



ISSUE #13

25 November 2011

THE MEDEE

The Weekly Newsletter of the International School of Ulaanbaatar

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings to all

On Thursday, Nov 24, ISU hosted a visit from the teaching and administrative staff of our partner school in Baganuur. This is the school and town to which we donated a number of books last year. At the end of their afternoon visit yesterday, they picked up another dozen boxes of additional books to bring back to their school. Next weekend, a number of our students, TAs and teachers will be travelling to Baganuur to give assistance in their public library with the organising, cataloging and library check-out/check-in system of their growing book collection.



Our partnership with Baganuur is just one example of many where ISU staff and students are engaged in meaningful service to the UB community. The learning that students can take away from their experiences in such service, wherever they do it, can be very significant in helping them develop a sense of their shared humanity within their community. It can help them learn that their personal efforts can make a difference to others and encourage lifelong civic participation.

To realize the full learning potential of our partnership with Baganuur, we need to make sure that we are focused on “service learning” rather than just “community service”? But what is the difference between “service learning” and “community service”? Furthermore, in the MYP, the term used is “community and service”. What does this mean?

Laurel Singleton editor of *Service Learning in the Middle School Curriculum: A Resource Book*, states that it is a mistake to use the terms “community service” and “service learning” interchangeably. Community service is defined as volunteering in the community for some form of external reward such as fulfilling a graduation requirement. Service learning, in contrast, is a type of experiential learning that combines academic content with direct service experiences in which students provide genuine service to their school or community while extending or deepening their understanding of the curriculum content. If service learning is done correctly, it provides students the opportunity to learn about diversity, social development and citizenship and to further develop their teamwork,



problem-solving, and interpersonal skills. Of course, service learning needs to be assessed as part of the student’s overall performance in the curriculum programme in order to make it really meaningful.

One of the five Areas of Interaction in the MYP is called “Community and Service”.

FRONT PAGE— THE MEDEE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE EACH WEEK AT: WWW.ISUMONGOLIA.EDU.MN

This label is used specifically to ensure that the concept of service learning is emphasized rather than community service. The IB states that community and service aims to give students opportunity to determine how they live in relation to others, how they can contribute to the community, and how they can help others? It starts in the classroom and then extends beyond it, requiring students to take an active part in the communities in which they live. It is achieved through a process of discovery of self and community and of reflections inside as well as outside the classroom. Parents who had an opportunity on Thursday to attend the PYP assembly, will notice that these concepts are extensions of the Primary curriculum framework with its trans disciplinary themes: who we are; where we are in place and time; and sharing the planet. Service learning in the IB starts at the very early grade levels.



We will be talking a lot about experiential learning at ISU over the months to come – service learning, outdoor education, and other forms of education outside the classroom. This form of learning is at the core of an IB education and it is what sets ISU apart from other international schools here in UB – even those who may claim to be IB schools because they are (or will be) offering the last two years the IB programme, the Grade 11/12 DP. The kind of learning we are looking at here is not developed in just two years! It is acquired by putting into practice an ethos that permeates all the years of schooling – from early Primary to senior Secondary - exactly what we do at ISU.

Best wishes

Robert Stearns, Director

DIARY DATES:

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| November 29 | Introduction to the grade 5 exhibition for G5 parents and students-8:30 |
| December 8 | Primary Production-19:00 Grade2-5 students to perform |
| December 9 | Primary Production-10:15 All primary students to perform |

SECONDARY NEWS

The basketball season is underway and we are excited about both the girls and boys teams. The DP visual arts students are creating their hearts out – ask you children about their work at school. The Career Day has turned into a longer term project for some of our students with internships for them here in UB – well done Ms. Richard for organizing the day, and to Jill Baer who has secured the 1st internship! The Student Council is happily getting another dance ready for our secondary school students – it will take place next week here at ISU on Friday night the 2nd of December. Please allow your child(ren) to attend and have fun with their schoolmates.

Please check to be sure that your child(ren) leave the house in the morning with warm clothes for the cold weather that has now come upon us. Many come without coats, and it is -22C in the mornings. We want to keep all students safe.

Have a great long weekend!

Betsy Hanselmann, Head of Secondary

International Week-Reflections

November 13-18 was International week. As well as participating in several events that celebrated the diversity of the ISU community, students also inquired into deep and surface culture and what it means to be an internationally minded citizen. At the end of the week students had the opportunity to reflect on their learning. Here are some of their comments:

I liked to go to each class and do something about the countries – Selina, Grade 1

The best thing about international week was visiting the Ger because we saw how real Mongolians live. – Paige, Grade 2

The best thing about International week was the Mongolian assembly because they showed us lots of things. The best thing was the contortionist because she was very good at bending. – Sansarbileg, Grade 2

I would stay at ISU because I like speaking English and Mongolian. – Ishjamts, Grade 3

I think host country day is important because we live in Mongolia. – Taryn, Grade 3

When we played the trade game, I learnt that stealing and other things we did on the game was true in real life. – Rina, Grade 4

This week, learning about other culture was most important because not knowing anything about someone's culture and saying rude things is ignorant. – Grace Joy, Grade 4

I learnt that I shouldn't judge people by the way they look. – Mollie, Grade 4

I think the most important thing I learnt is to be open-minded with other cultures, question what I don't know and to be proud of my nation. - Ariana, Grade 4

I am an inquirer because I want to learn more about different cultures. Amanda - Grade 5

I think I have become more respectful to other nationalities and been more of a risk taker because I have been asking other people to tell me how to say hello in their language. - Ronan, Grade 5

It's really fun and interesting working with people from all over the world and learning about other religions, beliefs and cultures. - Annick, Grade 5

The most interesting thing about studying at an international school is we get to interact with other people from different countries and learn more about their culture. – Haryoung, Grade 6

The most interesting thing for me is watching how people from different nationalities interact with each other. – Enerzaya, Grade 6

I learned that there is a lot of difference between everyone and they should all be appreciated. – Elliot, Grade 7

Learning different cultures, learning to be open-minded and understand the fact that there is no right or wrong. Just difference. – Temuulen, Grade 7

Everyone is so unique, and everyone has different cultures. So this made me think about how everyone is so different, and therefore similar, so now when I leave I know to be accepting of everyone. Sabrina, Grade 8

I learnt that it's okay to be a third culture kid, there are some benefits and some disadvantages. You can use those skills later in life. – Nitika, Grade 8

I think that by teaching students and teachers more about culture, uniqueness and by discussing global questions and issues, the people are more likely to thrive in a global society. – Anonymous, Grade 9

International week has made us closer to one another due to the fact that all of us got to know about our differences and similarities. – Anonymous, Grade 9

It is interesting to see so many different people of different backgrounds, religions, mind sets under the same roof. It is also nice to see that we all work so well together. Anonymous, Grade 10

When people are told about the existence of other cultures they will be open minded, tolerant and accept others. Anonymous, Grade 10

We have learnt how unique people are and that people have strengths in different areas. People contribute to the society in different ways. Anonymous, Grade 10

PRIMARY NEWS

The new green field and playground may have been blanketed by several inches of snow this week, but that didn't stop the children from playing outside. In fact, this week's snowfall inspired the primary students' imaginations and creativity. During recess breaks this week I observed numerous versions of collaboratively constructed snow structures. From forts to igloos to houses, the structures made of out snow seemed to change shape from one recess period to the next.

During their play in the snow, the children also demonstrated and discovered the skills required of being a member of a team. The biggest challenge with recess this week was getting all the children to stop their play and come inside when the bell rang! Please ask your child of their time spent in the snow this week. With the cold weather and snow season upon us, please see that your child arrives to school in appropriate warm clothing every day.

It is expected that children play outdoors during recess breaks until the temperature goes below -25 C; therefore, a warm coat, boots, a hat, gloves or mittens and waterproof outer gear are essential for play.

Rick Elya, Head of Primary

