

newsCAST

The Newsletter of Collegiate American School

Thursday, 29 October 2015 | Issue 61

GENERAL

ELEMENTARY

MIDDLE & HIGH

IVEI

Message from the Head Principal —Tammy Tusek

This year is flying by. Wow. We have reached the end of October and nearing the end of the Progress Report for Semester I. The following are highlights that have occurred at Collegiate American for the month of October based on our values:

◆ RESPECT

The theme of the month was “Boo to Bullying”. Counselors and teachers worked with students on how to deal with bullying and strategies to keep CAS a safe and friendly school.

The value of RESPECT is spiraled in student learning daily as students are taught to respect the diversity at Collegiate American—80 countries represented at our school! As we continue to push forward with technology we find it critical that student’s respect each other’s property and rights. We discourage use of social media at school but technology is encouraged to research, think critically and create.

◆ COLLABORATION

Collaboration is a characteristic that universities and future employers name as the top 10 characteristic that they would like candidates to have. We are proud that this is extremely strong at our school. Students are asked to collaborate daily in their varying classes either person to person or electronically. Teams collaborate in the means of 1) sporting events 2) secondary intramural “houses” (see Mr. Haag’s article for more information 3) teachers collaborating on data and assessments 4) CAS educators attending and presenting at conferences to better professional practices 5) foreign languages Skyping with students in Spain to practice their conversational skills 6) students attended the Qatar Leadership Conference supported by Model United Nations to collaborate with students from all over the world and the list goes on...

◆ INTEGRITY

The most important tasks this month aside from student learning seem to be focused on our inspections and accreditations coming up this year. They want to know are we doing what we claim we are and how well are we doing it. The process has been intense and instrumental and is still a work in progress. Here are our updates on this:

Inspection, Accreditation and Authorization Processes Update

⇒ KHDA

- * Review of 2014-15 SEF.
- * Look at MAP data to determine judgement and goal setting.
- * Visit dates unknown.

⇒ CIS Accreditation

- * Final application due to CIS agency.

- * Visit has been set for week of February 21-27th.

⇒ NEASC

- * Same Self Study as CIS.
- * Visit occurs concurrently with KHDA inspection.

⇒ IBDP Authorization

- * Application due November 1st.
- * Authorization visit April 19-20th.

Although the month has been rigorous, we believe that all outcomes will be positive. As we finalize our Strategic Plan and goals, we will hold a Town Hall Meeting to Review with our stakeholders.

◆ ACHIEVEMENT

We are nearing the end of Progress Report I and have completed MAP testing. We are studying the trends our data demonstrates and gaining a plan of action. What we hear from students is how challenging this year is for them. It is a good thing.

To support achievement, we have had Math Week where the whole school participated in math challenges and initiatives to support the learning of Math and connecting it to the outside world. Literacy Day is approaching for the elementary to support the love of literature and reading. We hope you followed the “Yellow Brick Road” and of course the MacGrudy Bookfair which put books in the hands of our families. Yet another great thing.

◆ RESPONSIBILITY

This value is spiraled into the academic day constantly. Responsibility for learning and doing your personal best in whatever they are participating in. In the month of October, RESPONSIBILITY was extended into the philanthropic effort of the Radisson Box Appeal. CAS collected 244 boxes. We are happy to report that the workers on our campus were recipients of this as well. The secondary student council found this to be so important that an ongoing pantry will be available for the workers at CAS where you can donate hygiene products so they have direct access when they need them. Many of us travel so why not keep the shampoo and lotions for this cause?

A key action of RESPONSIBILITY is our commitment to keep your children safe. We had our first fire drill this year and saw the students exit safely and efficiently. Nice job Sandcats! Next step, is drill for our lock down procedures. As last year, we will inform our early childhood parents so they can discuss this with their small children at home and reinforce what we are telling them at school.

Although these next two are not CAS values, they are components of a well-rounded student so we thought we'd include them:

Global Mindedness

We hosted Grand Mufti Mohammed to share with student the meaning of Hijri New Year. Additionally who can forget the color of pink in support of the global effort to support early detection of Breast Cancer and Pinktober.

Innovation

Did you know Collegiate American has a 3D printer and students are designing sculptures? I assure you it is not simple as this makes it sound. Podcats, podcasts, podcats. As a method to share their passion for music, the secondary students have begun podcats about music.

We'd like to thank CASPA for hosting Wild Wadi Night for CAS. A great time was had by all! If you were not able to participate, we hope to see you at the Thanksgiving celebration. Information forthcoming.

As it is impossible to share all the events we have going on, we ask that you follow us on our Facebook page Collegiate American School. We focus on a photo of the day which allows you to see the great things happening at our school.

Dear Families,

I love visiting the classrooms throughout CAS. It's where our mission statement comes to life. This week, I've seen fifth graders struggling to solve complex, multi-step problems and deciding how to spend a million dirham budget as though they were the head of their own household; fourth graders writing story starters with the background of suspenseful music in a darkened room; the counselor sharing a book and engaging students in a discussion of what it's like to be a bystander and witness someone being bullied; third grade science students reading informational text to compare cycles; students working through differentiated math word problems using multiple steps, first graders partner talking with a buddy as they learn about double facts; second graders filling and measuring water in beakers to set up an experiment about evaporation; peers judging quality pieces of artwork that their classmates produced; students intently reading their own leveled pieces of literature; and Kindergarteners engaged in productive, imaginative play.

Over the past few days, I've had 16 conferences with teachers as we begin our yearlong appraisal process. Seeing them in action as they facilitate the learning that occurs within our walls is powerful. But, hearing them talk about their students is an incredible experience. What I love about this talented group of professionals is that they know their students so well – and, they want to do what is best for them. Our teachers have an incredible passion for what they do. They work hard to increase skills and to build confidence. And, I see that in the classroom as children function within a safe climate where they are allowed to make mistakes in order to persevere through difficult work.

Our elementary leadership team is putting together an informational parent meeting about how to read your child's MAP scores. In addition, we are discussing with teachers the ways to use data to inform our instruction. In November, we look forward to celebrating the UAE Flag Day, a Diwali assembly, World Kindness Day, Parent/Teacher Conference Day, Thanksgiving, and the UAE National Day Celebration.

Your children are, quite simply, adorable. I remember my father encouraging me to develop my own three children into people whom others enjoy – friendly, well-mannered, encouraging, adventurous, confident, and happy. Thank you for helping shape your children into people that we like to be around!

Cindy Davis

Elementary Division Principal

News from the Middle & High School...



PBL Updates

In the Middle School, our students wrapped up the first of their four Project-Based Learning Units this past week.

Our grade 6 students hosted a Greek Agora and displayed their temples built with math ingenuity, persuasive language (convincing you to travel there), a lot of research-- and even a little Minecraft!

Traveling to the medieval times, Grade 7 students sold us on the Castle of our Dreams through their Medieval Castle Realty Companies. Displaying their coats of arms, and attempting to “teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even put a stopper on death” (Professor Snape, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone).

On Monday, November 2nd our grade 8 students will be presenting “*The Times, They are A-Changin’*” which is an exploration of changes through-out history by building a web to find and demonstrate the connections between math, science, social studies and English.

Our atriums have been lively, active places of learning – even more so than usual these past two weeks!

The Intramural Competitions

During this month CAS began a tradition that we hope will stay at the school for years to come.....“The Intramural Competition”. The concept is based on every middle/high school pupil and teacher given a university to represent in various sporting and educational competitions. The four universities are **Harvard, Stanford, Yale** and **Princeton** and each competition gives them a chance to win points which contribute to the final points tally at the end of year.

The first week has been and gone with volleyball and a math challenge setting a great competitive standard for the rest of the year. With games taking place every day except Tuesday, the sports hall was transformed into a cauldron of activity and noise! With all grades performing well throughout the week, showing how much CAS as a whole is improving in volleyball. One of the highlights of the week was the extremely competitive match between the teachers that either side didn’t want to lose, it came down to next point wins with **Princeton** and **Harvard** sneaking in at the last minute. The points stand after week 1..... **Princeton** – 575, **Yale** – 525, **Stanford** – 400 and **Harvard** – 375.



The next competition will be the end of January with details of the events published nearer the time...

Middle and High School Sports

This academic year Collegiate American School participates in the Junior Emirates Athletic Conference, Sony Football League, Dubai Affiliated School Sport Association and a special focus is placed upon the unique Innoventures Education League.

As an American Curriculum school, CAS places emphasis on the American sports such as volleyball, basketball and softball. This year the number of SandCats sports teams has doubled from last year. Currently in the middle and high school, over 50 percent of the students are involved in a sports team, which is a great achievement and generates a fun school spirit.

Next on the calendar for the SandCats is basketball, tennis, track and field, cross country and soccer so stay tuned for more excited games. Please note that all info can be found on our new sports website, www.cassandcatssport.com



IB Diploma Updates

An IB parent meeting was held on October 19th to discuss the program structure and course options.

Remember – CAS will be offering three different and flexible diploma options: the American Diploma, an American Diploma with IB courses and the full IB Diploma. What a busy and exciting time at Collegiate American School!

Robert Haag

Secondary Principal



Dear Parents of Innoventures Education,

Many returning students will remember the creation of the GIVE Initiative last year. This charity was created to help provide clean water and education to impoverished areas of the world. The aim of this initiative is to provide the students at our institutions with a unique possibility of actually seeing how their contributions and hard work are helping certain parts of the world year after year. With regular trips to these parts of the world and exchange programmes with children from these regions, we hope to give our students a front row, if not centre stage, on this philanthropic journey.

GIVE has decided to team up with Dubai Cares and more specifically with the branches dedicated to bringing education to lesser privileged parts of the world. This cooperation will help our community gain greater access to some very noble projects that have already been created and also help us make a real difference with all the contributions that have been collected so far. Our input however will not just come in the form of fundraising but will see our students witness firsthand the growth and benefits of their hard work.

Starting from November 1, students of Innoventures Education will play an active role in sponsoring the construction and development of schools in Nepal. All funds collected so far will go towards these two important projects. A select group of Grade 11 and 12 students from each school will go to this region to witness the work being done on our specific projects on a yearly basis.

One upcoming event to pencil in will be the GIVE Walkathon taking place at DIA, RWA, RIS and CAS on November 19. Each school will be selecting specific age groups to take part and will be sending more information about the event closer to the date.

We hope that all of you will support us in this exciting journey ahead. We look forward to making a difference together.

Regards,

Colin Scicluna

Innoventures Education Events and GIVE Coordinator & English Teacher