

# ***Tehdeed***

*Tehdeed: 11 November 2009*

## **Summary**

In this week's *Tehdeed*, International Schools Group Superintendent, Norma Hudson, thanks staff and parents for their on-going commitment to all ISG students, highlighting the countless ways that member schools honor, value and celebrate student learning and the critical role of their families in supporting their educational growth.

As member schools wrap up initial trimester and quarter classes, a host of events are taking place, and planned in the coming weeks, to showcase student achievement.

Read on to learn more about the variety of events sponsored by Dhahran British Grammar School to highlight ISG's cultural diversity. In other updates, Dhahran High School leaders talk about the upcoming WOW week and planned student trips/volunteer projects to the Maldives and Rumania.

Last week, ISG Damman linked seniors with countless college recruiting representatives from the U.S. and the Middle East. As Dammam prepares for a number of upcoming community-wide programs, Yanbu International School continues to experience record enrollment and unveils a new report card format in time for parent-teacher conferences.

## **ISG PARTNERING SCHOOLS**

Each *Tehdeed* includes highlights from ISG member schools. See what is happening in your community and throughout the ISG educational network.

### ***Dhahran British Grammar School (DBGS)***

Last week was **International Week** at Dhahran British Grammar School. Parents visited classes to talk to the children about their home countries and in many cases; they brought examples of traditional foods to share!

The week-long celebration culminated on Wednesday with an **International Parade** held for Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 children, followed by a sing-along in the Sand Dome with a programme of songs from around the world. Reflective of ISG's diversity, over 40 nationalities were represented in the parade with many parents wearing clothing representative of their home countries.

On Sunday last week, DBGS also hosted its first **Parent Assembly** of the year. Thanks to the creative talent of Year 5 children, visiting family members were transported back in time as they gained a glimpse of life from the Victorian Age and enjoyed artifacts and costumes from the era. "... It was a lovely start to our cycle of parent assemblies," commented Headteacher Jones.

To view photographs from both events, click on the following link to the DBGS blog:

Photos from the Year 5 Blue Assembly, focusing on Victorian era lifestyles, can be found at: <http://www.dhahranbritish.com/Galleries2009-10/Y5BlueAssembly/index.html>

Many of the colorful traditional costumes from the international day parade were captured on film. Photos can be found at the following link: <http://www.dhahranbritish.com/Galleries2009-10/InternationalDay/index.html>

### ***Dhahran High School (DHS)***

Dhahran High School held **Parent-Teacher conferences on Thursday, November 5th**. According to Principal David Dorn, approximately 66% of DHS families met with faculty concerning the academic progress of their students over the first quarter. Principal Dorn highlighted the work of Ms. Herme Tugado, DHS administrative assistant, whose excellent pre-event organizing and planning enabled "... families to flow through the day to meet with teachers in an efficient and successful manner."

Following a series of modifications, **WOW Week** has also been finalized with two trips planned this coming January. Twenty students will travel to the Maldives with another 22 students volunteering for Habitat for Humanity in Romania. Due to lower than typical participation, **DHS will run classes as "normal" for the 430+ students who will be on campus.**

Principal Dorn expressed DHS's on-going commitment to student study abroad trips, emphasizing their ability to "enhance and extend student learning opportunities". DHS typically runs 5 or more trips during a WOW Week. To strengthen future participation, students and families will be surveyed to gain input for future planning efforts and identify possible reasons behind this year's lower registration.

Also last week, DHS student leaders and the administrative team met to talk about **dress code policy**. The student council proposed an adaptation to the current dress code which has been approved. The student leadership group is planning to re-vamp the **Dome Student Lounge** to create a more positive and user-friendly atmosphere. They are also developing a proposal for the initiation of a **Senior Lounge** during this school year. Principal Dorn thanked DHS's Student Council Advisor, Mr. Robert Smith, for his leadership. The "team [is] doing an outstanding job of representing their classmates and initiating actions to enhance the student climate here on campus."

### ***International Schools Group Dammam***

This week's ISG Dammam update is from three dynamic Vice Principals:

First, at ISG Dammam Middle School, Vice Principal Sylvia Marcos reported that students **elected new Student Council officers**. The officers and class representatives have already met to explore a variety of projects, including fund-raising activities, field trips, fun days, peer-tutoring for struggling students, and sports tournaments.

In the classroom, the **selection of Speak Out class winners** was at its peak and Grade 5 and 6 students were challenged by first quarter exams. For grade 5, this was their first time to be assessed. To celebrate the end of the exams, the first quarter Grade 5 and 6 students sponsored their **first social event** featuring dancing and costumes with shwarmas, chips, and beverages to keep energy levels up. Two Grade 8 students who are DJ's provided the sound and lights.

Meanwhile, Vice Principal Annie Mathew at ISG Dammam Elementary School called attention to the culmination of student testing and grade reporting with details of the **Fall festival held November 11<sup>th</sup>**.

Students participated in a costume parade, games, movie, food sales, and other fun activities. "They also received a lot of treats from their teachers," commented Ms. Mathew. "It was a colorful morning with students dressed in fancy storybook and spooky characters!" In other exciting news, the **AFG Committee** did exceptional work to finalize the school's **Beliefs Statement**.

Lastly, from Vineeta Dambal, ISG Dammam High School Vice Principal, we learned that on Wednesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, an estimated 32 **representatives from U.S. and Middle Eastern colleges met with Grade 11 and 12 students** to answer questions regarding their campus, courses, requirements and other information. Ms. Dambal commended the work of Counselor, Mrs. Veron Naidu and her office for organizing the event. "It was a great opportunity for students to get a glimpse of college life and for the college representatives to visit the ISG-Dammam facility.

Also last week, students and Language Arts teachers worked to select the finalists for the **Annual Speak-out** event which will take place in the coming week. In the next Tehdeed, watch for details on upcoming Parent-Teacher conferences, the annual Book Fair, and the results from the popular Speak-out event.

### **Yanbu International School (YIS)**

According to Principal Paul Thompson, **YIS is "growing, growing, growing."** YIS has been reaching out to "expatriate enterprises" with plans to relocate to Yanbu in the near future and the response has been positive. Last week, YIS experienced one of its highest new student enrollment periods with an average of more than four daily intake assessments during the week.

At the same time, YIS had their highest absentee rate among students in memory with over 8% absenteeism in a population that usually has a rate lower than 3%. Citing teachers' prompt attendance reporting and the work of YIS's nurse, Mrs. Avee Baldoz, who is "doing a great job of health education, screening, communication and management, Principal Thompson expressed that YIS is "definitely becoming a more aware and effective organization" in dealing with current health-related challenges.

In other news, thanks to the superb effort of AFG Coordinator Mark Lasater in leading "a rigorous and well-reasoned consideration, vetting, and writing process," YIS's **Belief Statements** have been finalized. Survey Monkey was employed to increase stakeholder "buy in" throughout the planning process; an input mechanism which may also be employed as YIS turns next to the completion of its **Graduate Profile statement**.

The **newly-minted report card** (years in development) was also unveiled by elementary teachers last week with the conclusion of the Elementary trimester. The Middle and High School quarter has also ended and grades have been submitted in preparation for the **student-parent-teacher conferences** scheduled to take place on November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.