

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR THE SHANGHAI COMMUNITY AND HANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

# COMMUNITAS

MAY 2011

**A look  
at the  
SCIS-HIS  
Curriculum**

**PLUS:  
Katherine  
Niu wins  
the China  
Regional  
Spelling  
Bee**

**Learning  
for Life**

**Earth Week celebrated  
across the SCIS-HIS campuses**



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Communitas is the official magazine for the Shanghai Community and Hangzhou International Schools. It is the publication of all things learning and teaching in the SCIS-HIS system of schools.

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# Letter from the Superintendent

Dear SCIS-HIS Community and Friends,

As we head into the final weeks of another wonderful school year, we should pause to reflect on the continuous undertaking and responsibility involved in the growth and learning of a child. Indeed much goes into the planning, organization, and implementation of programs and opportunities that explore life-long skills and enduring understandings. At our schools, we recognize that this endeavor is best pursued when all those in the care of our students embrace a culture of learning. At SCIS-HIS schools, faculty, parents and students are all learners, and in this month's *Communitas* magazine we celebrate "Learning for Life".

Some will say that education is all about values. What to learn and what not to learn? How to teach and how not to teach? What a school should provide and what a home should provide? Essentially, the decisions we make in this regard reveal how we believe we should spend our time with our kids. At our schools, we believe involving the student at the center of these decisions is critical to providing an education that allows for all of our students to pursue academic and personal excellence. At SCIS-HIS schools, we believe lifelong learning should be focused around our Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLR's). Simply put, we want all our students:

- To Be Effective Communicators
- To Be High Level Thinkers
- To Have a Solid Foundation of Knowledge
- To Have Positive Learning Attitudes and Behaviors
- To Demonstrate Global and Community Appreciation

It is no coincidence that SCIS-HIS schools have built their reputation upon the pursuit of these lifelong skills and understandings and that our parents report a high degree of agreement with these educational values (as expressed in last year's WASC "focus on learning" survey). One reason is that these skills, understandings, and attitudes are needed and valued in the community and workplace now and in the near future. It is also no coincidence that many of these educational pursuits have been valued by many cultures throughout history. However, at our international schools, our unique imperative is to educate a most diverse group of students, each with distinct learning needs, to be prepared to use the tools, solve the problems, and be successful within the opportunities of tomorrow. So, for example, while we still embrace the importance of language learning and communication as did the ancient Greeks, the age of the global



digital landscape has significantly altered the tools and aptitudes required for our students to be competent in the future.

Lifelong learning can instill creativity, initiative and responsiveness in people thereby enabling them to show adaptability in modern society through enhancing skills to manage uncertainties, communicate across and within cultures, and negotiate conflicts. At SCIS-HIS schools, we believe a community that values and engages in lifelong learning is best positioned to support the students the school serves. For this reason, we strive to provide a variety of opportunities for parents and teachers to continue learning. Whether it is a parent forum sharing the challenges of raising a teen in Shanghai or the Masters of Science and Educational Doctorate degrees we host for teachers to further their craft, we believe lifelong learning is a habit of mind that serves us as reflective and ever-improving individuals.

During the final months of the school year, many of the culminating assessments, student-led conferences, individual presentations, and final performances will highlight the lifelong learning we intend for our students. It is a time one can witness great growth and celebrate in the accomplishments of our students, parents, and faculty. At SCIS-HIS schools, we welcome you to share in our community of lifelong learners.

**Jeffrey R. Stubbs**  
Superintendent of Schools



# Growth a Reflection of SCIS-HIS Excellence

by DANIEL ESCHTRUTH, Director of Development

As we head toward our fifteenth anniversary, it is wonderful to be able to look back upon the history of our fine schools, to acknowledge the changes, the improvements, and the development that we have seen, and that I have personally seen in my 9 years. In less than a decade we have witnessed incredible growth, graduations at all three campuses, and a continuous effort on behalf of the teachers, administrators, parents and students to ensure our school community flourishes.

As a system of schools we have responded to this growth and the growing needs of our community in a variety of ways. The addition of facilities such as the Pudong Upper School Campus and the Hongqiao Early Childhood Campus helped address the surging populations on both sides of the river in Shanghai. Enhanced science, theater, athletic and fine arts facilities across all campuses ensured our students have top quality spaces to practice, improve, and perform. The adoption of the International Baccalaureate program at both Shanghai campuses ensures the broad needs of our international population are being addressed at our highest grade levels. Finally, we'll see more major developments occur this summer with an additional building being added to the Early Childhood Campus in Hongqiao and the addition of a theater on the Pudong Upper School campus.

As the entranceway for all families across the system, the Admissions department is reaching its busiest time of the year just as the academic school year begins to wind down. With new families coming to see the campuses each day and current families informing the department of their ultimate departure it truly represents the cycle that is International School Community. Each year, there is an expected amount of student turnover, as families move to their next international posting, or back to their home countries, and this, of course, opens the doors to new families entering Shanghai. To ensure that we can adequately monitor availability for the new school year, we need to have updated information from our present families and we thank you all for the time you take in helping us gather all this information. We try to offer information upfront to all prospective families about availability and ask any interested parents to please contact our Admissions team should you wish to explore the opportunities of having your child/ren be a part of the growth that is reflecting the popularity and success of SCIS-HIS

Over the years, we have monitored our expansion closely to ensure that we maintain our strength in community, our high

“Over the years, we ... ensure that we maintain our strength in community, our high standards of academia and our philosophy to provide opportunities for each and every child to grow as individuals.”

standards of academia and our philosophy to provide opportunities for each and every child to grow as individuals. To ensure this continued success for the year ahead, we need to make important decisions due to the unprecedented early enrollment figures that we are now witnessing in several grades system wide, and almost all grade levels at our Hongqiao campus. While much of the enrollment growth has led to positive program expansion and facilities additions/enhancements, of growing concern is the possibility that current SCIS-HIS families might take a tentative stance with re-enrollment because their company posting may not yet be definitive. It is important that these families seek advice from the admissions department, to ensure that they understand the situation as it stands, and what is needed for their children's seats to be reserved. Understanding the dynamics of the average expatriate postings in a city like Shanghai, we try to be as accommodating as we can. Although we are unable to reserve seats beyond the seat guarantee deadline without payment, there are a number of options available to parents whose status for next year is uncertain. Considering what priorities will be given for wait listing, the SCIS-HIS approach will look to keep our campuses as diverse as possible, while continuing to offer a rigorous program, and provide a strong, supportive, involved community.

# Administrators Tour Pudong

by JEFFRY STUBBS, Superintendent of Schools

The April monthly system administrator meeting brought together our senior administration team to discuss opportunities and challenges facing our network of schools. SCIS-Pudong Head of School, Mr. Ryan Blanton, hosted and led the group on a tour of the Upper School facilities.

We began with a look at the Upper School swimming pool, which held its first multischool swim meet this year. As we continued, we noticed the hallways at SCIS-Pudong were covered with photos and artwork that clearly highlight the artistic talents and educational pursuits of its students. After showing off Shanghai's only true black box theater, we made our way up to the visual arts exhibition space and discussed plans for the expansion of arts classrooms and facilities.

Finally, we visited the shell of what

could be a performing arts theater, each of us with thoughts and visualizations of how this magnificent space might look. We are now pleased to announce this site has been granted the capital support necessary to go forward with the long awaited... SCIS-Pudong Upper School THEATER!

The plans have been finalized and work is set to begin right away, carrying on through the summer break.

Our tour ended with a discussion of current issues and key strategic objectives by the Superintendent of Schools, campus heads along with the system administrators. Our unprecedented early enrollment



figures were discussed as an affirmation of SCIS-HIS' commitment to maintaining a rigorous, engaging curriculum pursued by motivated students and parents committed to their child's learning and school community. We will continue to uphold these values as we adapt to the growth present throughout our system of schools.

## A Moment with Ryan Blanton, Head of School, SCIS Pudong

### Where do you come from and what has been your journey bringing you to SCIS 2010?

Originally, I'm from St. Louis, Missouri. My wife, Karen, is from England and both of our children, Grace and Patrick, were born in South Africa. Karen and I met in Cairo in 2004 and have since spent time in Cape Town and Shanghai. We're lucky to have had some great experiences as a family.

### What do you love about being a Head of School?

First and foremost, I work with a lot of great people. That's huge. Specific to the job itself, I enjoy having insight and influence into all aspects of the school. It's a fairly big operation, with a lot of different interest groups, so it's fun and challenging to try to keep things balanced. Plus, there aren't too many jobs where you can transition from Kindergarten story time to a Board meeting to a high school musical all in the same day.

### What is your favorite time of year on campus or favorite event?

I'd probably have to go with graduation. I think you'd be hard pressed to find another situation or circumstance where there's such concentrated pride. The parents are proud, the teachers are proud, the students are proud, and all for good reason. I also enjoy the conversations about what each graduate has planned for the year ahead. It's exciting to think about what these kids have in front of them.

### What is great about learning and working at SCIS Pudong?

I live and work in a great community. It's hard not to be impacted by that. Not a day goes by when I don't learn something new from the people around me. And I think that's the beauty of working in a school like SCIS, you're surrounded by smart, successful, driven people, both kids and adults. And these people have been around a bit. They've travelled,



they've worked hard, they speak multiple languages, and, for the most part, they all get along. That's the sort of environment that I'd prefer to spend my time. And it's certainly the sort of environment that I'd prefer be impacting my own children.

### What is your favorite part of living in Shanghai?

Watching Grace and Patrick learn and speak Mandarin. Something tells me they wouldn't be doing that if we lived in St. Louis.

# Take a Hike!

by ROBERT VANDER EYKEN, Head of School, Hangzhou International School

The clear water deepened as more rocks were removed from the streambed and placed across the dam that my son and I were constructing. For over an hour, one recent Sunday afternoon people passed us as they hiked along the Nine Creeks Road in the hills and tea fields only a few kilometers from downtown Hangzhou. I found it as interesting to watch the people who briefly stopped and observed us as they undoubtedly found the two *laowei*, an eleven-year old and his father, playing in the creek.

During our dam building, hundreds of people passed with the sun shining through cypress trees that flanked the stream. Some took photos while others shook their heads in disbelief. Eventually one family did approach and their children joined our mission to deepen our reservoir. They were German and their addition to our antics furthered the circus-like atmosphere.

We are blessed to be able to readily escape the concrete jungle and retreat where one can breathe air infused with oxygen,

the perfume of pine, cedar and blossoms and the sound of birds and the wind rustling through trees. However, in all those retreats rarely have we seen children. It is a sad irony that in a Chinese city where nature is so accessible, few parents capitalize on the physical, social, emotional and academic benefits for their children.

Contact with nature is a “natural” part of healthy human development. Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) concentrate better after contact with nature. Children with views of and contact with nature score higher on tests of concentration and self-discipline. Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility, and they are sick less often.

When children play in natural environments, their play is more diverse with imaginative and creative play that fosters language and collaborative skills. Awareness, reasoning and observational skills improve. Nature buffers the impact of stress and helps children deal with adver-

sity. Early experiences with nature have been positively linked with the development of imagination and sense of wonder. Wonder is an important motivator for lifelong learning. A decrease in children’s time spent outdoors is contributing to an increase of children’s myopia, a visual problem, in developed countries. Natural environments stimulate social interaction between children and the outdoors are important to children’s development of independence and autonomy.

Finally, we live in a world on the verge of serious environmental crisis. School curriculums are replete with references to teaching knowledge about environmental issues but as ecologist John Burroughs writes, “knowledge without love will not stick, but if love comes first, knowledge is sure to follow.” As parents, if we are truly concerned about our children’s personal and collective future on a planet shared by over 7 billion people we owe it to them to take them on a hike and let them get their feet dirty. Living in Hangzhou is a great way to bring our children “back into the woods.”

# Harry Potter’s World

by ELIZABETH HAH, Lower School Music, Hangzhou International School

THE GRADE 4 AND 5 CLASSES at Hangzhou recently performed a fantastic show based on Harry Potter. While we love performing regular music concerts, some of the students along with some of their teachers, are great Harry Potter fans. We decided to base our show around that theme and performed scenes taken directly from the books including Professor Trelawney’s dramatic prediction of Harry’s death, Ron’s accidental love potion overdose and Harry’s final battle with Lord Voldemort.

There was also the Wizarding World Game Show where students from the four Hogwarts Houses pitted themselves against each other. They not only answered general knowledge questions, but performed spells and charms, magically levitating objects, disarming opponents, magnifying their voice, disappearing into the fireplace and dancing the Hogwarts Waltz.

Of course, they also had to sing a few Hogwarts’ songs and finished off their performance with an energetic rendition of “Do the Hippogriff”, accompanied by the famous wizarding band, the Weird Sisters, who moonlight as teachers and students at



HIS. The Hogwarts Faculty choir also made an appearance: in their other lives they are parents and teachers of our students.

It was a tremendous learning process; the students worked extremely hard and produced excellent performances. We’re very proud of all of them!

# The Spelling Bee

by MICHAEL GUSTAFSON, Language Arts, Hongqiao with ROB CRITCHER, Humanities, Pudong and RYAN RETTIG, Hangzhou International School

**8** *4 years of history, 11 million students around the world, and China's dream to win . . . this was the adage that lured our SCIS-HIS students to prepare to compete in the Spelling Bee. For the third consecutive year, China's regional spelling competition was organized by Community Center Shanghai. The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the US competition that has gripped audiences since 1925 and now includes international schools in China and elsewhere as students worldwide now participate in the fun and fervor.*

Our SCIS and HIS campuses were pleased to have had a great mix of students take part. Each campus had the opportunity to send one representative to compete in the March 19 China Regional Spelling Bee at the Shanghai Centre Theatre for a chance to win this third round of spelling competition and go to represent China in Washington, D.C. on June 2 in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

In leading up to the Spelling Bee, each of the campuses held its own competition. The first round of spelling created much excitement among students to practice on their spelling skills and go for the chance to win or to just see if they could spell more words correctly than their classmates. Some might have thought it was silly to want to spell words in a competition but still they gave it their all and did their best. Others thought of the grandeur to win and represent all of China in a national event. Some lower school students gathered at the Pudong campus for the second round of the spelling competition and one fourth grade student was heard saying, "Maybe that will be me someday." In the end it came down to three students representing our middle school campuses.

Our three student winners to move on to the China Regional event were, Lauren Bennett of Pudong, grade 8, Arushi Rana of Hongqiao, grade 7 and Katherine Niu of Hangzhou, grade 7. The round three competition was held in Shanghai with 11 schools from Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Suzhou sending 33 finalists

in all. The finalists sparred one by one up on stage before the judges and theatre audience to spell words such as *sustenance*, *quintessence* and *rheumatic*. Finalists were allowed to ask the origin of a word, the definition and to use the word in a sentence.

In the end, Katherine Niu emerged as the grand champion. With the successful spelling of "splenetic" she earned the title of China's Scripps Spelling Champ. Katherine and her mom and dad will travel to the United States in May to compete with the rest of the US and global spelling champs in Washington, DC. The semi-final and finals competition will be held June 1-2 and will be broadcast live on ESPN!

The competition may have been fierce, but it always remained friendly and gave our students an experience of a lifetime. One parent commented that this competition has given

her daughter the opportunity to build her confidence and character; something that will benefit her for years to come.



HIS and China's Spelling Champ, Katherine Niu (Center)



## A Word with Katherine

KATHERINE NIU IS A SOFT SPOKEN, well mannered seventh grader from HIS. *Communitas* took a few moments to talk with her about her recent accomplishment.

When asked about her preparation for the spelling competition, she admitted to studying the words issued by the Scripps' organization. While her mother and father helped quiz her on these words, it seems that Katherine's best training has been her years as an avid reader. She said she recognized most of the words offered during the spelling competition, but when it came down to it, she dug into her own knowledge of words and deep background in reading to come up with the correct spelling.

While a bit surprised to emerge as the champion of China, she is very excited to be able to travel to the United States with her mother and father to compete for the grand prize – a \$30,000 cash prize along with a \$5,000 scholarship, reference materials and of course, a trophy!

# Music and the Importance of Creativity

by STEPHEN VENEMA, Head of Fine Arts, Hongqiao

*"A song will outlive all sermons in the memory." Henry Giles*

**A**s a teacher of Upper School Strings Music at Hongqiao campus, I am aware that my students may not choose to go on to become professional violinists. They will however, need to be creative in the future regardless of their chosen field. In light of this I feel it is important to create opportunities for students to compose music and then play it. These exercises awaken and develop parts of the students' minds and personalities that they can successfully use in creative ways throughout their lives. I believe that a complete education must include music and a complete musical education includes developing musical creativity.

Developing our student's creative abilities in music is also necessary in grades 6-10 as we prepare students for the possibility of studying IB music in their 11th and 12th grade years. IB music at the higher level contains a 25% composition component.

On that note, (pun!) here is a snapshot of the creative ways students at SCIS Hongqiao are composing, reflecting, playing and researching music.

In our lower school, our fantastic music teachers, Helen Bendall-Hughes and Tammy Rauschenbach, have been engaging the students in creating and playing their own musical instruments. The students from grade three to five really let their imaginations run wild! Students have also been learning to compose 16 measure rhythms and melodies. Sometimes, I miss teaching the younger students!

In Middle and High School Strings classes, we have been learning to improvise on instruments while accompanied by music from GarageBand backing tracks. We then performed at lunchtime in the Library. The amount of courage to perform in front of friends at lunchtime, when there is no score in front of you, just relying on your skills and the music in your heart is

amazing. The students really blew me away.

Strings students have also written duets and performed them for the class with a classmate. They can be seen on each of the student's own web pages that link from mine. <http://Blog.scischina.org/svenema> I am very proud of my students and their compositions.

In Middle School General Music/Choir classes, students have written and recorded their own rap songs. This combines rhythms and metered rhyming lyrics. They have also explored improvisation as singers by trying a little scat singing. Students are now working on creating themed music which reflects an imovie presentation of some of their China Trip photos.

At the last Middle School assembly, the Percussion Ensemble performed a piece they wrote themselves. It showed dynamic and rhythmic contrasts as the students demonstrated their knowledge of structure.

These are just a few of the ways the Music Students at Hongqiao are developing the creative side to their personality through music. I am so proud to be a part of a school that places such a high value on music, the arts, and creativity.

## A Side Note

Steve Venema recently attended the Apple Distinguished Educator Institute held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. During the very busy five day schedule, there was time built into the conference for profes-



sional reflection on a "personal brand" of teaching. Upon consideration of the many different components which make up his professional identity, Steve formulated a personal teaching mission statement. The following is Hongqiao campus' Head of Fine Arts' personal statement:

To play music is to utter divine wisdom, but to compose music is to create worlds, capture emotions and fly without limitations.

# Instrumental Music in Pudong

by TRACEY RAMSEY, Music, Pudong

The instrumental program in Pudong has experienced tremendous growth throughout the past handful of years, growing from a small group of unsure middle and high school students on the PD Lower School campus, to a thriving group of beginning, intermediate, and advanced students that perform regularly at our Upper School campus. What started as a small program with dedicated and enthusiastic students has blossomed into a large and thriving group of bands.

Three years ago, our small beginning band met twice a week and were able to play 6 note songs at the Winter Concert, and though they were hesitant in the beginning and not sure of what to make of this new teacher and program, now they are a confident, mature group of students that work on a daily basis to master their respective instruments. Over fifty beginning students receive between 3 and 4.5 hours of music a week. These kids were playing 6 note songs at the Hongqiao Dynamix festival with their peers, and now, just six months later are ready to join with the intermediate players.

One of the difficulties of being a band teacher is creating a band that fills out the needs of the complex music that we play. It can be a big problem for teachers around the world to coax students away from the traditional instruments (everyone wants to play the flute!). However, at SCIS, our beginners play on a wide variety of instruments, that offers us the opportunity to play a wider variety of music, and these bands have a low brass section



that provides the opportunity for this diversity and powers the bottom part of the band.

Every student in the Pudong middle school is afforded the opportunity to be engaged in a music class that includes choir, strings and band. The instrumental program at our school is thriving. In just three short years, we have grown exponentially and look to expand that growth even further in the coming years. With a rich, diverse band, excellent opportunities outside of school, regular performances for both the student body and parents, the SCIS Pudong music department is offering a program that provides students with the best of what an international school music program should offer.

## Performances Year Round at HIS

by NICOLE LAPWING, Music, Hangzhou International School

BOTH UPPER AND LOWER SCHOOL students of Hangzhou International School have been busy with music and musicals, productions and performances, beginning way back last fall and running right through to this spring. Aply assisted and directed by music specialists Nicole Lapwing in the Upper School and Liz Hah in the Lower School, there have been a number of notable presentations this year.

Two small ensembles were assembled from the Upper School student musicians. These ensembles perform music from various genres and styles, and each musician plays two to three instruments. The groups are currently writing their own music. They have also enjoyed performing at various venues around Hangzhou throughout the year including, the Hyatt, the Four Points Sheraton, SC Pottery, and the Hangzhou International Art exhibition.

The Upper School is currently practicing after school for the musical production of "Twisted" - a story combining the well known story of the "Wizard of Oz", with the popular Broadway musicals "The Wiz" and "Wicked". The students "ease on down

the road" May 27 at 7:00pm at the Hangzhou International School performance center.

Liz Hah, HIS Lower School Music specialist, is working with the elementary students quite a bit to prepare for their production of "Harry Potter" this spring. The students also gave a great performance of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory", and "Bugs" earlier this fall. She has been enjoying her time working with the music students this year in the lower school.

The performance center at HIS is a well used space, offering multiple productions each year and offering our children the chance to express their inner actor and our community a chance to enjoy these young musicians and performers.



# SCIS Pudong Hosts Variety Show Fundraiser

by DANIEL JUBERT, Lower School Vice Principal, Pudong

SCIS Pudong Lower School Student Council recently hosted a Variety Show. The event was connected to a larger school-wide goal of supporting the Mai Tian foundation but in the process, the audience was treated to a fabulous show.

Acts included circus tricks, magicians, musical talents, comedy skits, videos, and—of course—plenty of singing and dancing. Brave students showcased their budding talents to the crowd while building self-confidence and pride in their abilities.

Throughout the year, SCIS students, staff, and parents have been committed to this organization, donating basic items and raising money to build a new school for children of Chinese migrant workers. Admission was “by donation,” and, by the end of the night, Student Council had raised a substantial amount towards building a new school. It was a success all around!



## Kids Helping Kids

by JANE MACMILLAN, Lower School Principal, Pudong

KIDS HELPING KIDS is their motto and that is what the Lower School students of SCIS Pudong are doing as they work towards providing educational opportunities for children living in the mountain villages of rural China.

The SCIS Pudong Lower School student council, under the direction of Sheri DeNeef, (3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher) and Bruce Delaney (2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher), is working with Maitian, a non-government organization, to provide an opportunity for children living in the poor mountain areas of rural China. Maitian, which was established in 2005 by Mr. Mo Fan, works towards building schools and providing educational material for these children. It currently has 4500 volunteers and works in 13 provinces in China. In the past 5 years, Maitian has funded 180 temporary teachers, built 13 schools, 200 libraries, and reached 3051 students.

Two SCIS Pudong parents, Ms. Hester Taverne and Ms. Maud Ackermans, wanted to help make a difference in the lives of children and began researching almost six months ago before presenting Maitian as a charity Pudong students could support. Together with the student council, a goal was determined; the students of SCIS Pudong would help Maitian build their 14<sup>th</sup> school.

The goal is lofty. The students will need to raise a total of RMB 60,000 to fund the 14<sup>th</sup> school. The students are driven. They have sold greeting cards, have held a variety show to raise money and awareness and have had an art piece auctioned off at a recent community event – and there is more planned. In the words of Mr. Mo Fan, “What these children need is not charity but the opportunity to change.”

With momentum growing and the student and community embracing the



challenge, nothing will deter these students from recognizing their goal and living their motto - kids helping kids.

# Learning Outside the Classroom

by CHRISTI CHASE, Learning Specialist, Pudong

When we think of learning, most often we think of a school classroom. Truth be told, the majority of our learning occurs in these spaces. However, not all learning comes in a structured classroom environment. Learning can also occur in our everyday activities, experiences, and interests and found in a variety of places in various forms.

At SCIS-HIS, we encourage our students to learn not only in their classrooms and from the curriculum, but also from the world around them. Our students learn from their personal interactions with their peers, as well as interactions and conversations with their teachers. Additional contributions come from their personal experiences with the surrounding culture in and around China. Learning can and does occur anywhere and everywhere.

As students, teachers, and parents, it is important for us all to continue our learning and expand our learning experiences outside of the classroom setting and into the wide world of our interests. Someone interested in the ocean may learn how to scuba dive and experience firsthand the underwater world. An interest in the theater may spark a desire to participate in a play. A child interested in

space may go to a NASA Space summer camp and learn about space flight and engineering and what it takes to be a real astronaut. All these different experiences can be learned in a “classroom” setting, but the real life experience of being there and experiencing that learning first hand in the ocean, on a stage, or in a flight simulator, can impact a student or an adult and how they see their life and the experiences they choose next.

As the summer months quickly approach, many students and parents are thinking of summer plans, visiting families, or returning to their home country. These months are also a perfect time to help encourage students and parents alike to plan experiences and learning outside the classroom and in the world around you. Have you made plans yet? Have you considered what interests you might take and make into a learning experience or one that you can share

with your family or friends? I encourage you all this summer to take a look at your plans and experiences and see how you can make them into summer learning experiences. So give it a try and take your learning outside the classroom!



## City Film Fest Hosted by Pudong Campus

by RANDY GIRTNER, IB Film/Theory of Knowledge/Drama, Pudong

THIS YEAR, SCIS Pudong was proud to host the 4th annual Shanghai Student Film Festival at our Upper School Campus this April. The Shanghai Student Film Festival is a teacher-run festival that provides students with the opportunity to showcase some of their amazing work in this exciting medium. Teachers from all over the city have come together to offer this tremendous opportunity for students and this year was no different. Last year's festival at SCIS Hongqiao was so successful that my wonderful colleagues asked (coerced?) me into chairing the festival again this year. I agreed on the condition that we host the event on our lovely Pudong campus.

Our event this year was bigger and better than ever. Whereas previously we had an event that focused on one day of getting the students together, this year we expanded it to two days of workshops and activities. In addition to that, we also created the first ever EARCOS Asia Film Festival and had our first students from outside the city (and country!) join us for the events. The International School of Beijing, Korea International School and Hangzhou International School joined us for a few creative days.

Our first day consisted of what is a first for the city - an 8 hour film festival. Students were divided into small groups

and tasked with writing, filming, and editing a three minute film over the course of eight hours. On the second day, we welcomed our distinguished guests for the festival: Logan & Noah Miller, writers, producers, directors, and stars of the film *Touching Home*; and Hammond Peek, the Oscar-winning sound recordist for the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *King Kong*.

Overall, it was a grand success. Students from all over Asia worked together to make movies, meet successful industry people, and attend workshops, all while celebrating their art. What will these students do next year?



# Learning for Life

**E**nvironmental awareness forms a substantial part of the SCIS-HIS curriculum and philosophy. They plant the seeds, nurture the students, and watch as global citizens grow, and watch as each student's success branches into all aspects of their learning and life. They provide the roots and the soil for this growth with programs and activities, and a supportive learning community.

The aim of SCIS-HIS to teach environmental awareness is no better reflected than during Earth Week from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April. With pledges, to concerts, from cleaning up trash to turning off electricity, the students learnt about the issues the environment faces and devised ways to correct them.

## Pudong students reduce their Carbon Footprint

Contributor: Ms. Amy Brummit, Grade 1 and Mr. Daniel Jubert, Lower School Vice Principal

DURING EARTH WEEK, students were encouraged to participate in a variety of practical and eco-friendly activities aimed at reducing their "carbon footprint." There was Water Bottle day, where all plastic cups at each water cooler station were permanently removed and students were asked to use their reusable water bottles from that day forward; classrooms tracked the garbage they created during the day and focused on using environmentally-friendly items to reduce waste, and they focused on reducing energy consumption as the school participated in its very own Earth Hour where—in a symbolic show of support for energy conservation—all electricity in the school was turned off. Students also made a "Pledge for the Planet," coming up with simple every day "acts of green" to contribute to helping the environment stay healthy.

The climatic event of the week was our Earth Day Rally, where students became highly engaged in viewing the Theatre Departments production of the play *The Great Kapok Tree*. This story tells the tale of a man about to cut down a tree in the Rainforest, but is then taught by the animals several reasons why he should save the Rainforest. The star of the show was a real 7-meter tall tree that was later planted on SCIS grounds!



## Hongqiao community performs in order to plant

Contributor: Mr. Noah Flesher, Kindergarten

ALONGSIDE MANY OTHER ACTIVITIES like green market days, pledges, “wear blue jeans for 2 trees”, organic gardens and walkathons, the SCIS Hongqiao Campus also hosted the 3rd Annual *Million Tree- EARTH DAY Concert* on the April 22<sup>nd</sup>. With performances from faculty and staff, the community enjoyed a wide range of entertainment, all for the cost of 2 trees to be planted in Inner Mongolia through *Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots Million Tree Project*.

“I am always concerned about our environment and feel it’s of great importance for our students and their families’ awareness to be raised and take action to do things to better our environment and lessen our impact and reduce our environmental footprints,” says Noah Flesher, Kindergarten teacher and SCIS Roots and Shoots representative. Jane Goodall also presented SCIS Hongqiao with two awards, earlier in the school year. One award was for completing the Thousand Tree Challenge for 2010 in support of the Million Tree Project. The second, a ‘Student Action Award in support of the Million Tree Project.’ “Your school forest has been planted in Kulun Qi, Inner Mongolia. The trees help to stall desertification, soften the impact of sandstorms, and fight global warming by clearing the air of carbon dioxide,” said Dr. Jane Goodall.

Jamie Hull, Grade 5 student, told us more, “I was lucky enough to attend the awards ceremony for Roots and Shoots in a middle school in down town, Shanghai. I was able to listen to Jane Goodall, the founder of the Roots and Shoots organization, talking about some of her experiences with the chimpanzee’s. I think that she is a wonderful lady and I admire her.”

“We had our photograph taken with Jane Goodall. She



was the special guest at the ceremony and she talked to us afterwards. Do you know that she travels around the world for 365 days a year to tell people about how we can save the world? She is 76 years old and when she travels, she always takes her stuffed monkey called Mr. H with her,” said Melissa Hull, Grade 2.



“Ms. Goodall spoke to the audience and announced that it is not too late to make a change and that if we think, anything can happen. She talked about her work with the chimpanzees and in her study how she figured out that chimpanzees have the closest DNA to us. I feel so lucky to have met Jane Goodall in person,” said Isobel Kuo, Grade 5.

## Hangzhou students learn, decide and act

Contributor: Maranda Brunner, Upper School Science

EARTH DAY AT HIS was a group of high-school students and their teachers finding a problem and deciding to do something about it, “...we assess the damage of human activity. This is where HIS students can decide if they really do want to *think globally but act locally*,” says Ms. Maranda Brunner. HIS decided to adopt a little park beside the river, and have committed to clean it up. They found trash in the pond and along the pathways. Through a series of activities students will create a safe environment, clean, free from trash and an area that students can use and appreciate. “A positive example of a few is the best way to change the world. Students who engage in saving the planet come to love it. Love is the key to action. It is incredibly powerful to hear students say, as they picked up trash, how they will never again be indifferent to waste.”

As Dr. Jane Goodall says, “People ask me ‘What can I do?’ I think if we all just spend a very little time each day, thinking about



the consequences of our choices, just the small choices—what we eat, what we wear, how we get from A to B, how we treat people or animals, or the environment—then we start making small changes and millions of small changes lead to big changes. Everyone of us matters, everyone of us makes a difference.”

The same applies for each student, within the SCIS-HIS learning community.

# Life-Long Learning and the International Baccalaureate

by JO BURKE, Upper School Vice Principal, Hongqiao

*"Life in the 21st century, in an interconnected, globalized world, requires critical-thinking skills and a sense of international-mindedness." - <http://www.ibo.org/>*

One core component of the IB Diploma program is an extended essay. This is an independent, self-directed piece of research, which offers students the opportunity to investigate a topic of special interest in depth. It is intended to promote high level analysis and synthesis of information, independent research skills and writing skills.

This past couple of months has been busy for both grades 11 and 12 in the area of the extended essay. Grade 11 students were introduced to the task and have chosen their research question. Students are now working on developing their argument and critically analyzing research so that by October they will have completed a comprehensive piece of work of 4000 words. Grade

12 has just celebrated the submission of their extended essays to the IB examiners. To celebrate they dressed in costume fitting for their chosen essay topics. Their research questions included:

- 'How did the Cu chi tunnels benefit the Viet Cong in the war in Vietnam?'
- 'How is Butoh rooted in both western and eastern theatre practices?'
- 'How was Pepsi® able to beat its competitor, Coca Cola® in the Indian market?'

Recent studies on IB Diploma Program graduates in university confirm that they perform well and have significantly higher grade point averages and higher graduation rates than students who did not complete the IB Diploma Program (<http://www.ibo.org/research>). The extended essay is just one part of the IB Diploma program which makes it a good grounding for life long learning.

## Writing at SCIS Hongqiao Lower School

by LORETTA WAYTH, Lower School Vice Principal, Hongqiao

Looking back over the past school year, I have appreciated the enormous amount of work by our elementary teachers at Hongqiao in strengthening our curriculum programs. This year we have specifically focused on enhancing and implementing high quality writing practices across the grade levels to ensure we have a consistent writing program that scaffolds and supports all student learning in this area, irrespective of their previous background or experience.

The 'purpose' of writing, is a major element for consideration. In order to write for different audiences and different purposes, we must be able to help move students closer to mastering the *hows*, *whens*, and *wheres*, in order to select different oral and written styles of writing. To ensure students gain a thorough understanding of each different writing genre, they require a variety of learning experiences through immersion, modeling and creating texts.

Finding the most appropriate writing instructional method for each child is essential. If this occurs, the writing of students will gradually move from dependence on the teacher to an independent approach from students. We have examined various methods and we now have more powerful and in-depth knowledge of good writing practices. This will allow our teachers to create lessons that best cater to the individual learning needs of all of their students.

Working closely within this writing agenda, students will work through the writing process, which includes pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing of a particular text. The ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency,



conventions and presentation are all carefully considered by the student. Along with conferencing with their peers and the teacher, the writer is provided feedback and clarity.

The most positive aspect of working together as a faculty on a focused, targeted area of the curriculum, is the professional learning team approach where conversations about best teaching practice, meaningful assessments, the sharing of strategies, and open ended activities are all brought to the table. As a result of this, learning opportunities are created that both excite and motivate our students.

# Trees For a Cleaner Future

by CAMRYN LITJENS, 5<sup>th</sup> grade student, Hongqiao



As my dad and I were waiting for our food the other night at the restaurant, I explained to my dad what the Million Tree Project\* was about. My dad was engrossed by the project. He asked loads of questions. Thankfully, I could answer the questions because Mr. Flesher had told me all about the Project last year when our Girl Scout troop planted a tree for Earth Day.

I asked my dad if he would buy 500 trees, I asked him because I really feel/felt very strong about the trees and I really wanted to help Mr. Flesher and the others for this project. He said yes! I was so happy I could help Inner Mongolia. Then my father asked why that much. I felt a shiver go down my back, "Because that is how much I love you and more!" I replied just to make something up. But still it is true I love him that much.

When I am sixteen or older I really want to see the plantation and if so, I would help out. I think I would always remember that experience. I think I would enjoy seeing "my" trees being enjoyed and/or cared for. For me to work with the trees/environment is such a delight, I think it is so important to help our world for the next people who will be able to see the world in good shape.

\*The Million Tree Project was started the Shanghai Roots and Shoots organization in 2007. Individuals and organizations have the opportunity through Roots and Shoots to raise money to plant trees in Inner Mongolia. This particular area suffers from desertification and planting the trees will help to stop the terrible sandstorms that hit there each year. Globally, it will also help in the efforts to reduce Global Warming. (Editor's note)

# Disaster Relief Bake Sale

by HIROMI YASUKAWA, Preschool, and NOAH FLESHER, Kindergarten, Hongqiao

PEOPLE'S HEARTS WERE ACHING after a 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit New Zealand on 22 February then, three weeks later, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit Northeast Japan on 11 March. Acute disasters require acute response. In a time like this, our diverse community at both SCIS Hongqiao campuses has worked together to raise over RMB64,000 which is the equivalent of over USD9,800 through various fund raisers. These funds will be transferred to the Red Cross while we continue our efforts with the Pudong campus and Hangzhou International School.

The Hongqiao main campus held three Disaster Relief Bake Sales along with Student Council Beverage sales to raise funds for the Red Cross. More than 40 parent volunteers took time from their busy schedules to volunteer at the Disaster Relief Bake Sales to sell baked goods that were generously baked and brought in by families. Some classes even baked during school! We would like to once

again say thank you to them all.

One of the volunteers was Ms. Linda Li who is the VP and designer of the plush toy company called Plushland ([www.plushland.com](http://www.plushland.com)). She approached us with a plan of donating 500 "Help Japan" teddy bears in

which all proceeds would also go to the Red Cross. At both the Hongqiao main and ECE campuses, these teddy bears flew off the tables, and at the HQ campus.

The best part of the sales was that our communities knew exactly what the cause was for and they wholeheartedly contrib-



uted. We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to everyone who contributed to and supported this cause in various ways. It is our sincere wish that the monies donated by our SCIS community will play a role in bringing back hope and smiles to the victims in New Zealand and Japan.

# SCIS-HIS Personnel Receive Red Cross Certifications

by STAFF WRITER

During the drizzly month of January this year, while the SCIS-HIS communities were returning from our winter holidays and settling back into our routines at school, many of our SCIS-HIS staff and faculty were spending time in the Pudong pool working on Red Cross Certifications.

Giovanni Bello, Head of Aquatics at the Hongqiao pool, and Bonnie Coles, Head of Aquatics at the Pudong pool, collaborated this year to provide training for interested staff and faculty to become certified in two Red Cross courses. While Bonnie made arrangements for certified instructor Maggie Loudon of Singapore American Safety Swim Instruction to teach the courses, Giovanni spread the word amongst all SCIS-HIS faculty that training was available. The courses were also offered to personnel at other International Schools.

Personnel from each campus were invited to participate so that each cam-

pus had a widely distributed representation. Both Mandarin and English speakers were trained as well as some Spanish speakers along with faculty and staff. The goal was that each campus would have certified instructors in various languages as well as various positions.

"My vision is that our pools can develop into community aquatics centers and resources," says Giovanni Bello. "Not just for our schools but for the whole city of Shanghai. Our certified instructors can now offer this training to others - from our schools *and* those in the surrounding communities."

The first course offered, trained our personnel so that they would become certified first aid instructors. They received not only training in basic-level Red Cross First Aid, CPR and AED (use of defibrillator) but also received training in how to teach others these valuable skills. Our certified faculty and staff are now able to certify others in First Aid/CPR/AED for

Schools and the Community, Sport Safety Training, and First Aid - Responding to Emergencies. (Course descriptions per [www.sassisafety.com](http://www.sassisafety.com))

The second course offered training so that our certified personnel can now teach Lifeguarding, Shallow Water Attendant, Lifeguard Management, First Aid, CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer, Administering Emergency Oxygen, Blood borne Pathogens Training and Basic Water Rescue.

Our staff and faculty pursued these certifications by attending weekend courses held at the Pudong pool. The First Aid course required three 12 hour days offered on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Lifesaving course was offered over four 12 hour days from Thursday through Sunday.

Due to the dedication and enthusiasm of our faculty and staff, SCIS is now one of only two schools in Shanghai that can offer Red Cross Certification.

## Read-A-Thon Benefits Blind

by NICOLETTE YPMA-KLOEK, Parent, SCIS-Hongqiao

BRILLE WITHOUT BORDERS (BWB) is an organization which teaches blind children in Tibet to read and write in Chinese, Tibetan and English with the goal of becoming independent people. For the past 4 years, SCIS students have raised money through the annual Read-A-Thon to support this worthy cause.

Children from all grade levels participate in the Read-A-Thon by securing patrons who will pledge money according to how many pages or books the child reads. Joining in, the Hongqiao Upper Schoolers held a house competition to see which houses could raise more money and read the most pages. Also, joining in, Hangzhou International School, read like crazy and helped us in this worthy cause! Thanks to Paul Wong and Mechteld van Dijk who helped in Hangzhou!

In past years, with the money we

raised, Paul and Sabriye (the founders of BwB), were able to build a bakery in Shygtatse and start a Braille book production library in Lhasa and Shygtatse. They also have been able to expand the school in Lhasa by adding an extra class and Kyila (blind teacher) started her own Kindergarten! This is the first Kindergarten for Blind children in Tibet! See [www.kikikids.org](http://www.kikikids.org). This year, Gyendesen, who started as a student in Lhasa and graduated in Kerala, India, has plans to expand the Braille book production for the library.

This year, our goal was to help pay



the daily operational costs of the school and bakery as well as living expenses for staff and teachers. Prices of food, energy and salaries have gone up this past year. With our help this is all possible as SCIS-HIS collected a total sum of nearly **47,000 RMB!** A great big "Thank You" to all who made this generous donation possible.



# The Ever Evolving Library

by MARGIE DE VILLIERS, Head of Libraries

“...students, more than anything, need guidance to ensure that they are gathering information efficiently and effectively.”

The newly assembled Library Committee at SCIS Hongqiao has begun their appraisal of the focus and the function of the SCIS-HIS Media Centers to better align with the school vision, curriculum of all departments, and to better serve and support our students. Our philosophy is to embrace and involve all our stakeholders. For that reason, our membership includes students, administration, faculty, the technology coordinator, media studies specialists, and parents.

This began with a Symposium of Librarians from the Shanghai Librarian Network. Held in the Hongqiao Upper School Library, librarians from various international schools in Shanghai, and Suzhou joined us as did our SCIS-HIS librarians Karen Togneri from the Pudong cam-

pus and Paul Wong from the Hangzhou Campus. Dan Kerr, SCIS Hongqiao Upper

School Vice Principal (see article following) was our featured speaker.

The feedback from the International Librarians on the TeLMs (Technology Library Media Studies) approach was that they loved the collaborative approach to the media centre and Dan is being called back to present at the upcoming Shanghai Librarian Conference next November.

The TeLMs group are looking at current resources, including technology, magazine subscriptions, fiction and non fiction books, and the physical learning space. Because of the vastness of information available, students, more than anything, need guidance to ensure that they

are gathering information efficiently and effectively. The SCIS-HIS libraries and librarians will lead the charge into this vast area of information and ensure that students, families and friends are safely and knowledgeably guided all the while.

There are several resources that are unavailable online, and these resources and archives will be available in our library. The physical space will reflect a learning centered environment, where students can carry out objectives from their teachers.

Reassessing, updating and meeting the changing needs of our students is at the forefront of this vision put forth for our ever adaptable SCIS-HIS libraries.

## Technology Essential in Today's Libraries

by DAN KERR, Upper School Vice Principal, Hongqiao

DURING MY RECENT PRESENTATION to the members of the Shanghai Library Association, I introduced an exciting approach in library/technology integration which promises to keep student learning current, relevant and engaging. The school libraries of today should not be only spaces where students can check out books, study, or find a quiet place to read but a gateway to so much more. The librarians of today need to continue to be media studies specialists, passionate about guiding students in the use of technology, and assisting them in all kinds of multi-media and research based projects.

Books not only have a place in the library but need to get into classroom libraries as well for much easier access. Next, a collaboration between technology and the libraries needs to be borne out to the classrooms, teaching students and assisting teachers in a wide range of

areas. Things like academic honesty, research citation, the effective use of EBSCO, E-portfolios, implementing and understanding QR codes (think bar codes with far more information encoded), and so much more!

Another necessity is to look at redesigning our current library spaces so they have the feel of true, active, engaging, and busy media centers. Smart boards, LCD monitors, kindles or iPads, movable table pods with screens for presentations and collaborative research projects, QR code corner for student book review – these are just some of the new technologies that could make our libraries the information centers our 21<sup>st</sup> century students require.

To realize this vision, the communities who use the libraries must guide this process. This includes not only the librarians but must continue to include tech



coordinators, media studies specialists, teacher, students, parents and administrators. This all-encompassing group must regularly meet to review, suggest, discuss, and find ways to keep this vision sustainable and achievable. With collaboration, plenty of discussion, loads of tweaking and some passionate visionaries who want to bring this to life, our libraries can be the leading edge centers of essential learning our students of today require.



# Learning Resources Abound in Shanghai and on the Net

by CHRIS MCANALLY, Director of Technology

It can be difficult keeping up with your profession overseas. It's easy to use that as an excuse to let training slip and then find yourself behind the times when you return home. However, both Shanghai and the Internet offer a wealth of corporate and university educational systems. The following are just a few suggestions from the local area and the Internet.

## Business Process Training

SAP is one of the largest software companies in the world and their software runs most large companies' business processes. Orbis (<http://www.orbis-china.com.cn/>) offers English and Chinese SAP training. It also offers an eAcademy which provides an adaptive testing/training system.

SAP also offers training directly at their Shanghai training center (86 21)63345758 or [education.china@sap.com](mailto:education.china@sap.com).

## University Training

### Shanghai Jiao Tong University

website: <http://en.sjtu.edu.cn/>

Jiao Tong University is one of the largest and most reputable universities in China. It is conveniently located near the SCIS Hongqiao campus. It offers English-language programs in Engineering – both BS & MS available in partnership with the University of Michigan; Economics; Management; Finance; and Law – both Chinese law and a Doctorate of Law.

### Fudan University

<http://www.fudan.edu.cn/englishnew/>

Fudan University is among the most reputable universities in Shanghai and is the third-ranked university in mainland China. It has a long history of accepting and training foreigners and is one of the few Chinese institutions to do so with over 2500 foreign students currently. It has a very long list of academic programs and a large graduate school.

## Online MBA Programs

### IE Business School

Website: <http://www.gmba-eng.ie.edu/>

IE offers a 15-month Global MBA program for English and Spanish speakers. The program allows students to connect to the virtual classroom from anywhere in the world. Students are required to participate in two week-long residence sessions in Madrid.

### University of Texas at Dallas

Website: <http://som.utdallas.edu/>

The University of Texas at Dallas, besides being my university, is well-regarded and has a robust online program. UTD also has an excellent engineering program.

## Books

Amazon ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)) is an excellent source of books you can use to keep up on skills. Amazon's Kindle books can be read on a variety of platforms (Mac, Windows, iPhone, Android, and Kindle devices). You can take the books everywhere with you. Alternatively, if you are an engineer, Packt (<http://www.packtpub.com/>) is an excellent source of technical books in PDF format.

## Chinese Language Training

Learning Chinese is a very rewarding experience and can make your time in China much more valuable and comfortable. There are a number of places to take classes, or you can find a personal tutor.

### Mandarin House

<http://www.mandarinhouse.cn>

Mandarin House is one of the largest Chinese-language education centers in Shanghai. They offer group and individual training.

### Mandarin Garden

<http://www.mandaringarden.org>

Mandarin Garden offers both language and cultural courses. Despite having one of the busiest websites I have ever seen, they do have a solid reputation.

## Chinesepod

<http://www.chinesepod.com>

As mentioned in a previous *Communitas* article, Chinesepod.com offers online extensive Mandarin and a few Shanghainese lessons. They provide PDF transcripts, vocabulary practice exercises, and audio recordings. They also provide a tutoring service through Skype with a Chinese instructor. Although this is convenient, it is an expensive option.

## Teachers in Training

Teachers, like all professionals, need to keep up on the latest technologies, techniques and theories. The international school community in Shanghai takes a lead in Asia holding conferences, workshops and training opportunities.

## Technology Learning Summit - May 14th Concordia International School

<http://phoenix.ciiss.com.cn/websites/artc/2010/03/10/summit/>

At the Technology Learning Summit teachers from all over Shanghai will be sharing knowledge and exchanging techniques and strategies. SCIS-HIS faculty members, Stephen Venema, Erick Pessoa and Paul Witzel, will be leading workshops.

## Learning 2.011 - September 2011

<http://www.learning2.asia/>

At the Learning 2.0 conference (which will be held at our own Pudong Campus), teachers from all over Asia and the Americas will be learning the best practices of technology and classroom integration. This year's conference continues the cohort practice, but it has been modified to tightly integrate with core curriculum.

Additionally, workshops are planned on changes to existing technologies and new introductions including Moodle, Wordpress, and Apple's iLife. Teachers will also have the chance to examine incorporating iPads & iTouches into the classroom.

# 5th Grade Inventors Invade Pudong!

Contributions by JENNA SANDOVEL, Pudong, DOUG BRUNNER and PAMELA CAMPBELL, Hangzhou, students MARIUS LONBERG, TYCHO VAN TARTWIJK and TOM KWON

The 8th Annual SCIS-HIS Invention Convention, held recently at the SCIS Pudong campus, was a resounding success. Over 180 students from all three of our SCIS-HIS campuses (Pudong, Hangzhou, and Hongqiao) gathered to participate in this celebration of creativity and entrepreneurship. Fifty judges from the SCIS-HIS community - from engineers to businessmen, architects to analysts - came forward to volunteer their professional insights to the students.

The actual gathering of all our young inventors at the Pudong Campus was just the final step in the process that began weeks ago for our SCIS-HIS 5<sup>th</sup> graders. It took about ten weeks for these students to get ready for this day. Along the way, they received lots of instructions and other ideas to help them with their projects. These activities included the "Egg Drop" where students designed packaging to protect raw eggs being dropped from a tall building as well as an "enlightening" presentation by an SCIS Hongqiao parent, Guido van Tartwijk, about LEDs and a better light bulb. Another parent, Lucas Nijman, made a radical show about ways to invent and how to improve inventions.

As long and hard as the students worked, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade faculty was there to guide and support them through this amazing process. Doug Brunner and Pamela Campbell from HIS joined the faculty just this past fall. Being new 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers as well as being introduced to the whole concept of the Invention Convention challenged them to keep one step ahead of their students. Aply assisted by Jenna Sandoval from Pudong, they managed to get a handle on the process and then learn right alongside their students.

The students and faculty from HIS traveled from Hangzhou to Shanghai the day before the convention, enjoying an afternoon at the Science and Technology Museum before settling into the Pudong campus for the night with their sleeping bags. The following morning started quite early for them as the sun peeked through the windows but they were eager and ready to go when they joined the students from both Pudong and Hongqiao in setting up in the school gymnasium.

Every student's presentation included a persuasive speech to help outline how their invention was unique and to explain how it solves a problem. They drew blueprints, created advertisements and, best of all, built a prototype of the actual invention. The judges faced tough choices, determining the top alternative between a reminder-binder, an Earth Saver, a board game designed to teach Greek Mythology or a clever solution to those hot pan handles and lids.

As the convention came to a close, the awards were revealed and presented. As the judges' decisions became public, the young inventors learned which of their presentations were



deemed "Most Original", "Most Patentable" and "Best Overall".

From day one to the final awards ceremony, the process was littered with life lessons and ample opportunities for creative thought. It was amazing to see how well prepared the fifth graders were and the creativity that flowed from these young minds. Tom

Kwon, a non-native English language speaker and Hongqiao 5<sup>th</sup> grader remarked that while he was nervous because of his language skills, as soon as he heard the judge remark "clever invention" and the other children say "cool", he would love to do it all over again! Other 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Marius Lonberg and Tycho van Tartwijk remarked on the hard work and the long process and advise the current 4<sup>th</sup> graders to start thinking about their inventions now and how they "can make the world a better place."



# ACAMIS Chinese Spelling Bee Hosted at Hongqiao Campus

by HELEN HE, Mandarin, Hongqiao

The Mandarin department at the SCIS Hongqiao Campus hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> ACAMIS Chinese Characters Spelling Competition recently. Over 400 students from 11 international schools including Nanjing International School, Hangzhou International School and Wuxi Taihu International School participated in the competition. Mandarin teachers from the 11 participating schools as well as college students from the East China Normal University worked together to produce this successful event.

The competition covered 9 levels so that students from lower to highest levels of learning were able to choose the right level to participate. Level 1 students were tested on recognizing and writing 70 characters while level 9 students were tested on 1200 characters and some idioms. Students competed with each other against the clock to write as many characters as possible within a given time. They also showed their abilities in making new characters based on existing characters. The competition was fierce, but the students all seemed to enjoy each other's company.

One student from Nanjing International School said to their teacher, "I wish this was a two-day event as it was really fun."

With over 1000 students, teachers and parents participating in the events, the atmosphere was festive as all enjoyed a beautiful spring day in Shanghai. The campus bustled with activity as a home hosted swim meet took place on the same day. We were delighted to see many of our students leaving the competition wearing their medals.

The SCIS-HIS Mandarin teachers are to be specifically recognized and commended for their tireless work and hours of preparation. They worked for more than two months preparing for this event as well as coordinating the efforts of teachers from participating schools and local college students. Without their effort or commitment, this event could not have been successful.

Finally, a big thank you to our school's administration team for encouraging and supporting us throughout the event.



# Mandarin Poetry From Daily Life

by CAROLYN ZHANG, Mandarin, Hongqiao

OUR GRADE 4 Intermediate 2 Mandarin Level students created poems which related to school life such as soccer and school subjects in response to our unit 3 learning.

上海长宁国际学校  
Author: Quincy and Patrice,  
我们爱学校,  
天天去学校。  
时刻看着表,  
千万别迟到。

Reflection: It is the second time to write a poem. We love to write a poem to reflect what we have learnt in class.

足球  
Author: Joon Soo, Anton, and Woong  
Gyu

玩足球，必需踢。  
射门时，用大力。  
如果没力气，  
你就不要踢。

Reflection: This is the first time to be writing a poem about sports called soccer by teamwork. We appreciate our work because we make use of all the materials we have.

学科  
Author: Sien, Jim, and Ahan  
一科，两科，三四科，  
五科，六科，七八科。  
九科，十科，十一科，  
都没时间休息了。

Reflection: In unit 3, we focused on school life. The poem is just like us when we are tired due to a lot of subjects. Writing a poem is really fun.



# Let's Talk About Curriculum

by TAMMY RODABAUGH, Director of Curriculum

In this article, the facets and levels of the SCIS-HIS curriculum are described giving those in our community a common basis for communicating about the learning and schooling experience at SCIS-HIS schools.

## Facets

Curriculum has three main facets.

- **Content:** What is to be learned.
- **Pedagogy:** How the learning opportunity is structured.
- **Assessment:** The means for demonstrating to what extent the content has been learned.

## Levels

Curriculum must be considered at various levels.

The discussion of the facets above starts at the highest level, the institution, and becomes more specific as we narrow the focus down towards the individual student. We will begin our discussion of SCIS-HIS curriculum, at the highest level – the institution -which means the network of three schools: SCIS-Pudong, SCIS-Hongqiao, and HIS-Hangzhou.

## Description of Curriculum at the Institution Level

- **Content:** What is to be learned is expressed through the academic area standards and expectations.
- **Pedagogy:** How the learning opportunities are structured is expressed through the Vision Statement, the Mission Statement, and description of the nature of learning opportunities.
- **Assessment:** The basis for demonstrating that learning has occurred is expressed through the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results.

## Content: Academic Area Standards and Expected Learning Opportunities

Academic Standards align academic areas with the Expected Schoolwide Learning

Results. Our curriculum is divided into 6 specific academic areas:

- World Languages (this includes all languages taught at SCIS-HIS)
- Social Studies
- Science
- Mathematics
- The Arts
- Physical Education.

Beginning with school year 2011-2012, we will launch a 7<sup>th</sup> curricular area that crosses all academic areas. The Transdisciplinary area will include outcomes related to collaboration, time management, and research skills to name a few.

## Pedagogy: Vision, Mission Statements, and Expected Learning Opportunities

### Vision Statement

The vision statement describes the type of school we strive to be and sets the tone for the entire curriculum. It is expressed by the Superintendent of Schools and approved by the Board of Directors. The following is the SCIS-HIS vision statement:

*We will be defined as a school of excellence by each of the constituents of our school community and the Shanghai-Hangzhou expatriate populations. We envision...*

- a diverse student population from around the world
- a system in which every student has equal opportunities for success and for university admission, based on a variety of performance indicators
- a system meeting the needs of individual learners, rather than making the learner fit the system
- a system that allows teachers to teach to the ESLRs (Expected Schoolwide Learning Results) in creative and motivating ways
- students who will be well-rounded, community contributors armed with the academic and personal skills to succeed in the adult world and who see the relevance and purpose in their learning

- staff who feel a high degree of purpose, job satisfaction, pride, and personal growth
- parents who feel informed, valued, and satisfied
- a strong connection to the Shanghai and Hangzhou communities and the perception that SCIS-HIS represents 'excellence'

## Mission Statement

The mission statement describes our purpose and provides the mandate for our curriculum. The following is the SCIS-HIS mission statement:

*Our mission is to provide all of our students with opportunities to pursue academic and personal excellence in nurturing, international community environments.*

## Expected Learning Opportunities

It is expected that all of our students are provided access to learning opportunities that nurture the following:

- curiosity and inquiry
- ingenuity and productivity
- resourcefulness and flexibility
- imagination and expression
- thoughtfulness and consideration
- connectivity and influence

## Assessment: Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLR's)

The expected schoolwide learning results articulate what we expect students to know, understand and be able to do as a result of taking full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.

It is expected that every SCIS-HIS student will demonstrate the following:

- A Solid Foundation of Knowledge
- Positive Learning Attitudes and Behaviors
- Effective Communication
- High Level Thinking
- Global and Community Appreciation

*Next month: description of curriculum at the campus level.*

# PAFA News Hongqiao

IN APRIL, PAFA had another successful *Used Book Fair*. This was kicked off with the book drive where all ECE and Lower School students were challenged to bring in 1000 books. This was then extended to the Middle School with their goal being an additional 650 books. As an added incentive to clearing off those bookshelves at home, a reward was offered - ice cream for all if our goal was achieved! The books came pouring in and we more than met our goal. Due to this generosity from our SCIS-Hongqiao community, there were more than enough books and the Used Book Fair was held over 4 days. The excitement on the childrens' faces was amazing as they came in excitedly looking through table after table of books for a good read.

Saturday, May 14th was the PAFA End of Year Carnival. Each year teachers, parents and students come together to celebrate the end of a successful school year. It is a great opportunity to celebrate the SCIS-Hongqiao Community, say farewell to those departing and have fun with the whole family. Luckily we had favorable weather for this annual event.

We are currently hard at work on a new slate of officers for next year. Additionally, we are considering a new booster structure in consideration of groups that cross between elementary, middle and high school boundaries.

For more information about PAFA at the Hongqiao campus, please contact Angela Anderson, andersonsinchina@gmail.com, or Gayle Thams, thamsgr@mac.com.

# PAFA News Pudong

PUDONG LOWER SCHOOL has had a busy spring with events leading us directly to the end of the school year.

In late March, our lower school held their Student Performed Variety Show. It was a wonderful evening of performances: guitar, singing, miniature plays, magic acts, bands and the list goes on. Our student Council helped organize the Variety show and all donations will go directly to our migrant school charity project MaiTian. It is the students' goal to raise 60,000RMB to build a new school. The variety show helped raise 17,000RMB!

On Saturday May 14th, we held our annual Family Fun Day. This event is always well anticipated and therefore well attended by our students and families. We had a afternoon filled with relays for all students and parents, a special area for our lower pre-school students with fishing games and looking for buried treasure. No day out is complete without a barbeque and much fun was had by all. The parents told PAFA their children were exhausted by the events of the day!

Looking forward....we have Field Day, our 5th graders Moving Up Ceremony followed by a special day out with a pool and pizza party.

We are always welcoming new members! Please contact us at:

- Lower School PAFA Chair - Renae Darling, darlingfam@yahoo.com
- Upper School PAFA Chair - Karla Quartuccio-Kluessendorf, karlygirl@hotmail.de

# PAFA News Hangzhou

WHILE SPRING IS A TIME for many HIS families to start packing and getting information about their next location, people from other countries are anticipating a move to Hangzhou. Our Welcoming Committee is spending a lot of time at the moment making the first contacts with the new families and answering the many questions people have moving to a country like China. The Welcoming Committee does a terrific job informing the parents and giving them the assurance that Hangzhou is a great place to live!

PAFA-HIS also hosts a book club. This month, we are reading "Miss Chopsticks" by Xinran (very well known from novels like "The Good Women of China"). If you want to join an interesting discussion about Chinese culture, please send a mail to Barbara Schrahe (baschrahe@freenet.de) and she can add you to the mailing list and you will get all the details.

The organization of the 5K run has started. Put the date on your calendar (28 May!) and start training. It will be a great event again with many sponsors, food and fun and we hope you will all participate. Keep an eye out for sign up information coming soon! PAFA will be there organizing games for the children and making sure that we have volunteers enough to make this again a successful event.

We hope there is something interesting for you to join and look forward to seeing you at one of our events. Also parents visiting from Shanghai are always welcome to join our events if you are in Hangzhou. Please contact us!

Please check the announcements section on the PAFA part of the school website (www.hischina.org) for regular updates. Contact us directly at pafa\_hz@scischina.org.

# Opportunities Abound for Life-Long Learning at SCIS

by AMY BRUMMIT, EARCOS Representative/1st grade teacher/Theatre Director, Pudong

Those of us in the world of education know the value of powerful professional development. In our continuous quest to inspire and challenge our students as well as ourselves, we look towards The East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS) for insight and wisdom.

EARCOS is an organization of 115 member schools in East Asia. These schools have a total of more than 83,000 pre-K to 12th grade students and over 9,000 teachers and administrators.

Their mission statement conveys their impact: "EARCOS inspires adult and student learning through its leadership and service and fosters intercultural understanding, global citizenship and exceptional educational practices within our learning community."

When attending an EARCOS conference or workshop, an educator is guaranteed supportive collaboration, intercultural understanding, effective communication, educational opportunities, rejuvenation in their profession, and the prospect of forming new friendships with people who share the same focus and dedication.

The EARCOS Executive Director, Dr. Dick Krajczar, an extremely optimistic and welcoming man, has made a commitment to hold down costs of workshops and conferences, while ensuring quality professional development. Both weekend workshops and the main four-day annual conference offer incredible opportunities for staff while still remaining affordable.

When attending the annual four-day conference, we are reminded of the value of learning outside our own campus walls. We spend our days in several workshop sessions of our choice, honing in on our area of expertise and learning new approaches to keep up with current day best practices for our students.

In the evenings, we have the joy of attending cultural art and entertainment fairs, where welcoming receptions and dinners provide us with a relaxed envi-

ronment to confer with fellow educators around Asia.

The daily keynote speakers inspire us in such a profound manner, we are reminded of why we became educators; to encourage, facilitate, and urge our students to do better, in hopes of making a difference in their lives and enthruse them to become global citizens. A quick Google search of some of the recent keynote speakers, such as John Joseph, Alan November, Geoff Green, Fred Mednick, and Michael Thompson demonstrates the level of expertise presenting, training and attending these conferences.

Additionally, select universities allow participants post-graduate credit for attending the conference, and therefore you will find many educators working towards higher degrees in the realm of education.

Last school year, SCIS had 17 teachers from our three campuses attend the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual EARCOS Teachers' Conference in Manila, Philippines. When they returned to their designated campus, they applied their gained knowledge to improve student learning by implementing that knowledge into their classroom instruction and sharing it with fellow colleagues through on-site workshops. By ensuring teachers the opportunity to attend such successful conferences, we discover the benefit enhances our students' achievement in potent ways, deepening their understanding of core ideas and essential questions.


At SCIS-HIS, we are fortunate to work with colleagues who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience from around the world. With great pride, this year we sent four of our SCIS Pudong Lower School teachers to represent SCIS-HIS (last year two SCIS Hongqiao Lower School teachers presented in Manilla) as presenters at the 9<sup>th</sup> annual EARCOS



Teachers' Conference in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. In order to be chosen as a teacher workshop presenter, interested teachers go through a strict process of submitting proposals, demonstrating their workshop to administrators and EARCOS Teacher Reps who have to evaluate their presentation using EARCOS high standards, then waiting to discover if EARCOS accepts their proposal as one of quality and effective teaching standards.

In recognition of such a feat, we congratulate Mr. Neil Bray, Ms. Heidi Johnson, Mrs. Karen Blanton, Ms. Christi Chase, Ms. Katharine Michaud, and Ms. Monwei Yung, who are examples of the professional excellence we have working in our classrooms and schools at SCIS-HIS.

To learn more about EARCOS, please visit [www.earcos.org](http://www.earcos.org) or contact current 2010-2011 school year representative Tony Harris.



**'Two year old'  
program now  
enrolling at  
HongQiao ECE  
for Aug 2011**

## Inspiring Lifelong Learners

Early childhood programs work best when a school's youngest students have their own space, in a facility designed with them in mind. Our Early Childhood Education Centers provide students aged 2 to 6 years old with just such a place. In nurturing environments, with specialized programs, and dedicated faculty, children learn, explore, develop and excel. Consider having your child experience Shanghai Community and Hangzhou International School's internationally recognized curriculum in one of our ECE Centers.



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