Extended Curriculum Activities: Student Choices & Voices
From the Editors

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From the Editors

Tuija Wallgren & Tasia Asakawa

ISP’s Extended Curriculum Activities (ECA) program offers our students a possibility to explore and learn new skills, work as a team, and be active beyond the classroom. The activities are so varied that it is impossible to present all 81 of them in just 12 pages, but you will be able to find a complete list of activities currently offered in the ECA handbooks, posted on the Extended Curriculum Activities page of our website.

In this issue, we will discuss the philosophy and practice of our ECA program, and especially emphasize the students’ experiences. Most of the articles are written by ISP students and – along with the inspired quotes and happy images – they speak volumes about their appreciation and enthusiasm for the ECA program.

Fitting to our theme, we asked the students from our Journalism program to write for us to ensure the broad scope and continuity of our ECA program. For this issue, we asked Mr. Bersegéay for this issue. You will be able to find a complete list of activities currently offered in the ECA handbooks, posted on the Extended Curriculum Activities page of our website.

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Farewell and Welcome
Arya Alexander and Shamsa Al Ameri, Journalism Club (ECA), Grade 6

In June, ISP’s Journalism Club interviewed Ms. Audrey Peverelli, our departing Head of School, and ISP’s Interim Head for 2013-14, Mr. Raymond Holliday-Bersegeay.

Ms. Peverelli, why did you choose to become a Head of School and why did you choose ISP?
I began my career as a psychologist, and while doing family therapy with children, became increasingly interested in education. During my studies, I specialized in early childhood, working with very young children. I moved to Paris and was appointed ISP’s Primary School Principal after having done several years of teaching and actually founding three schools in different parts of the world.

What do you think has changed from the time you came to ISP?
The school has almost doubled in size, and we have more buildings as well. Also, like in any organization, the solutions and systems that we use at ISP are quite different than what they were 11 years ago.

How would you describe excellent education?
An excellent student, I think, is somebody who is able to organize his or her time and studies, and who can be active outside school as well. The ability to prioritize and focus on the important things is crucial. An excellent education teaches students these skills, and helps them to analyze and make sense of today’s world. Good education teaches students how to apply the solutions and systems that we use at the campus.

What are some of the changes you want to make at ISP?
When I was a university student and young teacher, I used to work as a director of international holiday camps during the summer and I really loved that multicultural lifestyle. After receiving my degree, I started my teaching career in Middle Schools in the North East of England. I soon found that I was missing the diversity that I had appreciated at the camps, and decided to apply to work internationally. That decision brought me to work in Madrid, Boston, Budapest, and now ISP.

What are some of the differences you have observed from your previous school and ISP?
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Getting to know Mr. Holliday-Bersegeay
When did you start teaching? Why did you choose ISP?
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What is the main thing you are looking forward to at ISP?
I’m looking forward to working with everyone in the pursuit of excellence at all levels as well as the understanding of the practice of global citizenship. For me, these are very important, as I know from all the statistics that international school students are going to be leaders in their chosen areas of activity in their future careers. I therefore want to ensure that ISP students are well-challenged academically and that they grow as well-balanced individuals with a strong sense of their own identity, of ethical behavior and direction in life. I’m looking forward to the challenge!
I like brain games because you use your wonderful brain! — Ron, Grade 4

I like [Arabic songs and stories] because if you have a friend who speaks Arabic, you can talk to her! — Rebecca, Grade 1

I like [sewing and stitching] because you enjoy sewing when doing it and even after you’ve made your craft, your teddy bear, for example! We learn to be independent because we sew by ourselves. — Hannah, Grade 3

First Steps Towards Passion
Primary School ECAs

At the Primary School level, the whole family is often involved with the children’s activities. This is also a time when most activities are new to the children, and they are uncertain whether or not they will like them. ISP’s ECA program makes it easy for parents to let their children explore a broad range of opportunities in a safe and familiar environment.

“While it is important that ECA scheduling works for parent and sibling timetables as well, the most important concern is that the participating students are genuinely engaged. Therefore, the decision should always be made with the student’s best interest in mind,” our Primary School ECA Coordinator Nina Wilson says. ‘At the end of the day, our young students are often tired, and it is not beneficial for anyone to force them to participate in an activity that they don’t like.’

At the Primary School, ECA registration is done electronically by the parents, and the system has worked well. While some activities may become full, Nina does her best to give all students equal opportunities to do what they want. The program is constantly growing, and this year Nina is excited to introduce ‘yoga’ and ‘engineering fun with Lego’ to the activity list.

“Last year’s most successful additions were competitive sports and languages. I am extremely pleased to be able to offer Arabic, Chinese and Japanese for beginners, in addition to the many mother tongue classes that are available to Primary School students. Also, it’s great to cheer on our little Panther Cubs, when they compete in swimming, soccer and basketball.”

Report: Secondary School Student Council
By Juliette Teunissen, Grade 10 Student Representative, Academic Year 2012-13

The Secondary School Student Council is a student government group that organizes events and participates in school government issues. Each homeroom elects a representative at the beginning of the year. The Student Council meets every Friday at lunchtime, to discuss school issues, events and ideas to improve school life.

The Student Council also holds an open meeting (photo above) once each term. This is a public meeting where teachers and other students are invited to see what the Student Council does. The Student Council talks about relevant issues, giving the broader school community an opportunity to contribute constructive advice and ideas in Student Council discussions.

In the 2012-13 academic year, the Student Council elected their executive team and student liaisons, worked to improve the school’s facilities and teacher-student relationships and organized social activities to facilitate student interaction, among other things. In April, we organized a Spirit Week, during which the students were encouraged to dress up with a different theme every day. Days like pajama day and color day (each grade has its own color) are great opportunities for students to show their creativity and to raise school spirit.

Report: Primary School Student Council
By Reuben Beard and Oskar Mijic, Grade 5 Student Representatives, Academic Year 2012-13

The Primary School Student Council is a group consisting of one student representative per class from Grades 1-5. At the beginning of the school year, the students are elected by their peers to represent their classes at weekly meetings. Each week the Student Council discusses ideas and projects that they are interested in pursuing. The Student Council representatives collect ideas from their classmates and then the Student Council decides which ideas are most appropriate and feasible. Examples of this year’s projects have been helping the PTA welcome Dr. Jane Goodall to the Primary School, raising money for chimpanzees through toy, book and fruit sales in the ‘help-a-chimp’ project, and a Student Record Day, which was a huge success, raising more than 700€ for UNICEF’s ‘School in a Box’ initiative.
PAMUN (Paris Model United Nations)
By Laura McDuff, Grade 9, Academic Year 2012-13

The PAMUN conference was held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in December 2012. Approximately 65 schools attended, and 19 ISP students were delegates in various committees. The conference theme was the 'Bottom Billion,' referring to the billion people living below the poverty line. My role as PAMUN press administrator was to observe the four committees.

The Environmental Committee began with open debate on the resolution, after which a delegate of China submitted a clause for more economically developed countries (MEDCs) to cooperate with less economically developed countries (LEDCs) in creating infrastructures that enhance sustainable tourism. This would not only help LEDCs develop their tourism, but also create partnerships with MEDCs. After a short debate, followed by voting, the clause passed with an overwhelming majority.

The Disarmament Committee debated measures to combat trafficking of small arms and light weapons in Southeast Asia. A delegate of France submitted a clause to prevent poor border controls by creating a new international body against arms trafficking across borders. Both supporters and opponents produced thoughtful arguments concerning problems this clause might have. An amendment to strengthen bonds between countries, border agencies and the ‘new body’ to prevent arms trafficking was then made. Both the clause and amendment passed voting procedures.

Lastly, I observed the Political Committee, where the topic was how to combat Islamic terrorist organizations in Africa. Austria submitted a clause involving financial and economic restrictions, border control and arms distribution. The clause failed the vote and was not added to the resolution.

I found the PAMUN conference to be well-conducted and an interesting experience. All ISP students debated and participated impressively in their roles. It was a privilege to witness.

THIMUN (The Hague International Model UN)
By Ben Koetsier, Grade 11, Academic Year 2012-13

THIMUN week in The Hague was a fantastic, once-in-a-lifetime experience for 16 ISP Grade 11 students. Located in The World Forum next to the International Court of Justice, the Hague International MUN is an annual meeting of 4000 future leaders from schools around the world, who come together to mimic the procedures of the UN and debate current world issues.

The THIMUN 2013 agenda included issues such as "aiding the survivors of the 1994 Rwanda genocide" and "establishing a UN space program." After waking at an ungodly hour, suiting up, and taking crowded Hague trams, students divided into committees to tackle these issues through writing and debating UN-style resolutions. We made crowds of new friends along the way too. It was interesting to hear the views of delegates in so many different accents, from various cultural backgrounds.

In our free time, we took a trip to Amsterdam and had an all-you-can-eat ribs dinner, among many other things. The group bonded as a team, with the continuous guidance and help of our supervising teachers, the caring Ms. Craig and the jovial Mr. James.

The week was completely unforgettable – an amazing professional, international experience for everyone. All of us, MUN veterans and newbies alike, are looking forward to the much anticipated Grade 12 Athens MUN trip in October.
What Did Secondary School Students Think About Their 2012-13 ECAs?

ECA: CONCERT BAND, Mannat Singh, (Grade 9)
1. Why did you decide to go into Concert Band?
I knew how to play an instrument and I wanted to develop my skills in that instrument by playing songs from all kinds of genres and styles. Since we participate in different concerts and activities, it is a great experience to have.
2. What do you do there?
Everyone plays different genres and music styles that the teacher has prepared. The music we practice is often performed in one of the events that we have every year. We practice the songs every Wednesday during lunchtime with students from different grades, playing various instruments.
3. What do you like about it?
The Concert Band develops our music skills and it is nice to learn things.
4. Would you recommend this ECA to others? Is there anyone in particular?
I would recommend this to people who love music and want to develop their skills. Experiencing the combination of different sounds of instruments also develops your music listening skills.
—Interview by Eunho Kim (Grade 9)

ECA: BASKETBALL, Eriko Kabashima (Grade 9)
1. Why did you decide to join the Basketball Team?
I joined the basketball team because last year I was in it, and I really enjoyed it. Also, the team is very friendly.
2. What do you do there?
Other than play basketball, we practice together and we play matches against other schools in different countries.
3. What do you like about basketball?
I like basketball because we all work very well as a team. We are almost like a family and we communicate well together.
4. Would you recommend it to other people?
Yes, because I had lots of fun and thought that it was a great ECA to do.
5. Does basketball stand out from other ECAs? How?
You work hard because you play a lot, but you are also rewarding yourself because you get to play with some nice people.
—Interview by Charlotte de Wolf (Grade 9)

ECA: ENGLISH CONVERSATION
Koki Tazigawa (Grade 6)
1. Do you like English Conversation?
Yes, I think that it is a very good club and it’s fun.
2. Why do you like English Conversation?
I like it because it is good to learn things.
3. Would you recommend English Conversation to other students?
Yes, I think that it is a very fun club to be in.
—Interview by Yongsoon Hwang (Grade 9)

ECA: YEARBOOK CLUB, Sari Imai, (Grade 9)
1. Why did you decide to go into Yearbook Club?
I did it already last year and it was really fun. I like taking photos, making layouts and designing. It was also fun to see the finished product!
2. What do you do there?
We make the yearbook, from the cover to the photos on each page. Usually, each group of students begins by doing the pages of their own grade (layout and pictures), but once we’re done, we move onto working on other grades’ pages, as they may not be represented in the club.
3. What do you like about it?
I especially like designing, because we choose a main theme that we follow, and then we get to use our imagination to finish the pages.
4. Would you recommend Yearbook Club to other people?
I would like to recommend this to people who love photography and design. It can also be useful for people who want to develop skills for the future, since we get to develop and learn many skills while we are making the yearbook.
—Interview by Eunho Kim (Grade 9)
Anoush Saadat - How an ECA Became a Career

By Rhian Saadat, former ISP teacher and Anoush’s mother

Anoush Saadat was a student at ISP from 1994 until 2007. He loved everything about school, but it was when guitar teacher Teo Dimov arrived at Ranelagh that Anoush found his ‘calling’. Teo made the weekly lessons ‘cool,’ always considering the interests of individual students. Anoush remembers playing a duet on International Day and performing at Graduation.

Because of Anoush’s Iranian roots, he was brought up listening to old Persian music, usually played on setars and tars. He soon began picking out those tunes on the guitar. His music teacher, Felicity Herbert, was also interested in world music, and encouraged him to explore the tonalities he had identified. His future took a rapid turn after visiting a guitar shop in rue Rome, where a Paris-based flamenco guitarist, Andres Serrita, was waiting for his guitar to be re-strung. When he heard Anoush trying a guitar with a Middle Eastern piece, Serrita offered to give him lessons in flamenco. He thought Anoush might find it interesting due to its similarities with Persian music. Anoush spent a morning at Señor Serrita’s studio and never looked back.

At that time, Anoush needed a topic for his Grade 10 Personal Project. He decided to investigate the roots of flamenco music, tracing them back to Persia and India. He spent a summer in the Alpujarra mountains, near Granada, learning about Phrygian and Aeolian modes and playing with local musicians. The end product of Anoush’s project was an original composition, performed with two close ISP friends, Nohiro and Yuki.

Ultimately, Anoush decided to pursue a full-time music career. ‘The message I was given in Spain was that I needed to get going; age is crucial in music and if I wanted to be successful, no time was too soon. I had progressed steadily with Señor Serrita, but the only way to really absorb the rhythms and social context of flamenco is to live in Spain, speak the language, and become a local!’

We, his parents, believe that his easy integration into a completely Spanish culture was largely thanks to the development of open-mindedness at ISP, which enhanced his ability to adapt to the new surroundings. In 2011, Anoush completed his studies at the Cristina Heeren Foundation in Seville, and won the Under 25 Guitar competition. Today, he teaches at the Foundation and performs regularly throughout the world. “I want to develop my musicianship, and begin to explore ways to bring more Persian connections to flamenco. Thanks to Teo and Mrs. Herbert, and the education I received at ISP, I like looking for connections in things, and pushing myself a little bit further each day.”

This article is published in loving memory of Mrs. Felicity Herbert, who sadly passed away earlier this year.