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NEWSLETTER

Friday, 27th January, 2017

FROM THE ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER



Dear Community Members,

This past semester, our students have engaged in many activities. They have completed their End of Unit Sharing, Presentations, Exhibitions and Community Services. Apart from the field trips held in the scope of unit of inquiries, our secondary school students represented our host country and our school at MUN (Model United Nations) conferences twice this year in the Netherlands. They have shown us how talented they are with their stage performances and works of art. To sum up, we are proud of what our students have achieved and demonstrated in a range of learning stages through the first semester.

Our teachers and administrators also spent a very full term. They have done their best in supporting our students whilst improving their teaching skills through professional development sessions, collaborations and team building studies. In the last couple of weeks, our teachers have been quite busy with filling out the report cards.

Next, we are sure our parents will be going over report cards together with their children. Please encourage our students' learning process. Your constructive support means a lot to them. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the community members. It was a productive semester for all of us.

All the Best,

Müfide van der Hoeven
Assistant General Manager

FROM THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL...



School life for us round here has been quietly frantic as teachers have been busy writing school reports as well as planning for snow days and continuing to maintain the usual school day schedule. I have been busy too, searching on our recruitment databases, reading resumes and reaching out to people as we settle into the recruitment phase of the school year. Some of our faculty will be moving on to new adventures at the end of the year, and so I have been looking for possible replacements. I am off to a job fair in London this weekend as part of the process. I will be joined by the principal from Izmir and the general manager. So far, I have been very impressed (and relieved) by the pool of applicants that are interested in hearing more about MEF IS and life here in Istanbul.



Our staff meeting this week featured professional learning about the purpose and value of moderation. We do this as teachers to ensure we have similarity of understanding about assessment, and to support each other in achieving consistency across grade levels and between grade levels. It takes time to talk and share with each other, but is a really valuable process. I am always impressed with the level of professionalism from our staff, and their willingness to keep learning and growing and becoming better at their craft. In today's troubled times I encourage you to take a moment to write to your child's class teacher to let them know you appreciate them too.



FROM THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL...



The second term is under way and there is certainly a lot of activity at this time of the year. Students finished their examination week and now teachers and administrators are finalizing first semester reports. These days are intense for everyone but also constitute an important milestone for the year and furnish students and parents with important feedback on progress.

Despite all of this activity, there has also been time for Primary and Secondary students to collaborate with each other. Our Model United Nations (MUN) Club visited with the 5th Graders to discuss issues around human migration. Thank you to Ms. Colleen and Ms. Jennifer from Secondary and Mr. Jeffrey and Ms. Lauren in Primary for making this happen.



Next week is Reading Week and we are still looking for volunteers to come and read to our students. Remember, the reading can be in any language. If you are interested, then please inform Mr. Harris (harrisg@mefis.k12.tr). Perhaps viewing the English Department's promotional video will inspire you: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ASqEPuLf7c>

PRIMARY COUNSELLING



Primary School Student Council members have been organising a **charity for children of Syrian refugees** and they have been collecting clothes and toys for them. They included secondary school student council members as well to broaden the action. We are waiting for your contributions.

Interactive parent seminar on **Parenting Styles and Generation X Parents and Generation Z Children** will be held on January 24 in small conference room from 1 to 3 pm.

Primary School Talent Show will be held in February 8 in the auditorium at 1.30 pm. Deadline for signing up has just finished. Thank you for your interest. **Pelin Uster** usterp@mefis.k12.tr

SECONDARY COUNSELLING



Our Secondary students have been working hard over recent weeks preparing for their exams. During class time we have focused on building resilience and maintaining a positive mindset.

As we enter Semester 2 I wish all of our students a wonderful semester at MEF and I look forward to some exciting things we have planned.

Tracey Brereton, Secondary School Counsellor

OVERSEAS COLLEGE COUNSELLING



The SAT and ACT are required by colleges in the USA as well as at universities in other countries. The decision by a student as to which test to “sit” is a matter of choice. Both are designed to measure academic achievement: the ACT in English, Mathematics, Reading and Science; the SAT in Reading and Writing, Math, and The Essay. The fees for both are similar, ranging from approximately 80 – 110 USD. The main difference is that the ACT has a science test, whilst the SAT does not. However, the SAT has subject tests for which students can register, including the specific branches of science. The ACT Writing Test and the SAT Essay are both optional components.

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT SUPPORT ELL STRATEGIES FOR HOME



With multilingual children, there are so many strategies we could use to develop English as a Second Language. One way would be the use of a solid mother tongue in order to build on a second language. Here are some FAQ regarding this matter.

- **How does the mother tongue help the learning of English?**

Research has shown skills acquired in a first language could be transferred into a second language at ease. For example, a child that reads well and uses appropriate strategies in their first language could also be a good reader in their English as a Second Language. Therefore, learning skills in the first language should be encouraged at home in order to develop their second language.

- **Why should mother tongue be maintained and developed?**

The children in international schools will return to their home country at some point to continue their education there and therefore they need to maintain their skills. Also holding on to their cultural identity through language.

- **How can ESL students best develop their mother tongue?**

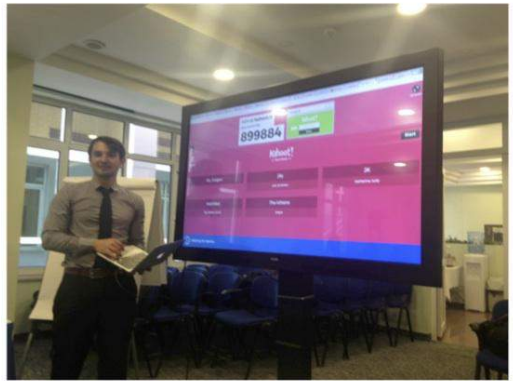
Parents can make sure that they have good reference books or textbooks at home - in the native language. Students should be encouraged to read good literature and to discuss school work.



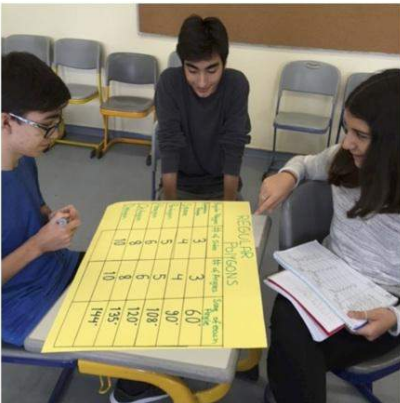
Some websites that would benefit these children would be:

- <http://www.eslgamesplus.com/>
- <http://www.funbrain.com/> (Activities for all Grade levels and subject areas)
- <http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/> (British Council website)
- <https://www.abcya.com/>

FROM THE MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

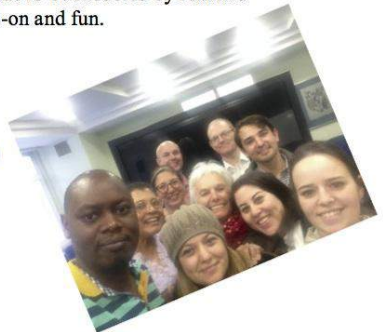


COLLABORATION has been the theme in the mathematics department for this academic year. Staff members of the mathematics departments of Mef International schools of Istanbul and Izmir as well as the Mef University, got together to share innovative ideas, assignments and applications on introducing technology in the classroom as well as the latest teaching strategies and assessment techniques. We spent two whole days exchanging information and we all came away from the workshop with a few more tools to add to our tool kit of strategies and applications.



In class activities continue to be modeled by real life situations and are hands-on and fun.

Adios from the Mefis
mathematics family!



PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM



As an international school our children can be termed Third Culture Kids. Students may be born in one country, have parents born in another and have moved multiple times (or once) before beginning school. Changing schools is tough for kids (as changing jobs is for parents).

Learning how to make friends and adapt to new situations and challenges are obstacles our children face and it is important for us to be mindful of this.

Through our Units of Inquiry and support systems in school we unpack these ideas and assist students with strategies in managing the changing world they live in.

I always say to parents that they must be feeling ok and secure with their decisions to move and supportive of the school so their children can feel supported, safe and happy.

After all one of our main goals in life is happiness and the feeling of being loved.



For more information on Third Culture Kids -TCKs please see the website by Dr Ruth Hill Useem. <http://www.tckworld.com/>

SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

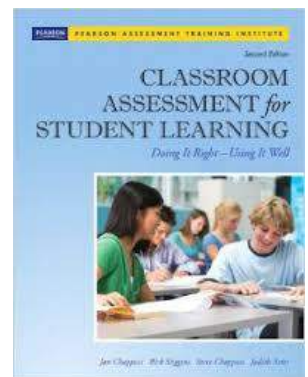
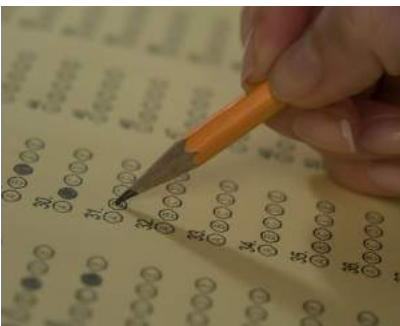
CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE



Assessment in Practice: We have recently concluded the second exam week. What might have your child taken from this experience, and how did teachers create the examinations?

To ensure best practices, many of our meetings for the teaching staff at MEF IS are designed to refresh and extend teachers' understandings. This week was no exception as we focused on assessment practice. The discussions were inspired by *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning* by Jan Chappuis, Rick Stiggins, Steve Chappuis and Judith Arter.

The book's authors claim that one important aspect of the teaching and learning process is assessment. When assessments do not measure learning and attainment, they are irritating, and sometimes painful, exercises that dissuade learning. Assessment is, indeed, a complex affair that is multi-faceted. Throughout a unit, students should be reminded of end-of-unit learning targets and constantly receive feedback on progress towards meeting these targets through a multitude of measures, including homework, daily assignments, quizzes, and projects, to name a few. Additionally, the unit's purpose and learning targets should be made clear from the beginning. Furthermore, the various assessment devices (e.g. selected response, written response and performance assessment), along with an understanding of their usage, must be comprehended. Lastly, it is highly advisable to make assessments into learning tools. When teachers follow best practice, children learn more, stress less, and, in many cases, look forward to assessments.



PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS AND EVENTS



Our students took advantage of the snow days and had a lot of fun.



SECONDARY SCHOOL NEWS AND EVENTS

Secondary students have been exuding confidence through presentations, the Talent Show, and debates.



MUN Junior with Gr. 5



Annual Winter Talent Show



Microfinance Seminar - IB2 Econ



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In doing so, the school endeavours to empower its students with a life-long passion for learning. Students are encouraged to become confident, balanced and socially responsible individuals who will contribute positively to local and global communities.”

For the latest news and events check out our website or social media pages:



<http://www.mefis.k12.tr>



MEF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

“Building Bridges between Countries and Cultures”

