.

DRAGON NEWS

WE WANT YOU!

TO WRITE FOR US

DRAGON NEWS
CELEBRATES THE
BEST OF HIS



AND WE WANT TO SHARE
YOUR STORIES!

SEND YOUR IDEA TO:
HISMARKETING@HISDRAGONS.ORG.CN

Dragon Scales

What color are YOUR scales today?

By Lisa Kerry, Design & Communication Specialist
With special contribution from Jessica Johnson, Lower School Vice Principal and PYP Coordinator

At Hangzhou International School, learning is about more than academics. It is also about developing character, communication, self-awareness, and the skills students need to grow within a global community. This year, the Lower School introduced a new initiative designed to help students recognize, celebrate, and talk about these important qualities in visible and meaningful ways: Dragon Scales.

The Dragon Scales initiative transforms the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile Attributes and Approaches to Learning into a colorful recognition system for Early Childhood Education and Lower School students. The initiative emerged through a collaborative effort between the Lower School and MarCom teams, with a shared goal of helping students build a stronger connection to the language of learning used throughout the IB Primary Years Programme.



Displayed in classrooms as large magnets alongside matching stickers, the Dragon Scales support both recognition and conversation. When students demonstrate one of the attributes or skills, they may receive a sticker featuring the phrase: "Ask me how." Rather than focusing only on praise, the initiative encourages reflection and student voice. Students are invited to explain how they demonstrated qualities such as being principled, courageous, caring, reflective, or skilled in communication and self-management.

The guiding question behind the campaign — "What color are YOUR scales today?" — encourages students to think intentionally about the choices they make throughout the day and the qualities they bring into their classrooms and community.

Jessica Johnson, Lower School Vice Principal and PYP Coordinator, explained that the goal was to make the Learner Profile Attributes and ATL skills more visible, meaningful, and accessible for students across all age levels. The initiative encourages students not only to recognize these qualities in others, but also to begin identifying them within themselves.

Teachers are already noticing meaningful changes in how students talk about their growth and behavior.

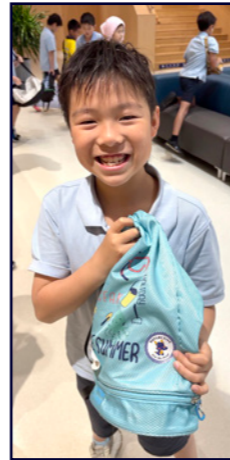
Ask me how!

The initiative includes fifteen unique Dragon Scale designs representing the ten IB Learner Profile Attributes and five Approaches to Learning skills. Each scale was designed to visually connect with the existing Lower School environmental graphics, helping strengthen the connection between the school environment and its culture of learning.





Teachers across the Lower School are also beginning to personalize the initiative in different ways within their own classrooms. Some use Dragon Scales as quick moments of encouragement and recognition, while others are connecting them to deeper reflection, projects, presentations, collaboration, and personal growth.



Lower School PE teacher Rachel Ford shared how the initiative helped reinforce empathy and inclusion during class. After noticing another student practicing alone, one student independently invited them to join her and a friend so they would feel included and supported. Rachel explained that she wanted to recognize and celebrate this caring action by awarding the student a Dragon Scale.



Emma John reflected, “Within Early Years, each Dragon scale helps our children to make meaningful connections between the words that we value and their actions.”

Our students are increasingly using the learner’s profile language, as well as demonstrating these attributes independently.

Maria Dutari shared, “Our students are increasingly using the learner’s profile language, as well as demonstrating these attributes independently.” Often times, they can be found being principled, caring, and great communicators. At first, they would just show their achievements, but now they can articulate the reason for receiving their ‘scales,’ becoming more aware of their own actions. “Hooray for scales!”

Teachers have also noticed students becoming more aware of the meaning behind the Learner Profile Attributes and ATL skills themselves. Matt Ruiz reflected that some students who had previously struggled with behavior and understanding the learner profiles are now taking greater ownership of their actions. Through the Dragon Scales system, students became more confident explaining why they received recognition and began demonstrating these positive behaviors more independently after having opportunities to reflect on what those attributes and skills look like in practice.

“Courage isn’t about never struggling—it’s about asking for help and keeping going anyway.”

Grade-level teacher Joel Bastedo, for example, has expanded the initiative by writing personalized reflections for students that connect their actions and growth to specific Learner Profile Attributes and ATL skills. Through these written recognitions, students celebrate achievement while also understanding how they demonstrated qualities such as courage, communication, research, self-management, and caring within authentic learning experiences.

One reflection shared with a student reads: “Courage isn’t about never struggling—it’s about asking for help and keeping going anyway.”



“Our students have become really articulate about their learning. When they earn a Dragon Scale, they don’t just say ‘I was kind’ — they explain exactly how they helped someone and why it mattered. It’s been one of the most rewarding parts of this system.”

- Jason Shapiro, Grade 1 Teacher

The visual identity for Dragon Scales was developed by Lisa Kerry, whose background includes both education and visual communication design. Before entering international education in 2011, Lisa worked professionally in graphic design and photography, favoring projects connected to sustainability, prevention, community art, and positive social impact. After thirteen years as a classroom teacher — primarily in Art & Design — she continues to enjoy projects that support teaching, learning, and student wellbeing through intentional design. As Lisa shared, “Design is my love language, and it’s projects like these that keep me inspired.”

Throughout the Lower School, Dragon Scales are already becoming part of the culture and language of the community. Students proudly share their scales with teachers, classmates, and families, while classrooms use the visuals as daily reminders of the values and skills that help shape compassionate, capable, and reflective learners.

From classroom walls to student conversations, the Dragon Scales initiative is helping create a shared language of learning across the Lower School community.

As the initiative continues to grow, it also stands as an example of collaboration, creativity, and intentional design in education.

As Jessica Johnson prepares for her next chapter, the Dragon Scales initiative will remain part of the learning culture she helped nurture — encouraging students to reflect, communicate, and proudly ask one another:

“What color are YOUR scales today?”

ATL Approaches to Learning



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

COMMUNICATION

Speak clearly • Listen actively • Share ideas respectfully



SOCIAL SKILLS

COLLABORATION

Work as a team • Respect others • Support group goals



SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS

ORGANIZATION

Be prepared • Be on time • Manage your belongings



AFFECTIVE SKILLS Stay positive • Stay calm • Be flexible



REFLECTION Think about your actions • Improve each day



RESEARCH SKILLS

INFORMATION & MEDIA LITERACY

Observe carefully • Use devices responsibly

Share information clearly



THINKING SKILLS

CRITICAL THINKING

Ask questions • Think deeply • Consider others



CREATIVE THINKING Try new ideas • Be open



TRANSFER Use learning in new situations • Adapt

IB Learner Profile Attributes



INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.



KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.



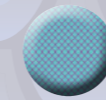
THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.



COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.



PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.



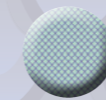
OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.



CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.



COURAGEOUS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.



BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives: intellectual, physical, and emotional to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.



REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Learning for a Sustainable Future: Earth Day, the UN Goals, and HIS Action

By Harper Girdner, PR & Communications Specialist
 Lisa Kerry, Design & Communication Specialist

Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd every year, as it gives awareness to the importance of the earth and the environment around us. Since it began in 1970, Earth Day has grown into a global movement that encourages individuals, schools, and communities to consider the impact we have on our planet and the actions we can take to support a more sustainable future.

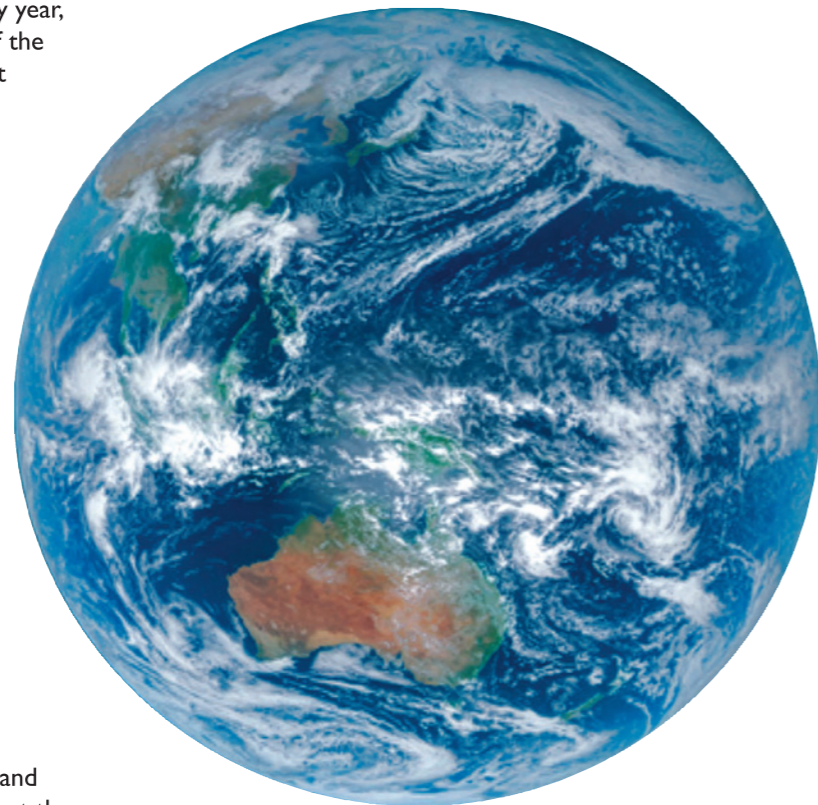
*8+ billion people.
 One planet.
 One shared future.*

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

To address these global challenges, the United Nations introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

Every sustainable development goal is linked, and one cannot exist without the other. This is what the purpose of the Sustainable Development Goals is. By bringing countries all together across the world, the SDGs help create specific measures we can all work towards, ranging from human development, like combating hunger and getting quality education, to the development of our earth, focusing on climate action, clean water, and clean energy. As the world is highly interconnected, by improving one goal we make it more possible to improve the others, leading to a more sustainable future. For now, we'll look into specific SDGs that are linked to Earth Day and learn what HIS is doing to contribute to sustainability.

“We recognize that social and economic development depends on the sustainable management of our planet’s natural resources. We are therefore determined to conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, freshwater resources, as well as forests, mountains and drylands and to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife.”



As an IB World School, HIS connects closely with these ideals by encouraging students to explore real-world issues through inquiry, research, and action. Through classroom learning, campus initiatives, and community projects, students develop a deeper understanding of sustainability and the role we all play in creating positive change.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY 	2 ZERO HUNGER 	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	15 LIFE ON LAND 	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 			

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

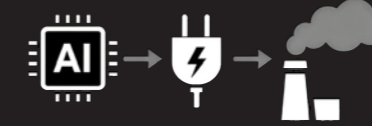
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



THE GOAL: To ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

We have long relied on fossil fuels, such as coal oil or gas, for electricity production, however this produces large amounts of greenhouse gases. This has many harmful impacts and affects everyone in the world. As well, as the world develops, the global use of electricity is also rising rapidly. This means, without electricity stability, we cannot continue to power our economies.

AI



Every Prompt Has a Footprint

- AI uses water for cooling — each prompt has a cost
- 10–50 text prompts ≈ 500ml of water
- Image-based AI: — up to several liters of water per image
- AI also uses large amounts of electricity
- Combine prompts and avoid repetition
- Think before you prompt



SUSTAINABLE LIVING

How Can We Live With Less?

- Global material use is rapidly increasing
- Reduce consumption
- Reuse materials
- Recycle correctly
- Choose durable products
- Small actions = big impact



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



THE GOAL: To make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

While levels of urban energy consumption and pollution are increasing, those who are causing the most impact are unlikely to be the ones feeling the strongest effects. Cities occupy just 3 percent of Earth's land, but account for 60-80% of energy consumption and 75% of carbon emissions. Places that are more vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters feel the effects of this consumption a lot more. It's increasingly important to be able to build up resilience so that everyone across the world has the same resources and ability to survive and thrive.

15 LIFE ON LAND



THE GOAL: To sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

Forests cover nearly 31% of our planet's land area, and home to more than 80% of all terrestrial species of animals, plants, and insects. Biodiversity is declining faster than any other time in human history. Around one fifth of the earth's land area has been degraded. This is also estimated to be affecting 3.2 billion people. That being said, deforestation is slowing, with the rate falling from 12 million hectares per year (2010-2015) to 10 million (2015-2020). This is slow progress, and much more will be needed to reach this development goal.

BIODEGRADATION

How Long Does Our Waste Last?



BANANA PEEL: 2–5 weeks



PAPER: 2–6 weeks



COTTON: ~5 months



PLASTIC BAG: 10–20 years

(in water 20+ years)



STEEL CAN: ~50 years



PLASTIC BOTTLE: ~450 years



GLASS: 1 million+ years





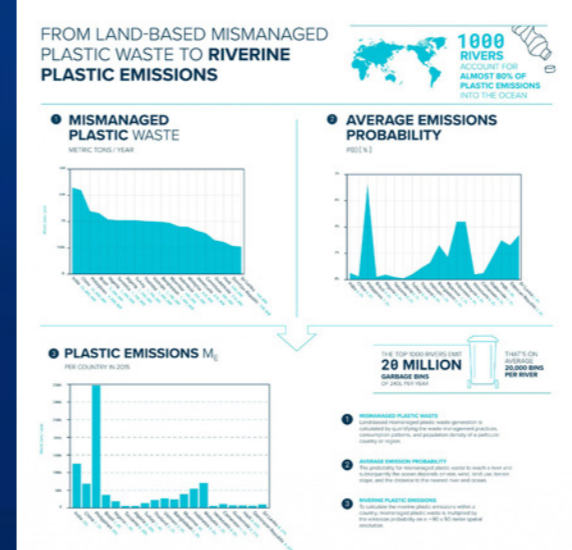
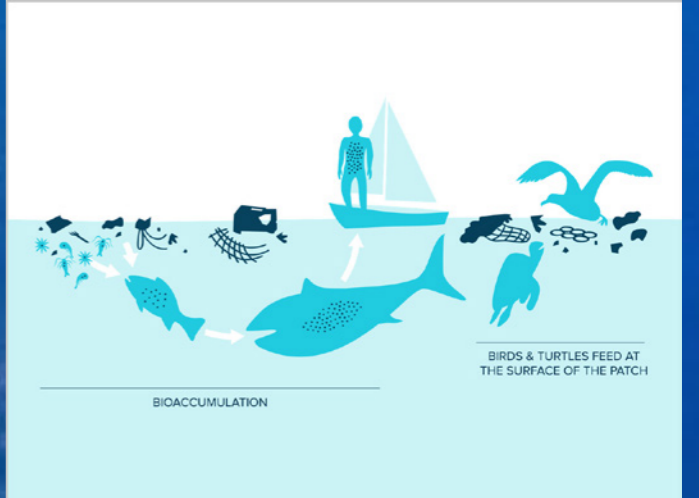
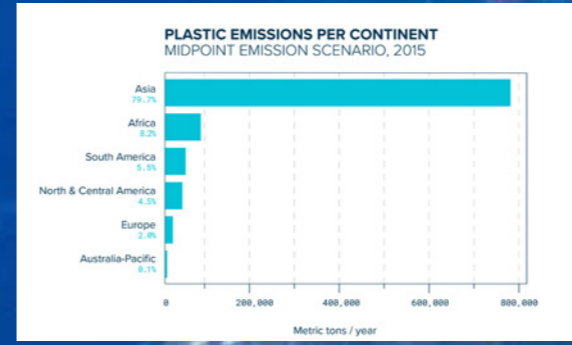
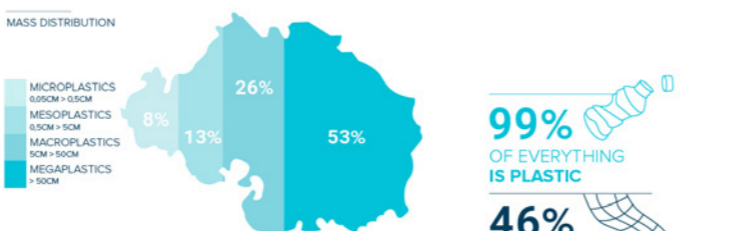
THE GOAL: To conserve and sustainably use the world's ocean, seas and marine resources.

Ocean heat is at record levels, causing widespread marine heatwaves, threatening its rich ecosystems and killing coral reefs around the world. Increasing levels of debris in the world's oceans are also having a major environmental and economic impact. Every year, an estimated 5 to 12 million metric tonnes of plastic enters the ocean, costing roughly \$13 billion per year – including clean-up costs and financial losses. About 89% of plastic litter found on the ocean floor are single-use items like plastic bags.

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is one example of where this plastic ends up. This is a large garbage patch in the Pacific Ocean that is estimated to be around triple the size of France or Thailand. The Ocean Cleanup project is working to combat this, however. Their research showed much of the garbage found in this patch was from Japan, China, the Korean Peninsula, and the USA. Their goal is to find ways to prevent this type of trash from reaching the ocean. Most plastic pollution in the ocean come from rivers, so they have built interceptors in some major rivers to try to stop this pollution. This has been very successful too, as they've intercepted 51,022,476 kg of trash since starting this project. The plastic they intercept then gets recycled. As this project continues to grow, more and more plastic pollution can be removed from the ocean.

This affects us all, even China is estimated to lose around \$5 billion per year from water pollution. As for the environment, around 900 species are impacted by plastic pollution. By working and supporting projects such as The Ocean Cleanup, you can make a difference in promoting sustainability in the ocean. On a personal level, you can pay attention to the amount of single use plastic you are consuming in your day to day and make a change yourself.

THE GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH IN NUMBERS





What is HIS doing?

There are many different efforts being made to help the environment at HIS, from things such as building structure, hands-on learning in the classroom, to community activities.



Design Features

Within the school building there are multiple ways that we are working towards sustainability.



The first is with solar panels on the roof of the school building, which helps us generate power that we can use at school every day.



Along with this, HIS also has a rain water collection system, which collects water when it rains that the landscapers can use to water the plants around campus.

Academics



In our DP course, Environmental System & Societies (ESS) students have been collecting samples of water from waterlogged area just next to our school, conducting water parameters tests and measuring things such as turbidity, dissolved oxygen levels, and pH. This is extremely useful as it helps track changes in our area. Along with this ESS students also used quadrat sampling to estimate population density in our area, which helps us look into the soil and diversity in species surrounding our school. All of this helps us understand the environment that we live and exist in every day.



Community



There are many ways that HIS involves the community with environmental sustainability, including research and out-of-school activities. In 2023, HIS performed a waste audit with other community members. Out of this they were able to target the best focuses for HIS, which were single-use plastics and recycling. Along with this, an initiative was launched by our school's marketing officer, Gabby He, who combined an outdoor hike and environmental action, forming the Eco Hike Squad. They went on a trail hike, cleaning up litter along the way. In one hike, they collected 3.4 kg of trash in two hours. It was a meaningful way to give back to the community.



What all of this goes to show is that progress is being made across the world along with your community to help make more sustainable choices for the future. And some of this progress is successful. There are many countries across the world committed to working on these sustainable goals, and there are many ways that you can get involved, big or small. Even by joining some of these initiatives mentioned you could contribute to environmental sustainability right at school. It's up to you to make these differences.

LITTERING & RESPONSIBILITY

乱扔垃圾与责任

Who Is Responsible for Our Waste?

谁应该为我们的垃圾负责?



- Litter enters rivers and oceans | 垃圾进入河流和海洋
- Harms wildlife | 危害野生动物
- Pollutes public spaces | 污染公共环境
- Sort, recycle, and dispose waste properly | 分类、回收并正确处理垃圾
- Everyone contributes to a cleaner environment | 人人为了更清洁的环境出一份力
- Small actions make big change | 小行动带来大改变

Littering harms the environment, public health, and the appearance of our communities. Waste left on the ground can enter rivers and oceans, affecting ecosystems and wildlife. While cleaners play an important role, maintaining clean spaces is a shared responsibility. Choosing not to litter—and taking action when we see waste—helps create a cleaner and more respectful community.



Check out The Ocean Cleanup Project at <https://theoceancleanup.com/>

Read more about the UN Sustainable Development Goals at <https://sdgs.un.org/>

SOURCES:

- United Nations. (n.d.). The 17 goals | sustainable development. United Nations.
- United Nations. (n.d.-a). Communications Materials - United Nations Sustainable Development. United Nations.
- The Ocean Cleanup. (n.d.). <https://theoceancleanup.com/milestones/>
- United Nations. (n.d.-b). SDG indicators. United Nations. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2025/Goal-15/>



LOWER SCHOOL

Learning to be Social

by Carolina Perdomo
Early Years Teacher

How we develop social-emotional learning and social skills in our youngest learners

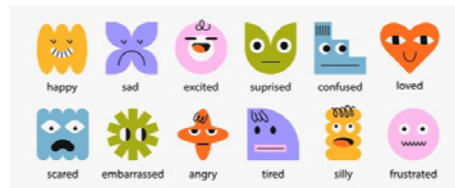
“Social-emotional learning of all our learners, no matter their age, is a shared responsibility”

At Hangzhou International School (HIS), students can join Early Years 1 (EY1) from the age of two, with most of our students turning three throughout the school year.

At this age, EY1 is often their first experience of regular socializing with other children and adults who are not family members.

Outside of school, some children may already have friendships, however, it is also common for adults to manage many conflicts before they occur, or to structure social interactions, so children do not have to navigate them independently.

As a result, many EY1 children begin school with social skills that are still developing, and one of our most important goals throughout the school year is to support social and emotional development.





How do we begin?

Social skills take time to develop, and practice is essential. School is a valuable setting for children to practice because it offers daily opportunities to interact, share, collaborate, and solve problems with other children. These interactions often happen spontaneously, and children may not yet understand how to respond in different situations.

To support children during this important stage, in EYI we hold weekly social-emotional sessions that cover a wide range of topics, such as emotions, class and school agreements, friendship, safe and appropriate use of the body, handling conflict, sharing, taking turns, and helping others.

We use a variety of strategies during these sessions. Children take part in group discussions, listen to books, and practice through adult modeling of social situations and conversations.

We may also use short educational resources to reinforce social and emotional learning, create class agreements together, and play games that encourage safe interaction.

What can families do if a conflict happens?

During this stage of development, children begin to absorb social-emotional learning, but they are not yet able to self-regulate independently. Conflicts are therefore normal and expected.

Interactions between young children are often fast, physical, and sometimes challenging. Importantly, these moments can be necessary for learning. Even when adults supervise closely, it is not possible to prevent every conflict. What we can do is respond promptly and help children learn the expected behavior.

At school, teachers intervene to support children in resolving the issue appropriately and, when needed, guide children in repairing relationships after a conflict.

If a teacher shares a message about a conflict, or if your child reports an incident at home, please do not worry, this is normal. If you have questions or would like more information, please reach out to your child's teacher. We are always willing to provide guidance and practical advice to support you at home.



When children need extra support

Some children experience difficulties more often than others. These children may benefit from additional support. At school, we provide help on a case-by-case basis.

Strategies may include social stories tailored to a child's needs, communication with families, individual or small-group social-emotional sessions, and consistent modeling of appropriate behavior.

Progress is not always immediate

Learning in EYI does not follow a straight line. Children need repetition, time, and opportunities to practice before new skills become part of their routine. It is important for families to be patient.


At the same time, patience does not mean lowering expectations. Clear boundaries and agreed expectations should remain consistent and be reinforced whenever needed.

How families can support at home

Families can strengthen children's social-emotional learning by reinforcing expectations at home, modeling safe behavior, and maintaining open communication with teachers.

If you are unsure how to respond to a particular situation, please speak with your child's teacher. Teachers will be happy to help and ensure there is alignment between home and school.



Social-emotional learning of all our learners, no matter their age, is a shared responsibility. With consistent support, practice, and patience, EYI children gradually build the skills they need to interact safely, respectfully, and confidently with others. 

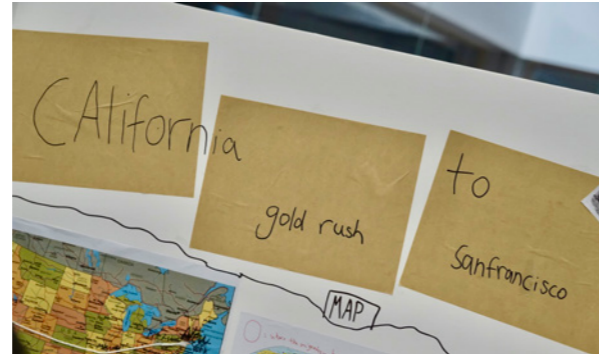
by Joel Bastedo
Grade 4 Teacher

Walking a Mile in Their Shoes

How a PYP Unit on Migration brought learning to Life in Grade 4

If you looked into a fourth-grade classroom at HIS during the past six weeks, you wouldn't have seen students sitting quietly at desks, memorizing facts about migration.

Instead, you would have found teams huddled over maps, making life-or-death decisions on the Oregon Trail. You would have seen students arguing passionately about whether a family



in 1850s Russia should flee a cholera pandemic or stay and risk infection. You would have witnessed children sleeping in tents, scaling high ropes courses, and filtering brown pond water through homemade carbon filters.

You would have seen inquiry in action. It was, in many ways, a highlight of our school year.

But here is what you might have seen if you looked a little closer. You might have noticed a student planning to drive across the Atlantic Ocean, or one claiming to be a toddler striking out across perilous mountain trails. You might have realized that some students coasted through weeks of research, copying shallow information from the first website they found,

never really understanding their character's journey.

Success is not guaranteed. Some students dive deep. Others struggle with independence or produce work that looks fine on the surface but lacks substance. The outcomes vary. But this unit, like any in the PYP, is not an end. It is one leg of a much longer journey.

Our unit on migration – “A Journey to the Past: Walking a Mile in Their Shoes” – offers a window into both the promise and the struggle of inquiry-based learning. What follows is an examination of each phase of the unit, highlighting how the principles of the PYP work at HIS, illustrated by the voices of students who embraced the challenge.



“Overall, our migration unit was a very fun learning experience... I got so emotional hearing about all the sad migration stories, especially hearing about how many people died on the coffin ships during the Irish Potato Famine”

– Lila

Provocations: Sparking Curiosity Before Content

In a traditional model, a unit on migration might begin with definitions. At HIS, we do the opposite. We start with the ‘Tuning In’ phase of the inquiry cycle, using hands-on provocations to activate curiosity before delivering any content.

Students joined “migration families” and faced simulated crises together. In a choose-your-own-adventure version of Oregon Trail, they made life-or-death decisions. In a pandemic simulation, families from Saudi Arabia, Russia, and England received updates as a cholera contagion crept closer. Should they emigrate or stay? When they collaborated effectively, they collected ration coupons (fractions of rations,

applying our math topic) which they needed to purchase meals for their family on the day of the sleepover.

Students were making decisions, feeling tension, and experiencing the emotional weight of migration before they had any formal vocabulary for it. They weren't learning about push factors; they were living them.



“Every time we have a new unit, we do provocations... But this time, it was special. We did tons of activities all leading up to our field trip... My favorite one was the Oregon Trail game. We got one piece of paper for our migration groups... The teacher gave us a budget for money and time... We also needed to make several decisions on the road. Some might lead you to cross out time or money, and some might cost nothing. If we crossed off all of them, we would die. Not literally, just in the game...”

“The game made me realize deeper how difficult migrating is, especially if people don't have enough money to pay for safe, modern transportation... I now know how I would feel if I had to migrate. Whether I'm leaving my family or not, I'm still leaving my home”

– Yu-Ching



The Overnight Experience – Learning Through Discomfort

The PYP values learning that is not abstract but embodied. You cannot truly understand a migrant's journey by reading about it in a textbook. You have to feel something.

Our overnight campout and high ropes course was this principle made concrete. Students set up tents in the school. They slept crowded together, woke early, and struck camp. Then came Deqing and the high ropes.

For many students, the course was genuinely terrifying. Standing on a narrow beam 20 feet in the air, heart racing, legs shaking – this is not simulated fear. This is real fear. And like migrants who must rely on each other to survive, students discovered that they could not do it alone. Their migration families cheered them on. Classmates who had finished their challenges waited at the bottom, offering encouragement.

The long walk to find water added another layer of authenticity. They drew turbid brown water from a pond and learned to filter it using charcoal, sand, and gravel from nature. They competed to produce the clearest sample. This wasn't a science demonstration – it was a problem they needed to solve.



“I felt really excited and happy on the high ropes even though it was hard. I felt a little bit nervous at level two, but I tried level one after, and it was easier. This connects to our migration unit because... it mimics the challenges immigrants face on their journey”

– Maisie



“That is what learning looks like at HIS. It is not always neat. But it is real”

Building Knowledge – From Curiosity to Understanding

After the immersion experience of the ‘Tuning In’ phrase, students continued ‘Finding Out’ and ‘Sorting Out’ – building systematic knowledge, but on their own terms.

First, students themselves sorted our library's migration books into categories. They discussed which categories would be most useful. This is student agency in action: they weren't handed a pre-made taxonomy. They invented one.

Then came book tastings. Each student chose a book about a historical migration, recorded key information, and presented findings to peers. Based on these presentations, students chose one migration to focus on for their Living Museum project. There was no teacher assigning topics, but students being exposed to possibilities and choosing what to pursue.

“We had a provocation where we chose a book on a specific person who migrated. We filled in a brochure about their migration and presented it to our friends. I read about Malala Yousafzai, who migrated from Pakistan to England. I was inspired by her challenging and successful story and shared it with the class”

– Anna WT



Deepening Through Creation – The Fictional Character

Here is where the unit entered the ‘Going Further’ phase, and the learning became transformative for many students. Students created a fictional character and wrote diary entries from their perspective – the decision to migrate, the journey, and the arrival.

This was not merely a writing assignment. It was an act of empathy. To write a diary, you must inhabit another person's interior world. You must imagine not just what happened to them, but what they felt. The fear of leaving home. The uncertainty of the road. The hope of a new beginning.

The PYP calls this “transdisciplinary” because it weaves together multiple subject areas not artificially but organically. The diary is literacy, yes. But it is also social studies (historical context), wellness (emotional transitions), and even math (the maps that they created included measurements, the diagrams of their sleeping quarters included area and perimeter).

“The PYP values learning that is not abstract but embodied”



“In our migration unit, we also wrote migration diaries to shape our character... I chose the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl... I felt devastated when learning about real people's experiences and how people died... I also felt incredulous that people actually survived some of the dangerous migration we studied. I wove their stories into my character's own diary with my own perspective... I will always remember this unit”

– Joy

The Living Museum – Sharing Learning with Authentic Audiences

The PYP emphasizes that learning should lead to action. The ‘Making Conclusions’ and ‘Taking Action’ phases of the inquiry cycle were embodied in our Living Museum exhibition.

Each student created a display board with maps, diagrams of living spaces, and a Transition Cycle Model showing their character’s emotional journey (a connection to our Wellness unit). They dressed in costume as their character.

First, they presented to each other – a safe audience for practice. Then to third and fifth graders, who provided feedback. This “test” phase of the design cycle is something we always include during projects. Students applied their feedback to make final adjustments in the “improve” phase.

Finally, the parents came. The halls filled with migrants from across time and space – Irish families fleeing the potato famine and Vietnamese boat people, Jewish families escaping Nazi Germany and Okies in the Dust Bowl. Each student stood beside their display, ready to tell their character’s story. This was not a performance for a grade. It was a demonstration of understanding for a real audience.

What the PYP Makes Possible

In a traditional unit, students memorize definitions and take a test. Every student produces roughly the same correct answers. Those who don’t are clearly behind.

At HIS, we do things differently – and differently is messier. Not every student thrives. Some struggle with independence. Some never fully realize what they didn’t learn.



“I absolutely loved the Living Museum because we got to choose a historical topic and dress up in a costume from that time, but the most awesome part was presenting to our friends and parents...”

“I chose a German Jewish girl in World War II who escaped to England using the Kindertransport. I learned about the concentration camps during my research, and I was horrified, so I made the fictional character’s parents die in one. During these presentations, I got emotional listening to my friends portraying migrants and telling, about their hardships and experiences... In the end, I really enjoyed this unit and I hope that we get to do something just as fun and engaging next time”

– Vivian

But here is what this approach makes possible. It creates conditions for genuine curiosity. It provides experiences that embed learning in the body. It offers agency. It connects subjects organically. And it requires students to share their learning with real audiences.

What about the students who struggle? Their learning journey is its own migration – circuitous, uncertain, full of detours.

Some will have their breakthrough during this unit. Others will have it during the next project. A single unit is not the destination. It is one iteration

in a lifelong design cycle of testing, failure, feedback, and improvement.

So yes, our Living Museum had inaccuracies. Yes, some students coasted. But we also saw students write diaries that made their audiences cry. We saw students discover they were stronger than they thought. We saw students walk a mile in someone else’s shoes.

That is what learning looks like at HIS. It is not always neat. But it is real. D

The Living Museum



Tired Brains, Busy Bodies

Why the basics matter more than we think

“Sleep, movement, and play are not extras; they are essentials. They are the foundations that support how children think, learn, and regulate themselves each day”

by Merryn Atkins
Occupational Therapist

Children’s learning, attention, and emotional regulation don’t just happen in the classroom - they are shaped every day by three simple foundations: sleep, movement, and play.

These are not extras or add-ons; they sit underneath everything a child does, influencing how well they can think, manage emotions, and engage with the world around them.



What’s the big deal with sleep anyway?

What research across Asian countries and international studies consistently shows is this: children need between 9 to 12 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night for their brain to function at its best the next day.

As adults, we all recognize the “brain fog” that comes with poor sleep and how it can affect our ability to regulate emotions. This might show up when we snap at a child when we would normally stay calm, struggle to find a word mid-conversation, or forget something simple like our child’s after-school schedule.

Children experience these same effects too, but because their brains are still developing, the impact is often more visible and intense. A tired child may become tearful or frustrated more quickly, react aggressively to small problems, or struggle to cope flexibly with challenges that they would normally manage with ease.

Similarly, the ability to think clearly, learn (often in a second language), and sustain attention across an eight hour school day becomes significantly more difficult when sleep is reduced. Research consistently shows that less sleep reduces a child’s ability to learn, rather than improving it.

Sleep is not just rest. It is when the brain processes learning, strengthens memory, and resets emotional systems. When sleep is reduced, we are not just dealing with tiredness, but with a brain working harder to do basic tasks.



Why is my child so hyper at bedtime?

This is a question I hear often from parents, and it can feel confusing. A child who seemed tired suddenly becomes restless, energetic, or silly just when the day should be winding down.

There is no single explanation for this, but one important factor that is often overlooked is daily movement.

The World Health Organization recommends that children get around 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day, where their heart rate is raised. This might include PE at school, biking, swimming, running, organized sport, or unstructured child-led outdoor play.

Movement plays an important role in helping the brain and body regulate energy across the day. When children move enough, their nervous system has the chance to cycle through activation and recovery, supporting the body’s ability to settle later in the evening.

When children do not get enough physical activity, that energy doesn’t disappear. Instead, it often shows up later when we are expecting calm. This is when children appear tired but wired - physically exhausted, but still internally restless.



Evening screens and sleep

For many families, screens naturally become part of the evening routine. They are easy, predictable, and often seem like a helpful way to wind children down after a busy day.

However, there are two important things happening when screens are used close to bedtime. The first is stimulation.

Many apps, games, and videos are designed to hold a child’s attention for long periods of time. They move quickly, respond instantly, and provide constant feedback.

This keeps the brain’s reward system highly activated, releasing dopamine - the “feel good” chemical linked to motivation and pleasure.



The result is a brain that is switched on and highly engaged, even when the body is still. So when the screen is turned off, the shift is immediate. Suddenly the stimulation drops, the feedback stops, and the brain has to move from a high-reward state into everyday life.

That's when we see children struggle - not just resisting stopping, but having genuine difficulty transitioning into slower, less interesting tasks like brushing teeth or getting ready for bed.

The second is the effect of light on the body's sleep rhythm. At night, the brain naturally increases melatonin production, which helps the body feel sleepy.

Blue light from screens can interfere with this process, delaying the body's natural signals that it is time to sleep. As a result, children may take longer to fall asleep and may not reach the same depth of rest.

What about play - isn't it just a break from learning?

Play is often misunderstood because it does not look like traditional academic learning. However, when you look more closely, play is one of the most powerful learning environments children have.



On the playground, children are constantly moving, climbing, running, balancing, and hanging. They are strengthening core muscles that help them sit upright and remain steady during classroom tasks, while also developing the fine motor strength and dexterity needed for handwriting and everyday independence skills, such as opening lunch containers or zipping up a jacket.

They are also developing the social skills needed to navigate a busy playground by negotiating space, taking turns, and regulating emotions when frustrated or tired.

At the same time, play supports the development of executive functioning skills, controlled by the pre-frontal cortex, which are essential for classroom learning. These include planning, organizing, problem solving, and self-control.

What makes play so powerful is that children are learning all of these skills at once - and they are motivated to


do it. Most children don't even realize how much learning is happening while they play.

Play isn't a break from learning - it is learning!

Bringing it together

Across cultures, the message from research is clear - sleep, movement, and play are not extras; they are essentials. They are the foundations that support how children think, learn, and regulate themselves each day.

These basics influence not only physical health, but also attention, behavior, emotional regulation, and learning in the classroom.

When these foundations are in place, children are not simply trying harder; they are working with a brain that is better prepared to learn, cope with challenges, and engage with the world around them. 

by Veronica Simova

Grade 2 Teacher

with Grade 5 students

Kelly W, Jasmine X, and Alice L



*“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire”
– William Butler Yeats*

Young Voices for Change

How a first time PYP Exhibition for teacher and students alike became a journey of self-discovery

This year, I had the privilege of mentoring students during the Primary Years Programme (PYP) Exhibition for the first time.

As a Grade 2 teacher, the experience allowed me to connect with older students and better understand the learning journey ahead for the younger learners in my class.

The PYP Exhibition is the culminating project of the PYP, and marks the final big project before they head to Middle

School. Students work collaboratively to investigate real-world issues they care about and take meaningful action based on their learning.

This year, I mentored Grade 5 students Kelly W, Jasmine X, and Alice L. Together, they explored the issue of animal cruelty through three areas of focus: animal clothing, animal entertainment, and animal testing. Throughout the process, the girls demonstrated compassion, collaboration, and thoughtful inquiry.





Animal Entertainment – Jasmine X

I explored how animals are used in entertainment, including circuses and tourism. Before this project, I did not fully understand how animals were treated behind the scenes.

For example, when I rode an elephant in Thailand, I thought it was harmless fun. Later, I learned that many elephants are forced to perform and treated poorly.

I also researched the Elephant Nature Park in Thailand, where rescued elephants are cared for with kindness and respect. This experience taught me that people can still enjoy learning about animals without causing harm.



Animal Testing – Alice L

My research focused on animal testing in the cosmetics and skincare industry. I learned that some companies test products such as makeup and shampoo on animals to make sure they are safe for humans. However, the process can be painful and harmful for the animals involved.

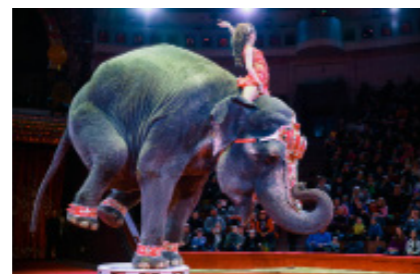
I also explored organizations such as PETA, which work to raise awareness about animal cruelty. This project helped me think more carefully about the products people use every day and how our choices can affect animals.



Animal Clothing – Kelly W

Through my research, I learned that many animals suffer for fashion, especially in the fur industry. Some animals are kept in small cages and treated cruelly so their fur can be used for clothing.

I also discovered that organizations such as PETA have encouraged brands like Gucci and Prada to stop using fur. This showed me that people's choices can make a difference. I believe animals should not suffer for fashion, and we can help by making kinder choices when buying clothes.



PYP Exhibition

As a mentor, my role was to guide discussions, encourage reflection, and support students in deepening their understanding rather than simply providing answers.

Along the way, the students strengthened their communication, research, critical thinking, and self-management skills.

Being part of this experience was both inspiring and rewarding. I enjoyed witnessing the students' growth in confidence, independence, and leadership throughout the exhibition process. Their passion and sense of responsibility reminded me that even young learners can inspire meaningful change in the world around them.



“Even young learners can inspire meaningful change in the world around them”

by Emer Cordoba
Music Teacher

Singing in Singapore

Stories from the AMIS Asian Middle School Honor Choir Festival

Habin

Me and my two friends auditioned for this festival and our dream came true. We faced various challenges preparing for it, the biggest one was time management.

When I got my musical scores, I was shocked. The folder was very thick, with nine songs that we needed to learn in a super short time and almost all songs were not in English. But we practiced hard, and in the end, I sustained my positive spirit and collaborated with other voices.

The most memorable moment was being recognized by the host school. The teacher introduced all participating schools, and when we heard

“Hangzhou International School,” all our crew stood up. We looked at each other with big smiles and were so proud of ourselves for showing our abilities and passion on a big stage.

We made a little trip to a country that I had never been to before and I even met a cool bunch of Koreans during the festival. It was an unforgettable experience, and the memories will stay with me forever.



AMIS
The Association for Music in International Schools

Last March, a group of nine talented Hangzhou International School students traveled to the Canadian International School Singapore for the AMIS Asian Middle School Honor Choir Festival, hosted by the Association for Music in International Schools – here are some success stories and reflections:



UPPER SCHOOL



Anita

We put great effort into constant rehearsals. When we first started learning the Malay songs, I thought they sounded odd at first. Yet when students from 21 different schools joined as one, singing all parts perfectly, I felt truly touched. The final song felt like a dream coming to an end, leaving me with heartfelt nostalgia and precious lifelong memories.

Kris

This was my second AMIS Choir event representing HIS. This year, I made a lot of friends in the baritone section from Concordia in Shanghai and the host school CIS Singapore. I also met again singers who went to last year's AMIS Choir Festival in Shanghai. All rehearsals were great; we had friendly and supportive teachers and conductors, outgoing choir members with the same hobbies, and a wonderful school environment.



Heely

The last three days of rehearsals were very intense to master nine songs, but also super fun. The festival was full of energy, especially performing on stage in formal attire; the moment felt profound. Beyond rehearsals, the festival was really about socializing and having fun. All my friends and I enjoyed our time in Singapore, and this festival was a great opportunity for us.



Elizabeth

My favorite song was 'The Tiger', with words by William Blake, and how he described this majestic animal making its way through the night. He compared it to a burning flame both because of its orange color and ferociousness. This may have been the song with the hardest text, but it was worth learning because of its story and connection to Singaporean culture.

I loved getting to know Singapore's culture and food. And at the Night Safari, my favorite part was the outdoor theatre with many local animals. I also loved visiting the host school CIS because it had cool open areas adapted to the hot Singaporean climate.



Lisa


I met a lot of new friends and learned about their school lives. During break time, I even met friends that enjoy playing the same games, and we still keep in touch.

When we arrived at the school, we saw a local band performing. I didn't expect that this band would have musicians and musical instruments from different cultures and countries in Asia, but that's what makes Singapore so international.

Eason

Conductor Mr Marshall taught us how important singing really is. He shared a real-life story where he and his choir were singing and helped save someone's life through their inspirational performance. That showed me music can be powerful beyond the stage. I also recognized a friend from last year's AMIS festival; Martin, from a school in Shenzhen.

One song, "小小羊儿," (Little Lambs) had sudden tone changes that were very hard. We repeated it singing with solfège until it became natural. I also improved my high notes, especially in the last song, "Little Red Dot," which describes life in Singapore. At the very end, all baritones sang a powerful, high note together – it was impressive and gave me chills.

I can't wait to participate again in AMIS because each festival is unique – the songs are different; we meet new people, and visit a new host school. To new participants, I suggest enjoying the whole festival. It's not about being perfect, it's about bringing joy and singing with others. Singing together with the same goal brought us closer; remember, in French "AMIS" means "friend." 

AMIS Asian Middle School Honor Choir Festival



by Anna Galuszka
Science Teacher



When people in school science circles hear the acronym “ESS,” they often assume it is simply environmental science. But IB Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) is different from many traditional environmental science courses, because it is built on a dual approach: science and social studies are taught together.

Humans and Nature

ESS: Where science meets social studies in the IB Diploma

“Science identifies and explains environmental change, while social studies helps us understand human behavior and design solutions that can actually work”



In ESS, students use scientific tools – data collection, experiments, ecological models, and chemical analysis – while also applying social frameworks such as economics, policy, ethics, and cultural perspectives. This combination reflects a real truth about environmental problems: they are never only scientific, and they are never only social.

What ESS actually studies

ESS focuses on the relationship between natural systems and human societies. It explores major global issues – climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, resource use, and food security – and asks not only what is happening, but also why it is happening and what can realistically be done. The course is structured around three key ideas: perspectives, systems, and sustainability.

Since last year, ESS also includes a Higher Level (HL) option, where content is explored through three additional “lenses”: environmental law, economics, and ethics. These lenses push students to see environmental challenges not as isolated scientific events, but as complex problems shaped by human decisions, power, and values.



“IB Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) is different from many traditional environmental science courses, because it is built on a dual approach: science and social studies are taught together”

Learning beyond the textbook

A major part of ESS is staying aware of real-world environmental issues at both local and global levels. Lessons often use case studies connected to current events, helping students practice discussion, debate, and communication. ESS is also practical: students do fieldwork, lab investigations, simulations, and secondary data analysis, often using statistics to interpret patterns and evaluate claims.

Perspectives: why people disagree even with the same facts

One of the first big ideas in ESS is that people interpret environmental issues through different Environmental Value Systems (EVSs).

Scientific evidence about deforestation or ecosystem collapse does not exist in a vacuum – people respond differently depending on whether they hold more ecocentric (nature-centered), anthropocentric (human-centered), or technocentric (technology-centered) views.

For example, a scientist might measure ecosystem resilience using biodiversity indices and population data. A social scientist, meanwhile, might examine how indigenous land rights, corporate extraction, or government policy affects that same ecosystem. ESS trains students to connect both perspectives instead of treating them as separate subjects

Soil and food: chemistry meets culture and economics

When studying soils and food systems, ESS shows the course’s duality clearly. On the science side, students learn about soil chemistry, nutrient cycling, energy flow, and trophic levels, and they investigate processes such as erosion, salinization, and desertification.



But the topic quickly expands into social studies: commercial versus subsistence farming, land ownership laws, trade systems, and the social causes of food insecurity.

A simple example is diet and energy efficiency. Scientifically, eating lower on the food chain (more plant-based diets) is more energy efficient because energy is lost at each trophic level. However, social studies explains why change is difficult: culture, food traditions, subsidies, marketing, and agribusiness influence what people eat. ESS therefore requires students to link scientific reality to social pressure and economic systems.

Atmosphere and climate: data meets politics

In the atmosphere and climate change unit, students study the greenhouse effect, ozone depletion, and climate feedback loops using scientific evidence and models. But understanding the science is only half the challenge.



ESS also asks students to evaluate international responses such as the Montreal Protocol and the Paris Agreement, and to explore why progress can stall even when scientific consensus is strong.

This is where politics and inequality become central. Countries have different economic priorities, and there are major debates about fairness between the Global North and Global South.

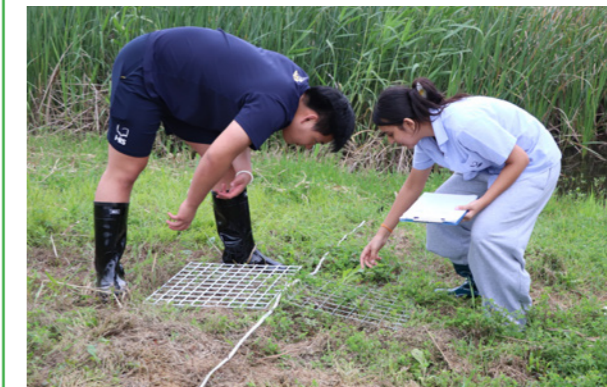
ESS encourages students to consider questions like: Who should pay for renewable transitions? Do countries with higher historical emissions have a greater responsibility to support developing nations? These are not questions science alone can answer.

Human systems: numbers shaped by society

ESS also explores population and resource use using mathematical tools such as growth rates, doubling time, and demographic transition models.

A population pyramid may look like a set of numbers, but its shape reflects social realities: education access, healthcare, women’s rights, urbanization, religion, and government policy. Students compare national population strategies and build case studies, learning that demographic change is both measurable and deeply social.

This topic connects to the “tragedy of the commons” – the idea that shared resources are often overused when individuals act in self-interest. ESS links this to real solutions: local sustainability plans, national policies, and international agreements working together to reduce pressure on Earth’s finite resources.



The core message of ESS

ESS demonstrates that environmental challenges are not just about ecosystems – they are about people, power, and priorities. Science identifies and explains environmental change, while social studies helps us understand human behavior and design solutions that can actually work.

That is the duality at the heart of ESS – and the reason the course is so relevant to the world we live in today. D

REFERENCES

IB Diploma Programme Environmental systems and societies teacher support materials

IB Diploma Programme Environmental systems and societies Guide First Assessment 2026

HL lenses: law, economics, and ethics in action

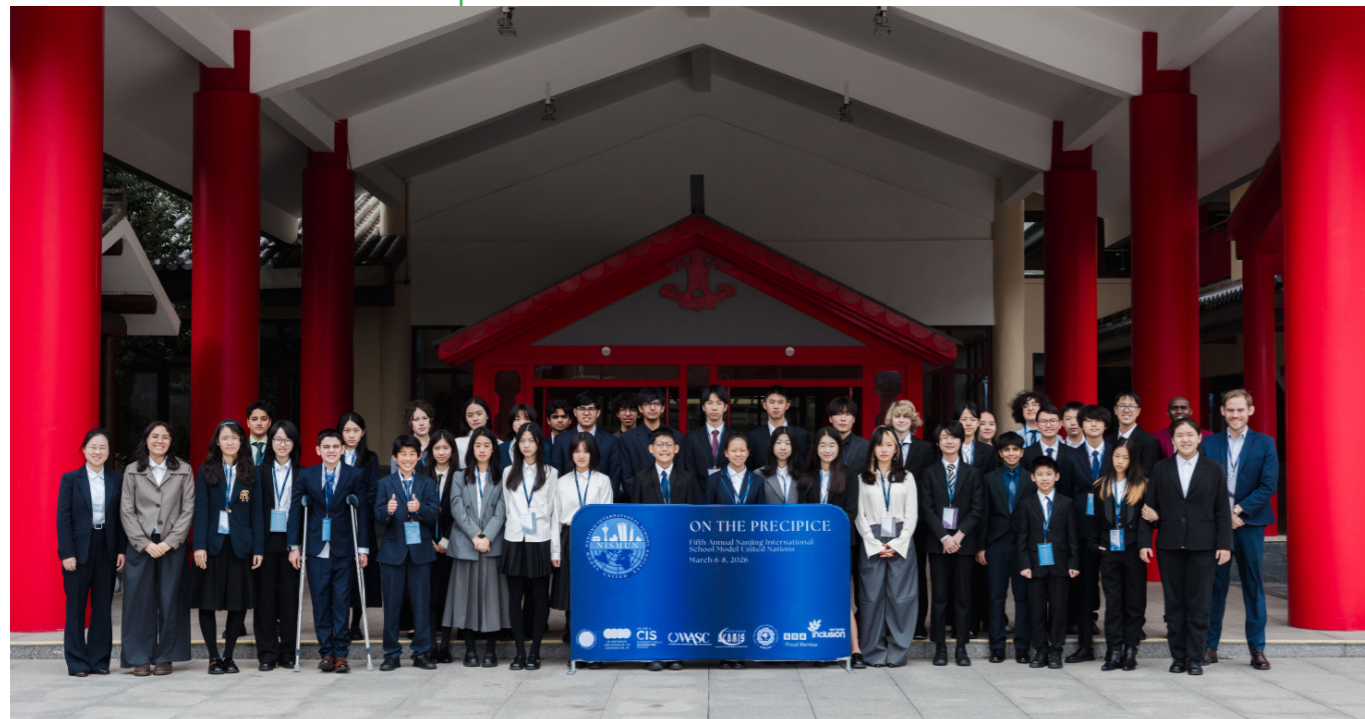
For HL students, the science-society connection becomes even more explicit. Students may use pollution and biodiversity data to argue environmental “court cases,” calculate externalities (hidden costs of pollution to society), and debate ethical limits of technocentric solutions such as geoengineering.

HL makes one message clear: science can measure the problem, but society decides the response.

by Lewis Braithwaite
Social Studies Teacher
& MUN Coordinator

A Year of Firsts

Reflecting on an exceptional year
for Model United Nations at HIS



Reflecting on the year Model United Nations (MUN) has had at Hangzhou International School (HIS) and trying to settle on a single highlight would not be possible.

Over the course of this school year, our student delegates have represented HIS at a range of conferences across China and have done so in an exemplary manner.

Whether it was our middle school delegates at BEIMUN Jr. in Beijing, our high school delegates at SHAMUN in Shanghai, or the combined middle school and high school delegation at NISMUN in Nanjing, our delegates were outstanding representatives of HIS in both attitude and achievement.



Notably, NISMUN V proved to be HIS' most successful conference on record, with four awards and eight Honourable Mentions collected by the HIS delegation.

Looking closer to home, HIS' own MUN conference, West Lake MUN (WLMUN), saw its 19th iteration and it goes without saying that it was a resounding success.

“Model United Nations at HIS continues to go from strength to strength”



This was no small part due to the hard work and commitment of Mr Bastedo and the WLMUN Secretariat, who put in long hours to ensure that the conference went off without a hitch.

This year, we welcomed nearly 300 student delegates from schools across China, Mongolia, and Korea, with this number anticipated to grow over the coming years.

Finally, it would not be a normal year for MUN at HIS without attending an international conference, and this year was certainly no exception. For the first time, a delegation of 12 students packed their bags and jetted off to London in the United Kingdom for the HabsMUN conference.

They spent six days there engaging in fruitful debate and negotiation, all while taking the opportunity to soak in the rich culture and history of the vibrant British capital. Such an intellectually stimulating and culturally enriching experience made the trip unforgettable for all those involved.

These are just the highlights of an extraordinary year for MUN at HIS, and there has been still so much left unsaid.

An honourable mention should go to the Delegate Mentor Committee (DMC), who, in their inaugural year, have played a central role in planning weekly MUN sessions and mentoring our junior delegates.

Model United Nations at HIS continues to go from strength to strength, and as we proudly reflect on a remarkable year, we are also excited to see what the next school year has in store. [D](#)



by Dylan Tidbury
English Language
& Literature Teacher

Community Focus

How the Grade 8 Community Project helps students to make a real world impact

One of the major annual curriculum highlights for the Grade 8 cohort at Hangzhou International School (HIS) is the Grade 8 Community Project, which represents a significant milestone in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP).

The community project is a student-led initiative which challenges our young learners to move beyond classroom theory, to engage meaningfully with their local community, and to connect their learning with service action.

The journey begins with students forming small groups based on shared interests and community concerns. Each team identifies an issue they feel passionate about, which could range from environmental sustainability to supporting elderly residents in the community.

For instance, one team focused on reducing single-use plastics on campus, while another organized reading sessions for the students in Early Childhood.

The main purpose is for the learners to think about their community, and to think of ways that they can give back using the resources they have available to them



“The Community Project does more than fulfill a program requirement. It plants seeds of active citizenship”



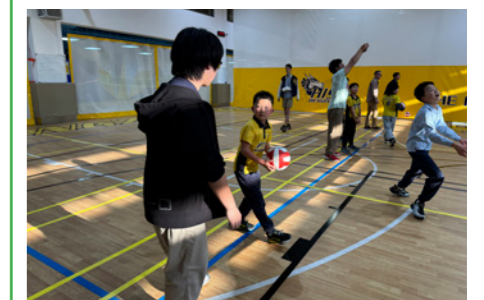
Developing Essential Skills

Throughout the community project, students have the opportunity to strengthen three core capabilities.

1. First, research skills came into play as groups investigated their chosen issues. They learned to collect data through surveys, interviews, and online sources, then analyse findings to plan effective action.
2. Second, collaboration skills proved essential. Students learned to delegate tasks, resolve disagreements, and communicate across different working styles, which is a valuable practice for future academic and professional settings.
3. Third, the project embodied ‘Service as Action’, a cornerstone of MYP philosophy. Rather than simply donating money or time, students engaged in authentic, sustained service that addressed genuine community needs.

The action phase looked different for every group. Some organised awareness campaigns with posters and social media content. Others hosted workshops for younger students or collected supplies for local charities. What united all projects was a commitment to real-world impact.

Students documented their progress carefully, reflecting on both successes and setbacks. This reflective practice helped them understand that meaningful service requires flexibility, patience, and genuine listening to community partners.



Celebrating at the Exhibition

The project culminated in a celebratory exhibition, open to the entire HIS school community.




Groups designed display boards, prepared presentations, and demonstrated their outcomes. Parents, teachers, and peers from other grade levels circulated through the exhibition space, asking thoughtful questions and offering encouragement.

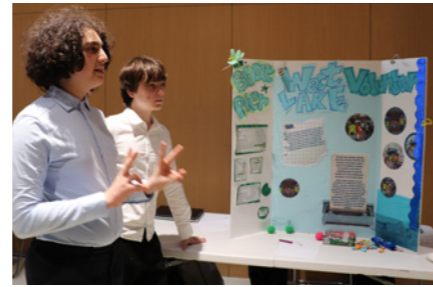
The atmosphere was proud and purposeful. For Grade 8 students, this was their moment to share what they had accomplished, not just as a grade, but as a contribution to Hangzhou.

The Community Project does more than fulfill a program requirement. It plants seeds of active citizenship.

By experiencing the entire cycle of investigation, preparation, action, and reflection, HIS Grade 8 students learn that they are capable of creating positive change.

They leave this project better researchers, stronger collaborators, and more thoughtful members of both their school and their city. 

Grade 8 Community Project Exhibition



“Our young learners to move beyond classroom theory, to engage meaningfully with their local community, and to connect their learning with service action”

Personal Achievement

A look back at the amazing representations of identity at the Grade 10 Personal Project Exhibition

As we reflect back on the many events held during this memorable school year, we cannot forget the celebration that occurred on the 10th of March: the Personal Project Exhibition.

Within the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Personal Project acts as an extensive project-based assignment that accumulates all of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills students have polished throughout their five years from grade 6 all the way to 10th grade.

One of my favorite things about the Personal Project is how the primary driver of the project is the students' interests and their motivation, which is explored through their learning goals and learning products.

This year, I, along with my co-coordinator Brian Vincent, aimed to scaffold the process as much as possible to support a smooth and concise journey that led to the students producing some incredible products as outputs of their learning goal.

From running magazines, mosaic art sculptures, and AI hockey simulations, the Grade 10s put on an exhibition to remember.

While the Personal Project always focuses on the integral use of ATL skills and the defining feature of allowing the students to focus on their own interests, this year, along with our new MYP Coordinator Dave Gates, we took the Personal Project in a new direction.



by Akira Sugata
Social Studies Teacher



This shift came with two main questions:

1. How can we best prepare our students for the Diploma Program (DP)?

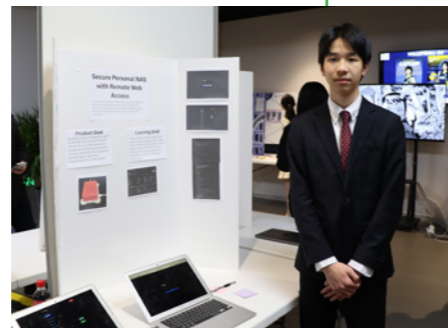
The Personal Project has always been something 'fun' and 'exciting' that the students have partaken in throughout the years. This year, we focused on how it could be more of a stepping stone for the intense Diploma Programme they're stepping into next year. With this, it meant that the deadlines were more stringent, and the focus on their self-management skills became more pertinent.

“My biggest takeaway is all the skills I learned throughout the product-making phase. For instance, self-management skills were the invisible engine that kept this project running. Thinking skills gave me the creativity to translate abstract music into visual stories and the critical mindset to solve technical problems”

— Jonathan C

“Your project may not sound as good as others in the beginning, but a change of perspective through a single conversation can entirely change the way you look at yourself and your project. Personal Project is not mainly about the ‘final product’ you create in the end, but more the process you went through to achieve it”

— Camille Y



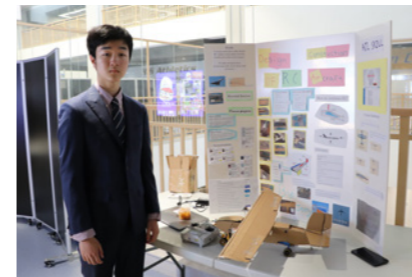
2. How can we make sure that the exhibition has meaning?

In addition to adding a more serious academic note to the project, we also decided to input the exhibition in-between their report-writing process to ensure that it could be used properly for their reflection.

In the past, the exhibition had existed at the end of the overall process, highlighting the celebration and the students' efforts for submitting their reports.

Now, with the exhibition coming midway, it meant two things: the students were looking for feedback to reflect on their product, and they were also keen on showcasing their projects to one another. As coordinators, we hope this not only added more meaning and brevity to the exhibition, but also raised the level of the reports.

While my love for the Personal Project will remain in the fact that it celebrates the students, their hobbies and their curiosity to discover a passion they have never been able to express before, the new academic layer added on top of everything that the Personal Project has to offer has taken the level of the projects higher.



“[I learned that] documentation is more important than I thought, especially throughout DP”

— Divay A

“The biggest takeaway from this personal project was that we had freedom on what we wanted to accomplish!”

— Aryan S

I look back at the pictures and videos of the exhibition and celebrate the artists, the writers, the story-book illustrators, the clothing designers, and the chefs that live among the student body.

It has been an incredible experience to coordinate the projects this year, and I cannot wait to see how the next cohort of Grade 10 students will impress me, and the community, while elevating the level of creativity within the campus.

As the current sophomores move upwards to the DP Program, we can only hope that they think of the lessons they have learned through the Personal Project when it comes to applying those same skills in the process of writing their Extended Essays.

Congratulations to the Grade 10s who will be very soon becoming 11th graders, with many embarking on their DP journey.



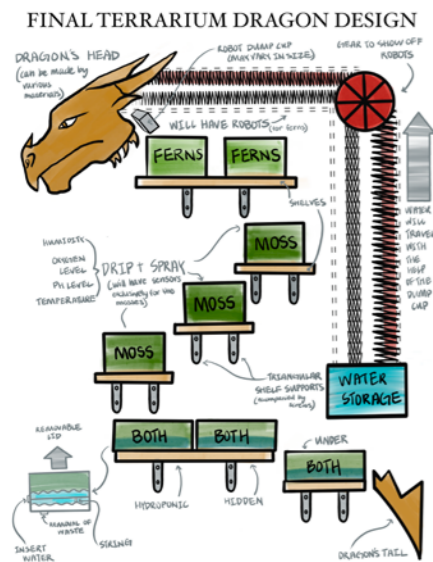
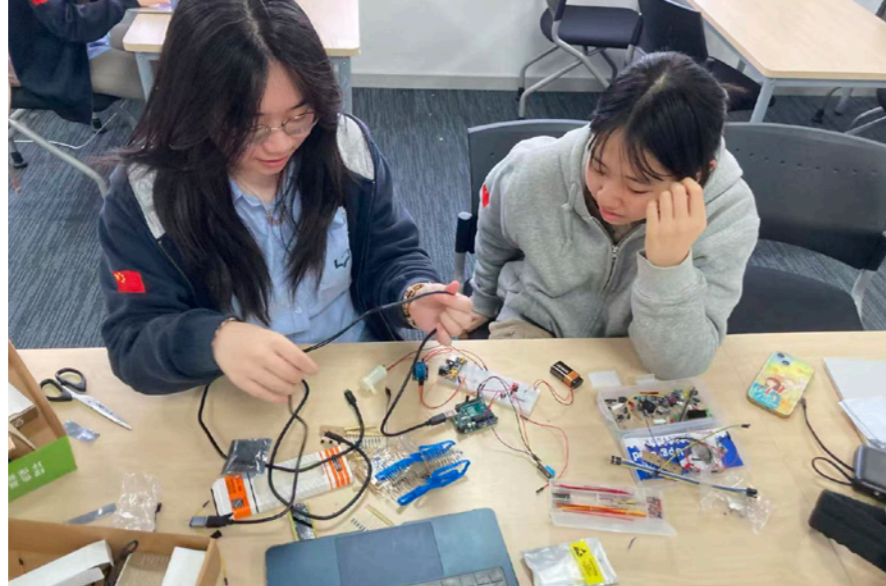
I'd like to end this article by thanking all of our colleagues who supervised a student and supported them throughout the Personal Project process.

Additionally, we would like to thank the marketing team for creating posters and taking photographs, the IT team for setting up the technology and being flexible with last-minute requests, and Christine from Operations, who helped us set up the tables and chairs for the exhibition. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

by Marcela Rojas
Mathematics Teacher
Justine Kushner
Science Teacher

Bright Young Minds

How STEM Club broadens our reach in science, technology and engineering education



The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Club at HIS did not begin as a carefully designed program. It began with students asking for more opportunities.

Small Beginnings

A year ago, a group of students was working on a project that grew from their Grade 10 Personal Project, combining environmental science, engineering, design, and programming.

What started as a relatively small idea gradually evolved into a much larger collaborative initiative: the development of a terrarium system enhanced with microcontrollers to monitor environmental conditions and automate irrigation.

The project later received an ACAMIS Award for Innovation, but more impor-

tantly, it sparked interest among other students who wanted greater access to science, technology, and engineering experiences beyond the classroom.

The project itself continues to grow. A team of senior students is currently developing different components of the system through interconnected areas of focus.

One group is working on the plants and hydroponic systems, another is designing the physical structure and aesthetic elements – including a dragon-themed artistic component – while a third group is developing the sensor technology and robotic irrigation arm.

After completing their external examinations, the students will continue integrating these systems into a fully functioning installation.

A Growing Program

As interest from students increased, it became clear that the original environment-focused CCA had naturally evolved into something broader.

Students were looking for spaces where they could explore scientific research, engineering, neuroscience, environmental science, and technology in ways that connected directly to their personal interests and ambitions. Rather than defining a rigid structure for the club, we decided to allow students themselves to guide its direction.

In many ways, the STEM Club has become closely connected with the philosophy of the IB program. Several students have used the club as a platform to develop their CAS experiences and projects (a requirement of the IBDP program), leadership opportunities, and independent research interests.

The projects are not created simply to complete assignments, but rather because students genuinely want to explore questions and ideas that matter to them.



Real Life Applications

One of the original goals proposed by students was to create research projects that could eventually be submitted to the JEI (Journal of Emerging Investigators), a high school scientific research journal.

This year, two groups of Grade 11 students are currently working toward that goal. One group is investigating the environmental and biological factors that may contribute to eczema and skin inflammation.



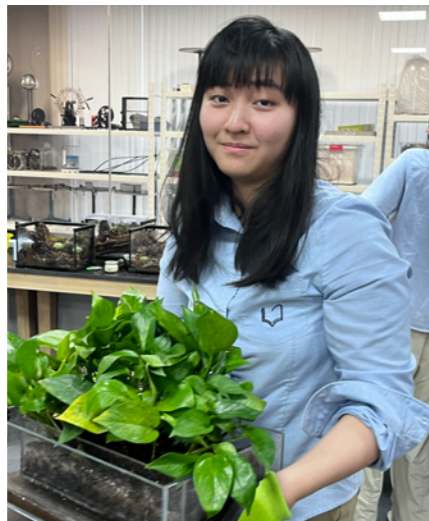
“The main reason we came up with this idea was because we were trying to link our research to a problem we faced in real life”
— Rhema H

while her classmate Joey L says he also faces the self immune disease eczema, and that he and Rhema were trying to study the environmental reasons that worsen it.

Meanwhile, Anna L is studying microbial growth and chemical changes in expired cosmetics, exploring questions related to consumer safety and product shelf life.

“Many people use cosmetic products that are months, or even years, past their expiry date. I wanted to investigate the implications of expiry on the safety and effectiveness of these implications, and to find out if companies are secretly scamming us to buy new products”

— Anna L

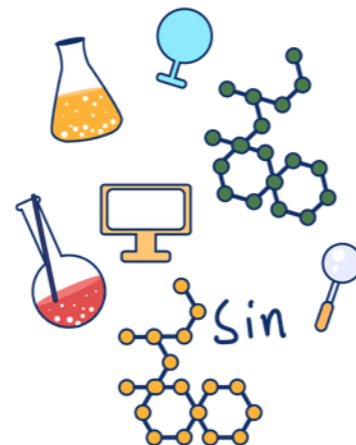


International Recognition

Earlier this year, student interest also led to the creation of a neuroscience initiative that later became an official chapter of the International Youth Neuroscience Association, making it currently only the second chapter in China.

“Neuroscience is as complex as the neural networks it studies, and that is so exciting. My passion for learning about the brain and human behavior is something I wanted to share with younger students at HIS, which motivated me to start a chapter of International Youth Neuroscience Association at our school”

— Tonya L



Joey L, also in Grade 11, just received a certificate from the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) for his participation in the annual DNA Essay writing Contest. ASHG supports National DNA Day through the competition.

“One of my family members had breast cancer so I was motivated to research and write my essay on the new genetic medicine called Olaparib”

— Joey L



Embracing Evolution

What has made the STEM Club particularly meaningful is that it continues to evolve directly from student initiative.

The projects are diverse because the students themselves are diverse in their interests. Some are drawn toward scientific research, others toward environmental engineering, coding, neuroscience, design, or experimentation.

The role of the club has therefore become less about following a fixed curriculum and more about creating opportunities, guidance, and spaces where students can develop ideas that are personally meaningful to them.

At the same time, the club is still evolving. One of the goals for the coming school year is to begin developing more structured workshops focused on foundational scientific and engineering skills.

The hope is that older students will eventually help younger students learn practical research, coding, laboratory, and design skills that will allow future projects to grow even further.

Looking back, what is perhaps most impressive is not any single project itself, but the fact that so many of these initiatives originated from students independently seeking opportunities to explore science, technology, and engineering more deeply.

The STEM Club has become a reflection of that curiosity, creativity, and initiative. □



Expanding Curiosity

Other students have pursued very different interests through the club.

Some are preparing projects for the HIS Science Fair, led by Mr Brader in the Lower School, including investigations into vitamin C content in commercial orange juices, experiments related to oxygen production for restoring aquatic environments, studies on aquatic plant growth in different water solutions, and the development of environmentally sustainable methods to manage invasive apple snail populations in local waterways.

Meanwhile, several students have become interested in engineering and programming through learning to use Arduino microcontrollers, sensors, and automation systems.



Taking Intellectual Risks

Celebrating mathematical curiosity and challenge



by Adeline Xie, Marcela Rojas
& Matthew Kushner

Mathematics Teachers

This year, students from Grades 6 to 12 participated in two international mathematics contests hosted at our school: the American Mathematics Competitions (AMC) and the Mathematical Kangaroo Competition.

The AMC focuses on rigorous analytical and reasoning questions, while Math Kangaroo emphasizes creative and logic-based thinking accessible to students of different ages and experience levels.

This year, more than 80 entries were submitted across both events, demonstrating a growing enthusiasm for mathematical exploration within our school community.

These experiences ask students to step beyond familiar classroom exercises and engage with unfamiliar questions that require creativity, persistence, and adaptability.

In many ways, this reflects the thinking skills students develop in our mathematics classrooms. Through extension work and open-ended tasks, students are encouraged to test multiple approaches, justify their reasoning, and think flexibly.

More importantly, engaging in this type of mathematical challenge requires intellectual courage. Students voluntarily place themselves in situations where they may not immediately know how to proceed, where persistence matters as much as technical knowledge, and where growth often comes through uncertainty.

This year, we wanted not only to celebrate achievement, but also to recognize the willingness of students to take intellectual risks.



“Don’t put too much stress on yourself,” Allen explained. “Just treat it like a normal test or even like a game”

— Allen W

One student who particularly embodies this spirit is Grade 11 student Allen W, who has consistently participated in mathematics contests since Grade 9 because he finds them enjoyable. Beyond school events, Allen has also pursued interests in Go, a highly strategic Chinese board game.

He explained that both mathematics and Go involve thinking through multiple possibilities and carefully calculating outcomes before making decisions. He shared that one of the reasons he enjoys mathematical contests is that they feel similar to solving puzzles or playing a strategic game.

When asked how he prepares for contests such as the AMC, Allen explained that he mainly practices using past papers. About two weeks before a contest, he begins solving one paper each day in order to become familiar with question styles and the exam pacing. However, his most important advice for younger students was not technical preparation, but rather mindset.

This year, we also invited middle school teachers to recognize a student from Grades 6, 7 and 8 who demonstrated curiosity, perseverance, and a willingness to challenge themselves through these experiences.

We asked the selected students to reflect on their experiences participating in the contests this year. Although each student approached the competitions differently, their reflections revealed common themes of perseverance, curiosity, and personal growth.





“The most interesting part of the competition was solving the final difficult questions. When you solve one of those challenging problems, you feel really proud of yourself. My advice for other students is to prepare well, understand that you will not know every question, and simply try your best.”

— Eran Y, Grade 6



“Success in mathematics competitions requires effort, practice, and studying beyond what we normally do in class.”

— Lerry Q, Grade 8



Across all three reflections, what stood out most was the students’ genuine enthusiasm. As they spoke about the contests, their eyes brightened and they excitedly described working through difficult questions. Rather than avoiding challenges, they embraced them as opportunities to think, explore, and grow.

Their words captured the true essence of mathematics. Strong math-

“The AMC competition was very challenging, but I felt excited to participate. Through the competition, I realized that I am good at math and that there are many interesting things to learn in mathematics. I scored 20 out of 25 in the AMC 8, and now I want to continue improving and prepare for the AMC 10.”

— Timmy Y, Grade 7



emicians are not simply quick at memorizing procedures; they develop the flexibility to approach problems from different perspectives, stay calm through challenges, and persist in finding solutions.

Students’ enthusiasm for mathematical discovery also contributed to the school earning both the AMC 8



School Honor Roll and the AMC 8 School Merit Roll.

The skills these young mathematicians exhibit extend far beyond mathematics itself. Through opportunities such as the AMC and Math Kangaroo contests, students continue developing resilience, adaptability, critical thinking, and confidence — learning not to fear difficult situations, but to approach them with curiosity, flexibility, and persistence. **D**

The True Meaning of Growth

Reflecting on his time at HIS, a Grade 8 student realizes there’s more to life than just results

“Some of the moments I value most now seemed completely ordinary at the time”



by Kingsley C
Grade 8 Student

When people reflect on school, they often talk about achievements first. Grades, awards, competition results, leadership positions — the measurable things.

Those are the moments that appear on report cards and university applications, so naturally they seem important. For a long time, I thought those things were the clearest proof of growth too. I believed improvement would look obvious: better results, bigger accomplishments, clearer evidence that I was becoming more capable than before.

Looking back now, I think I misunderstood what growth actually feels like.

The most important changes are rarely dramatic while they are happening. Most of the time, growth is quiet. It hides itself inside ordinary routines and repeated experiences until one day you suddenly realize you think differently, act differently, or see the world differently from the person you used to be.

When I first entered this school, I approached almost everything with a results-focused mindset. I measured myself constantly through productivity and achievement. If I performed well, I felt successful. If I fell short, it felt like failure.

I thought confidence came from proving yourself repeatedly, and I believed successful people were simply those who managed to stay ahead all the time. However, that mindset slowly changed.

School taught me things that could never be measured by grades alone. Some of the most meaningful lessons I learned were not academic at all. They came from responsibility, pressure, failure, leadership, uncertainty, and interacting with people very different from myself.

One of the biggest areas of growth for me was learning how to lead others. Earlier on, I assumed leadership meant confidence, authority, or naturally knowing what to do. In reality, it often felt much messier than that.

Running a Cubing CCA taught me this very quickly. At the start, I worried constantly about whether people were engaged enough, whether sessions were organized enough, or whether I was doing a good enough job helping others improve.

What surprised me was that leadership had much less to do with “being impressive” than I once thought. Most of the time, it meant reflection. It meant staying calm when plans became disorganized. It meant explaining the same concept multiple times without frustration. It meant encouraging beginners who felt discouraged because they could not improve immediately.



Gradually, I realized that leadership is often invisible. Good leaders are not necessarily the loudest people in the room. Sometimes they are simply the people who continue showing up

consistently for others. That lesson will never appear on a report card, but it changed me far more than many tests ever did.

I also learned how much growth comes from discomfort. Earlier in my school life, I avoided situations where I might fail publicly or look inexperienced. Confidence seemed like something people either naturally possessed or did not.

However, over time, I realized confidence is usually built through repeated exposure to discomfort. You become more comfortable speaking because you repeatedly force yourself to speak. You become more capable of handling responsibility because responsibility repeatedly forces you to adapt. Many of the things I once thought were intimidating, slowly became normal simply because I kept facing them.

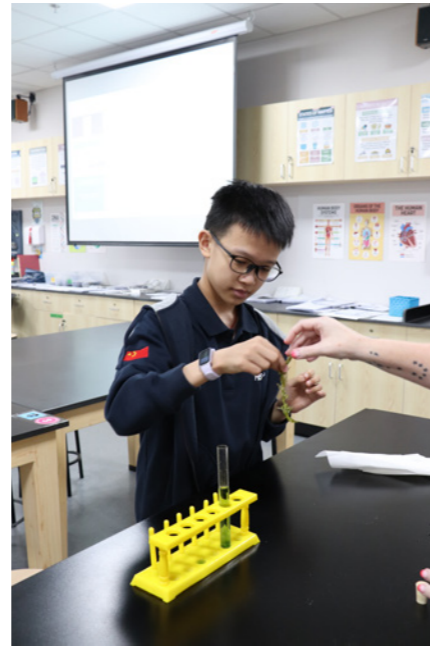


Another concept school changed was my understanding of success itself.

Students often live in a constant cycle of chasing the next goal: the next exam, the next achievement, the next stage of life. I was no different. I focused so heavily on future ambitions that I sometimes treated the present as temporary preparation instead of life itself.

Reflection made me realize how

dangerous that mindset can become. Some of the moments I value most now seemed completely ordinary at the time.



“Good leaders are not necessarily the loudest people in the room. Sometimes they are simply the people who continue showing up consistently for others”



Conversations after class. Shared stress before assessments. Small jokes during lessons. Watching people improve slowly over months. The final sessions of activities that once felt routine. None of these moments looked particularly important while they were happening, yet they became the memories that stayed with me most clearly.


I think one of the strangest parts of growing up is realizing that life does not boast when something meaningful is happening. We usually recognize the importance of certain moments only after they have already passed.

That is why reflection matters. It forces us to look beyond measurable success and notice the quieter forms of growth that often matter more in the long run. The patience we developed. The resilience we built. The ability to adapt under pressure. The friendships we formed. The confidence we slowly earned.

None of these things can be summarized neatly by a percentage or letter grade, yet they shape who we become far more deeply than many academic results.

As I reflect on my time here, I still value achievement and ambition. Those things matter. But I no longer think they are the complete picture of success.

The person who first walked into this school believed growth would be obvious and measurable. The person leaving understands that the most important changes are often the hardest to quantify.

Maybe that is the real value of reflection. It allows us to recognize how much we have changed in ways that numbers never could. 



by *Natalio Laires IV*
Aquatics Coordinator

Building a Culture of Care

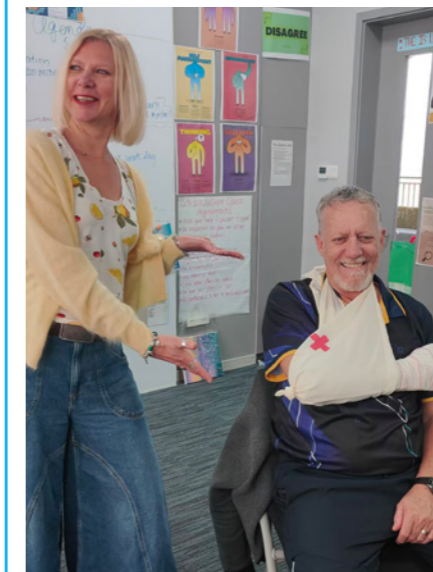
First Aid Training for staff creates a safe environment for all at HIS

At Hangzhou International School (HIS), excellence is measured not only by academic achievement, but by the care, preparedness, and responsibility shown across the community.

Creating a safe environment where students and staff can thrive requires more than policies – it requires a community that is ready to act when it matters most.

This commitment was evident during two First Aid, CPR, and AED certification training sessions held on 23 February and 13 March 2026 as part of the school's Professional Development (PD) In service Days.

The training sessions were accredited by global leader in safety and health programs, Ellis & Associates, based in Florida, United States, whose courses meet the most current American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, Emergency Cardiovascular Care, and First Aid.



More than 150 faculty and staff members participated in the training, reinforcing HIS's ongoing dedication to equipping all employees with the skills

and confidence needed to respond effectively to emergency situations on campus, during field trips, or in everyday life beyond school.

While many staff members had completed first aid training in the past, certifications often expire. These sessions aimed to renew certification for a further two year period, while also focusing on the broader goal of strengthening confidence, competence, and calm decision making in real world situations.

A distinctive feature of the program was that the training was led by members of the HIS community. In preparation, 21 faculty and staff members had completed instructor training and certification during November and January, enabling them to facilitate sessions for colleagues.

SPORTS



This diverse team – representing faculty, national staff, and school nurses – led 10 small groups, creating an environment that was practical, collaborative, and rooted in shared experience.

Participants actively contributed as “students,” sharing real examples from their teaching and supervision roles. Staff practiced essential life saving skills using CPR manikins, AED devices, and realistic first aid scenarios, building both technical skills and the confidence to act quickly and effectively.

Reflecting on the impact of the sessions, Director of Athletics and Activities Filipe Nogueira shared:

“First aid training is not just about certification – it’s about preparedness, confidence, and looking after one another. When staff feel confident responding to emergencies, students are safer, and our entire community benefits”



The instructor program was guided by Aquatics Coordinator Natalio Liares IV, who emphasized readiness through practice:

“Our goal was to move beyond theory and ensure staff feel capable in real situations. By practicing together and sharing experiences, teachers build the confidence needed to respond calmly and effectively when it counts”



Benefits to the School Community:

For students, trained staff mean faster, calmer, and more effective responses when incidents occur. Whether managing minor injuries or serious emergencies, confident adults reduce risk and help students feel safe and supported – allowing them to focus on learning and growth.

For parents, especially in an international setting, regular first aid training provides reassurance and trust. Knowing that staff are certified and prepared strengthens confidence in the school’s duty of care and demonstrates a proactive commitment to child safety.

For teachers and staff, first aid training builds confidence, teamwork, and professional empowerment. Emergencies are less stressful when staff know how to respond and support one another. These skills extend beyond campus, benefiting families and the wider community as well.

By investing in first aid training, Hangzhou International School continues to strengthen a culture of care, preparedness, and shared responsibility – ensuring a safe environment where students, families, and educators can thrive together. □



Color Me!

Congratulations!



Hangzhou International School
杭州国际学校

CLASS of 2026



Hikari Azuma
Japan



Raina Chaurasia
India



Yilei Leo Chen
China



Eshaan Dhanwani
India



Yashar Ebrahimi Moshaghini
Iran



Tom Fougere
France



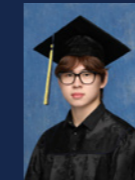
Jiaxuan Joseph Fu
United States of America



Ziyu Stephanie Gu
China



Jiaran Flora He
China



Tianlang Leo Huang
Hong Kong, China



Hojun Jayden Hwang
South Korea



Chun-Yan Calvin Lam
Hong Kong, China



Ethan Li
United States of America



Jinghang Jerry Lin
China



Jiaqi Micah Lu
China



Ping Gabriel Lu
China



Xiaochen Sylvia Lu
Hong Kong, China



Yijun Elaine Lu
Hong Kong, China



Chuk Sum Ikki Ma
Hong Kong, China



Youke Yolco Mao
China



Shauna Mc Erlean
Ireland - Indonesia



Caele Caitlin Mooney
United Kingdom



Irene Pan
United States of America



Jia Chen Qu
Canada



Haeun Ryu
South Korea



Jun Bo Jerry Shao
Chile



Sanyukta Shewakramani
India



Anahita Singh
India



Ka Yee Claire Sun
Hong Kong, China



Kaden Wang
United States of America



Shiqi Alex Wang
Hong Kong, China



Yang Sunny Weng
Hong Kong, China



Jialun Allan Wu
Hong Kong, China



Federico Fedex Xu
China



Kwo Yin Justin Xu
Hong Kong, China



Luca Ye
Germany



Oscar Zhang
Hong Kong, China



Youxin Yolcy Zhang
China



Jade Zhu
China



Qianwen Wendy Zhu
China



Ziwen Candy Zou
Hong Kong, China

Connect With Us

DragonNews magazine is published four times a year and is shared with the HIS and wider Hangzhou communities.

If you would like to contribute an article, have a suggestion for content, or want to ask a question, please email: hismarketing@hisdragons.org.cn

Designer: Mickey Ip

Editor: Simon Ostheimer

Thank you to the members of the MarCom Team, Gabby He, Harper Girdner and Lisa Kerry, and to all of this issue's contributors. Articles and photographs are provided by the HIS administration, faculty, students, and parents, with special thanks to community photographer Yuko Yanagimoto.

WE ARE SOCIAL

Stay connected with HIS through our social channels:



WeChat Stickers



Scan the QR code to use the stickers!



Hangzhou International School 杭州国际学校

SEMESTER ONE

JULY					
M	T	W	TH	F	
		1	2	3	
6	7	8	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	
20	21	22	23	24	
27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST					
M	T	W	TH	F	
3	4	5	6	7	
10	11	12	13	14	
17	18	19	20	21	
24	25	26	27	28	
31					

SEPTEMBER					
M	T	W	TH	F	
	1	2	3	4	
7	8	9	10	11	
14	15	16	17	18	
21	22	23	24	25	
28	29	30			

OCTOBER					
M	T	W	TH	F	
			1	2	
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30	

NOVEMBER					
M	T	W	TH	F	
2	3	4	5	6	
9	10	11	12	13	
16	17	18	19	20	
23	24	25	26	27	
30					

DECEMBER					
M	T	W	TH	F	
	1	2	3	4	
7	8	9	10	11	
14	15	16	17	18	
21	22	23	24	25	
28	29	30	31		

SEMESTER TWO

JANUARY					
M	T	W	TH	F	
				1	
4	5	6	7	8	
11	12	13	14	15	
18	19	20	21	22	
25	26	27	28	29	

FEBRUARY					
M	T	W	TH	F	
1	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	

MARCH					
M	T	W	TH	F	
1	2	3	4	5	
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	
29	30	31			

APRIL					
M	T	W	TH	F	
			1	2	
5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30	

MAY					
M	T	W	TH	F	
3	4	5	6	7	
10	11	12	13	14	
17	18	19	20	21	
24	25	26	27	28	
31					

JUNE					
M	T	W	TH	F	
	1	2	3	4	
7	8	9	10	11	
14	15	16	17	18	
21	22	23	24	25	
28	29	30			

School Calendar 2026-2027

IMPORTANT DATES:

SEMESTER ONE

- AUGUST** 5-7 New Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
- 10-17 All Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
- 18 New Family Orientation Day & Open House
- 19 First Day of Semester One
- SEPTEMBER** 11 Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- 25 Mid-Autumn Festival
- 28-30 Fall Break
- OCTOBER** 1-2 National Day Holiday
- 16 Mid-Semester Progress Reports
- 20 Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences
- 26 Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- NOVEMBER** 27 Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- DECEMBER** 18 End of Semester One & Semester Reports

SEMESTER TWO

- JANUARY** 11 Professional Inservice (no school for students) & New Family Orientation Day
- 12 First Day of Semester Two
- FEBRUARY** 5-12 Chinese New Year Holiday
- MARCH** 8 Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- 26 Mid-Semester Progress Reports
- APRIL** 5-9 Qingming "Tomb Sweeping" Festival Holiday and Spring Break
- MAY** 3 Labor Day Holiday
- 4 Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- JUNE** 1 Student-Led Conferences
- 9 Duanwu "Dragon Boat" Festival Holiday
- 24 End of Semester Two & Semester Reports
- 25 Professional Inservice (no school for students)

- New Family Orientation Day
- Beginning/End of Semester
- New Faculty Inservice (no school for students)
- Legal Holidays (no school)
- School Holidays (no school)
- Professional Inservice (no school for students)
- Conferences



Once a Dragon, Always a Dragon!



Hangzhou International School

2190 Xiangbin Road, Binjiang District, Hangzhou 310052

+86 571 8669 0045

info@hisdragons.org.cn

www.his-china.org

For further inquiries, please contact the Admissions Department

admissions@hisdragons.org.cn

Founded in 2002, Hangzhou International School was the first international school in Hangzhou and remains the only non-profit, WASC accredited, IB World School in Zhejiang province.

