



The Tiger Tale

Newsletter



January 2016

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Starting off 2016 ready and roaring!

Upcoming Events

- February 8-10: Lunar New Year Holiday
- February 15th: Tea with Marjie (in Sacheon in the GIFS Library)
- February 16th: Tea with Marjie (in Geoje at the GIC)
- February 23rd: Open House (For Prospective Parents, Companies, Relocation Agencies, and more!)
- February 24th: House Games
- February 26th: Free Dress Day
- February 29th-March 1st: No School (Samil Day)



A Message from the Principal

Greetings!

I am looking forward to spring! Warm breezes, spring rain, fresh green leaves, and cherry blossom viewing – the season of renewal is very beautiful in Korea. In addition to the real thing, GIFS will begin its own season of renewal by re-examining, reflecting, and creating a new Vision statement for our school.

What is a Vision statement, you might wonder, and how does it serve an organization and the people in it? A vision statement is an aspirational description (wish, dream, or ambition) of what an organization hopes to achieve or to be. While they are usually quite stable,

written to last for a long time, in order to be meaningful vision statements must be periodically revisited to make sure that they are consistent with the hopes and dreams of the group or individuals they currently serve. For GIFS, the vision statement that you see below was created over twelve years ago and we believe it is time to take a look at it again.

GIFS Vision statement:

GIFS has a welcoming environment where students gather to receive a quality education that prepares them for academic success. Our inclusive school provides students from (continued on page 5)



News in the IBDP

by Charles Campbell, IB Coordinator and Vice Principal

Our examinations went extremely smoothly with virtually no major hiccups over the 9 days. I would like to thank our dedicated teachers for supporting this process and also our students who were on time for the exams at each session.

The results, however, have been a bit of a mixed bag and for some a reality check that there is a difference between an essay where one is allowed to redraft, use a dictionary, ask your teacher for guidance; and producing a quality answer under timed conditions. But this is a learning process and why we do examinations in the first place. The results across secondary have been solid and I am pleased to not so many students in 10th Grade hanging in there. As Mr Woodhouse famously said "You are never quite out of it so long as you keep going". I have always maintained that success in the DP is 50% academic potential coupled with 50% effective time management. ToK essays and personal research projects are on their way and the internal assessment (coursework) deadlines start to kick in as of November. These are critical to success. Finally, it seems as if our numbers for the IBDP next year are on the rise which is fantastic news!

Teacher Feature: Ms. Chelsea Wright



Ms. Chelsea Wright was born in the land of sunflowers, AKA the state of Kansas, and began devouring the books of Austen and Dickens as a toddler. Okay, maybe not that young, but some of her earliest memories are of her learning how to read; thus beginning a life-long love of the written word.

Growing up, her life revolved around her family and friends, playing Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or Batman with her brothers, reading, basketball, baking, and more reading. Her mother started giving her books from different parts of the globe and the seed was planted. At the age of 16, she went to Central America to volunteer. She spent the month caring for orphaned babies, helping farmers harvest sugar cane, waking up at dawn to help the village women make breakfast, and sleeping in an actual tree house. She was officially hooked on traveling. After that summer, she was determined to find a way to live overseas.

She met her husband, Mr. Rodriguez, while teaching in Guatemala. He couldn't resist her curly hair and asked

her on a date to hike a volcano and roast marshmallows on one of the hot spots. She decided that she liked hiking volcanoes and that she kind of liked the guy too. (Really, it was the marshmallows that won her over.)

Ms. Wright is excited to be back in Korea (she lived here previously when she taught ESL at a public school) and loves the students of GIFS. When she is not in the classroom, you can usually find her enjoying all of the delicious food that Korea has to offer.



The Interview

How would your best friend describe you?

Free spirit, fun-loving, and the best road-trip partner ever!

How do you motivate your students?

Sing classroom instructions in my best Adele impression.

What's your spirit animal?

A Bear - they get to hibernate during winter.

Tell me about a time you did the right (or principled) thing and no one saw you do it.

I did not steal my husband's food when he got up to go to the bathroom. That was a tough decision.

If you were stranded on a deserted island, what three things would you want have with you and why?

My husband, books, chocolate, or I should probably bring a knife so I can crack open coconuts.



Ms. Wright laughs at her goofy students during drama class.

Recognizing Excellence: Jaewon Park



This month, GIFS would like recognize a student who has shown phenomenal growth over this past year. In Mr. Dean's 1st grade class, Jaewon Park has demonstrated noteworthy success. He is an ELL 1st grade student that came to GIFS with minimal reading, writing, and speaking skills. After working hard all first semester, he now volunteers to read aloud, his reading level has increased by 3 steps, and he is able to write better sentences and gives more details. But best of all... he is able to give his teacher a hard time by joking and being silly in English! Mr. Dean says, "I am SOOOOO proud of Jaewon!"

What's up in Elementary?

In **Mr. Dean's** 1st & 2nd grade class, students have just completed their biggest writing assignment yet! It was a long process. First, students started by writing about their vacations, then they worked through pages of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and finalizing it by illustrating their adventures. It took hours and days of effort.

When it comes to reading, their levels have grown so much! Currently 1st and 2nd grade are working on strengthening their comprehension skills and discussing what they read with their friends with similar levels. These discussions are so important to processing the texts that they are encouraged to talk with their parents at home as well.

As we move into February 1st and 2nd graders are starting to work on their goals for the rest of the school year. They began this by listening to their moms and dads to gain some direction. They can see that action steps are necessary to achieve our goals. Keep up the work!

In **Mr. Rodriguez's** class, PreK and Kindergarten has been exploring the science concepts of push and pull, sink or float, fast and slow. On their door, they have the labels "push" and "pull," so they can see how these science words apply to things we do every day!

In 4th and 5th grade this December and January, **Ms. K's** class has studied Earth sciences. They learned about our soil, resources, pollution, and carbon footprints. They also researched places to live and found that they really like places that are cared for. That means they will be good custodians of the Earth. Great work guys!



What's happening up in Secondary?

In **Ms. Lee's** math classes, 7th graders created function graph based on converting won to dollars, inches to centimeters, kilograms to pounds and gallons to liters. They are currently working on ratio project. They will gather data and express it as a ratio. Grade 8 are focusing on percent application. They have learned that tax is not applied to every consumable goods in Korea. Their project is based on creating a mock receipt based on their own native country tax percent. Grade 9 began their studies on Trigonometry and how it can be applied outside of class, especially as an architect and surveyor.

In **Ms. Wright's** Grade 8 class, students are reading "The Diary of Anne Frank" (the play) in class together and focusing on journal writing, as well as drama as literature. In Grade 10, students have begun learning the art of rhetoric and using ethos, pathos, logos to persuade an audience. Students will deconstruct famous speeches determining the various elements that the speaker used to persuade. The oldest students are working hard as well! IB Language and Literature students are wrapping up their unit on poetry in the next couple of weeks. Cue much applause from our diligent IB students! They will next be

looking at language and taboo and looking at a certain presidential candidate as an example.

In **Ms. Thomas's** 7th grade English class, students are reading "Red Scarf Girl" and learning about propaganda. They just finished a visual literacy unit where they learned the different types of persuasion techniques used on consumers. In high school for the IGCSE students, they are about to begin their Drama unit by reading Arthur Miller's play, "The Crucible."

Mr. Kuntz's sixth grade English class just wrapped up their literary and narrative writing unit. After reading some truly inspiring short stories, the students were eager to write their own. They also created posters emphasizing their characters and plots which serve as great promotional material. Swing by Mr. Kuntz's room to check out the sixth graders creations.

The poetry unit in IB Language and Literature is about to wrap up. The 11th graders started out this section by looking askance at the poems, but are now warming up to the topic. If the hallways are a bit chilly, come to room 206 to warm your "feet" by our iambic pentameter and trochaic tetrameter fires.



Bach Le and Ivan Castro act out different aspects of "Inquiry" during a school-wide assembly for the quarterly Learning Profile.

Musical Notes

BRAVO, GIFS Young Musicians! Sixth graders have just completed their last performance as a class presentation. They have achieved great improvement in many aspects of musicianship and most of all, a decent level of introductory band! Ms. Lee could not be happier!

The following class presentations are what each class has focused on for the past few months. They all performed very successfully at the Holiday Concert on December 4th, 2015.

-K-3 : Traditional children songs with a winter theme; composing new lyrics for international greeting songs
 -4/5 Elementary Band : A traditional folk song and a classical song in a class band setting
 -Middle School band: A combination of multicultural folk songs & pop songs – a traditional folk song (Western) and a Western pop song.
 After School Music Programs:
 -GIFS Young Orchestra : Holiday theme medley, a Korean traditional folk song, and a Western pop song
 -GIFS Band : A Holiday song and a Western pop song
 Good job everyone!

*News for 3rd Quarter

- Grades 7&8 Music has just started! Students have just begun some placement tests and leaning chord progressions.
 -Orchestra has started new pieces for performances in near future i.e., SKAC FAF(April), Spring Concert(May) & Graduation (June).
 -GIFS Band has auditions on Jan. 27th and Feb. 1st. Rehearsal starts on Wednesday, Feb. 3rd.





Our Winter Festival

Way back in December, we celebrated winter and the holiday season by hosting the GIFS Annual Winter Festival. This year's festival was a winter wonderland extravaganza!

With the help of teachers, administrators, PTO, and the Student Council, the Winter Festival was a night of fun. First, all partook in a fabulous meal put out by the cafeteria. It's a hard job to feed that many people for so many different cultures, but our staff did a noteworthy job.

After dinner, everyone was invited to play games or do arts and crafts in the gymnasium. The most popular booth, Cake Walk, was hosted by the Student

Council, with the baked goodies donated by teachers and parents. All the proceeds went to the Student Council to help them plan school dances and other improvements.

At the end of the evening, parents, students, and GIFS staff alike all moved downstairs to the MPR, where we were serenaded by the talented Tiger musicians. We saw performances from every grade level, and from the after school groups as well. It is amazing the amount of talent that comes out of this school.

Thanks to all involved for making this year's Winter Festival as great as it was. See you next year!

(continued from page 1) many nations and cultures an opportunity to learn and practice relationship skills that will foster harmony and positively impact the world.

In addition to a new vision statement, it makes sense for GIFS to write an accompanying Mission statement. A mission statement is more of a purposeful document that articulates specific goals or targets that emerge from the vision statement. Both the vision and mission statements serve as guideposts or touchstones to refer to when making decisions for the short and long term to ensure continuity over time.

You are invited to participate in the process of creating a new GIFS Vision and Mission statement. Join me at Tea with Marjie in Sacheon or Jinju later this month to help us get started. There will be other opportunities for you to participate that I will keep you informed about. I hope to see you soon.

All the best,
Marjie Carroll



GIFS Goes to a LG Sakers Game

When the GIFS basketball teams went to an Changwon LG Sakers game last quarter, they did not expect to be approached by the general manager and head of marketing. They were told if our school wanted to come back again, they would help GIFS get good seats and a chance to meet the players. Well... On January 31st, a group of 30 parents, students, and teachers went to a Sunday afternoon game. They sat in the Sky Lounge, with a fantastic bird's eye view of the game. Once the game ended (Sakers won!), everyone had a chance to come down to the court and take pictures with the players and coaches. They really felt like VIPs! It was so fun to get special treatment from the LG Sakers, and GIFS hopes to do it again next season! Special thanks to Peter Lynch and Nicolas Rodriguez for the idea and the follow-through.



WASC Accreditation

GIFS is proud to announce that our school has been re-accredited for 6-years, an enormous accomplishment! The accreditation process is a vehicle that enables schools to improve student learning and school performance based on an analysis of those strengths and limitations. Participating schools must meet rigorous, research-based standards that reflect the essential elements of a quality and effective school, but again, must also be able to demonstrate engagement in as well as capacity to provide continuous school improvement. Thanks to everyone who worked hard over the past few months, year, or years to make this happen. The making of a good school is a collaborative effort and we are very proud of the team effort that went into getting us to this point.



Don't forget to follow and like us on Facebook and Twitter. We have a website, too. There's always something new to see!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GyeongnamInternationalForeignSchool/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GIFSTigerTalk>

Website: gifs.or.kr