



TIE

Growing a Global Mindset

The IB's mandate to teach international perspectives and intercultural competence to the first generation of world citizens

By Tiffani Razavi
TIE Staff Writer

Last weekend, my husband and I wanted to take the kids out for the day, get out of town, go somewhere different. We rattled through a list of some well-loved nature reserves. All too close to dodgy border areas, outposts of extremist groups or military activity. Historic sightseeing, perhaps? No, tensions running too high in ancient cities. We ended up eating pancakes at a mini-mall just slightly out of a town that is not our own. Not too bad.

One way or another, our children are growing up globally conscious. To experience the consequences of shabby international relations in the mere curtailment of leisure activity is, of course, insignificant, but it is real; it is felt and it reminds us that we are ... continued on p. 4

Gambia Hosts "Best Practices in Education" Conference

Providing professional development opportunities to local teachers

By Sharon A. Sperry

This past November, over 100 educators gathered on the campus of Banjul American Embassy School (BAES) on the "Smiling Coast" to attend workshops, share ideas, and focus on inquiry-based education. Thanks to a self-help grant from the U.S. Embassy in Banjul, The Gambia, support from CEO Joseph Yorio of School Specialty, and a commitment to capacity building by the BAES faculty, the very first international education conference was held in The Gambia on November 21, 2015.

The BAES Faculty—as part of their professional development plan, commitment to our mission of lifelong learning, and desire to participate in capacity building in ... continued on p. 5



Students walk through the courtyard of Sanaa International School in Yemen before the school was temporarily closed due to civil strife and subsequently destroyed by bombs on 29 December 2015 (photo: Gilson).

Yemen's Sanaa International School Bombed

By Jim Gilson

Most of you have heard the sad news of the bombing of our school, Sanaa International School (SIS), in Yemen. On the night of 29 December 2015, the school's dome building was hit by an airstrike and destroyed. Damage was also done to the original classroom buildings. The school facility is effectively destroyed. No one was in the building at the time, so there are no injuries.

This was apparently carried out by Saudi Arabia or another coalition bomber, a coalition advised by the United States. It is hard to understand why our international school would be targeted. The school has taken no part in the ... continued on p. 13

Heightened School Security With a Friendly Feel

By William Scarborough

When Singapore American School (SAS) opened its doors in 1956, students, parents, teachers, neighbors, and even dogs and chickens walked through the campus at will. Sixty years later, we live in a nation renowned for being safe, clean, and law-abiding. However, we at SAS are aware that Southeast Asia can be a turbulent region, and that these are turbulent times. Recognizing our visibility as a symbol of the U.S., in recent years we have worked to improve our security measures while maintaining our traditional welcoming atmosphere.

The current SAS security plans have developed since 2001. In response to the September 11th attacks, the Singapore government stationed Gurkha Contingent police officers at international schools. Complete with guns and traditional kukri daggers, they were a visible and impressive symbol of the government's commitment to its foreign residents.

To supplement the Gurkhas, SAS hired extra guards for day-to-day security. After several years, decreased threat levels in Singapore caused the officers to be withdrawn, and the school enhanced its security in response.

Our physical security precautions now include a fence and barrier system, upgraded substantially between 2004 and 2006 with support from the U.S. State Department. While we know that high fences, car barriers, and turnstile pedestrian gates are necessary, we try to keep them as unobtrusive as possible, using plantings, awnings, banners, and other decorative features to soften their visual impact. We also have security cameras throughout our large campus, giving us inconspicuous extra "eyes" to spot problems. When the threat level is low, we keep our security relatively discreet, but if it rises we can respond by tightening access control, barring vehicles from campus, and raising security barriers or closing gates.

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ISOI Dedicates "Prayer of the Children" to Peshawar Victims



The choir at the International School of Islamabad sings a requiem (photo: ISOI).

By Rose C. Puffer

December 16, 2014 marked one year since the deadly attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar, Pakistan. After a seven-hour siege, the Tehrik-I-Taliban, who claimed responsibility for the attack, had murdered 141 K-12 students and staff and wounded 150 more.

With news coverage leaving little to the imagination, the students at the International School of Islamabad (ISOI) looked on in

horror as they watched the dreadful images of children of their same age being carried out of the school, injured, scarred, and most devastatingly, lifeless.

On December 16th, 2015, as a requiem for those lost during the horrific event, the middle and high school choir of ISOI, under the direction of Zachary Rush, came together as one voice to dedicate a simple yet powerful song called Prayer of the Children during their Winterfest performance.

Prayer of the Children, written and composed by Kurt Bestor, was originally dedicated to children displaced during the Bosnian War from 1992-1995. With a mission to infuse the song with new power, the students worked with their director to translate the Bosnian lyrics into Urdu, the language of Pakistan.

The result was simple and moving. "Crying who will help ... continued on p. 5

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News in Brief

● Hold the praise to raise performance levels

The Center for Transformative Teacher Training has worked with about 250 schools to introduce No-Nonsense Nurturing, a teaching approach that keeps expectations high by only praising outstanding effort. This method has been found to increase engagement while decreasing the number of out-of-school suspensions (National Public Radio, 1/11/16).

● Personal appearance plays a part in grading

Female college students who are considered attractive may earn higher grades, according to a study by researchers at Metropolitan State University of Denver. However, data show the achievement gap narrows when the same students take online classes (NPR, 1/14).

● California insists on inclusion in new standards

New teacher-prep programs in California will include lessons about teaching students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms under new standards released by the California Commission on

Teacher Credentialing. General-education teachers will learn about small-group instruction, behavior management, and the use of informal assessments to identify and address learning gaps (EdSource, 12/13/15).

● Michelle Obama seeks better access to education for girls worldwide

Sixty-two million girls around the world do not attend school, according to Michelle Obama, who is championing a US\$200 million plan to promote girls' education worldwide. Britain and the U.S. will work together on teacher training, girls' leadership camps, and other community-based programs in developing countries. "Let Girls Learn" will fund community girls' education projects, such as girls' leadership camps and school bathrooms; educate girls in conflict zones; and address poverty, HIV, and other issues that keep girls out of school. It will also seek to address the broader cultural beliefs and practices that can help cause and perpetuate this crisis (*The Atlantic*, 11/2/15).

● Massive British Ed-Tech show attracts 36,000 visitors

The Bett Show, the world's largest technology conference and exhibition focused on education, took place in London on 20 January. Ed-tech companies, organizations, and educators from more than 110 countries were represented as attendees, exhibitors, and presenters (EdWeek, 1/19/16).

● Scotland faces massive teacher shortage

Scotland is short on teachers, particularly in STEM areas. Education policy adviser Bruce Robertson has proposed offering incentives for students to study to teach those subjects. More than 100 teacher training places went unfilled this year at a time when councils have already warned over unfilled vacancies (*The Herald - Scotland*, 12/14/15).

● Researchers find peers can put a stop to bullying

Students are more likely to stop bullying if they hear anti-bullying messages from their peers rather than from authority

figures, according to a study of 56 middle schools in New Jersey. The findings could potentially overhaul how schools address bullying and conflict among students (*New York magazine*, 1/6/16).

● Google launches free 3D field-trip pilot program

Six states and three countries will participate in a new 3D virtual field-trip pilot program announced by Google on Monday. The field-trip simulation system, which is free for schools, includes about 100 trip options with plans for it to offer college tours and other options in the future (*The New York Times*, 9/28/15).

● Most U.S. 8th-graders not proficient in geography

Data from the 2014 National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates that only 24 percent of U.S. eighth-grade students are proficient in geography. This is the same percentage as when the exams first were administered in 1994 (*The Deseret News*, 10/29/15).

● U.K. leader Milburn calls for education reform

England should offer incentives to top teachers to teach in disadvantaged areas, said Alan Milburn, chairman of the social mobility commission. In his state of the nation report, the country's "inequality tsar" highlighted inequities in education and recommended a zero-tolerance approach to failure in schools and further education colleges (*The Guardian*, 12/22/15).

● U.S. schools give fewer tests than most other nations

Despite reports that students in the U.S. are overtested, an analysis of data from the OECD shows U.S. schools administer fewer standardized tests than most other nations. The Netherlands, Belgium, and Asian countries—all with high-performing education systems—administer a lot more. Data show about 2 percent of U.S. students take such tests on a monthly basis, compared with the OECD average of 8 percent (*The Hechinger Report*, 12/7/15). ●

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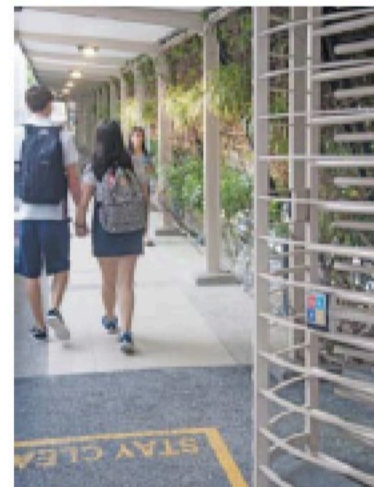
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School Security

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For most in our community, the guards staffing the school's access points are our most obvious security component. These guards are carefully chosen and trained by their company and by SAS's security manager, a retired Singapore Armed Forces Major with much relevant experience. In addition to their security duties, guards are instructed in how to interact appropriately with students, parents, and staff. As the first and last people visitors see at the school, their calm, friendly, patient demeanor is extremely important in creating positive impressions. Many students greet them as friends, and parents appreciate that they are helping to keep the children safe.

In 2011, the rollout of the SAS-Card proved a major security improvement. Every SAS staff member, student, and parent was issued a chip-based identity card, which is tapped on a sensor to allow entry through pedestrian gates. Vehicle access control uses a linked system of vehicle decals. Working with our bus company, we also ensure that students tap on and off their school buses. Access information is kept in our system, so at any moment we know who is on campus and where students are in their bus commutes. Visitors and vehicles



Turnstile pedestrian gates keep foot-traffic flowing (photo: SAS).

without SAS identification must go through extra security procedures.

Although some at first saw the SAS-Card as intrusive or burdensome, the cards' other functions quickly won them fans. When topped up by cash or credit card, they can be used to purchase food, school supplies, and uniforms. At this point, they have largely replaced cash purchases, saving our staff time and effort. They also serve as our library cards. Finally, they are linked to Singapore's NETS electronic payment system, so they can be used for cashless purchases off campus, and even serve as smart-cards for Singapore's trains and buses. We found that because they offered a variety of useful services, the cards quickly became an inte-

gral part of school life.

In addition to day-to-day security, SAS pays close attention to the bigger picture. We solicit security advice from two independent firms, and we commission an annual security audit. The U.S. Embassy also advises us, with Regional Security Office personnel making on-site visits and U.S. government experts giving us feedback. The RSO also provides advice for overseas student trips. Additionally, we work closely with neighborhood police, particularly when school events are open to the public. On school days, police cars drive through the school, and officers may conduct perimeter foot patrols. In the event of a known security threat, the Singapore government provides us with information and helps us craft our response.

At SAS we aim to balance the warm and open feeling of a neighborhood school with the security precautions necessary in our place and time. By emphasizing friendly interactions between guards and visitors, keeping security as unobtrusive as possible, offering user-friendly features with our identity cards, and creating strong links with outside advisors, we have been able to balance our security needs with the welcoming atmosphere that has characterized our school throughout its 60 years. ●