

# ***Tehdeed***

*Tehdeed: 18 November 2009*

## **Summary**

In this week's *Tehdeed*, as sessions come to a close prior to the holidays, ISG Headteachers, Principals and Vice Principals highlight a myriad of community outreach initiatives and academic-based interactions between teachers, parents and students.

Conferences, student and teacher assessments, concerts and celebrations continue to dot the calendars across each and every one of ISG's dynamic schools.

Excellent education means balanced education both in and out of the classroom. ISG's committed teachers and leadership are always looking for new ways to engage students; helping them to apply lessons learned in the classroom and creating opportunities to give back to the community.

With Eid break just around the corner, Superintendent Norma Hudson announced the closure of all ISG schools from November 26th through December 4th. "Thanks to our dedicated educators and support staff who continue to provide great instruction and help to ISG students throughout the District!" ISG's success is a product of the commitment of all students, parents, and colleagues.

Happy holidays everyone!

## **ISG PARTNERING SCHOOLS**

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

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

With three principals and every elementary teacher contributing, Principal Paul Thompson proudly announced the completion of Yanbu International School's **new elementary report card system**. (For more details, check out the article on YIS's website at: [http://www.isgyis.org/about\\_yis/principal.htm](http://www.isgyis.org/about_yis/principal.htm).)

Modified over a period of five years, to best reflect the learning of elementary students and better share their accomplishments with parents, the new report cards will be distributed to parents shortly. Future milestones include the integration of YIS's grading system and the Serco student information database. Down the road, YIS hopes to establish password protected on-line access to academic-related information for all students and parents.

In other news, the first **activity sessions will be drawing to a close** with the coming Eid holiday. Principal Thompson **recognized the dedication of teachers** who "hang in there" until 4:30 p.m., and later, to enrich the lives of students and make such fun, team-building, and educational activities possible.

Activity sessions are just one of the many ways through which YIS insures children experience a well-rounded and balanced education both in and out of the classroom.

In the classroom, newly appointed **teaching assistants** are helping to further advance student learning. These proud and proactive students develop personal leadership skills as they fulfill a variety of roles, often assisting multiple teachers during the course of the day.

*Mr. T* has been spending a lot of time in the classroom as well, as he wraps up **Fall teacher appraisals**. Drawing upon the **Danielson Model**, classroom observations serve as a proven tool to evaluate the planning and preparation, classroom environment, level of instruction and professional practices of YIS's newest and most veteran teachers.

As the rhythm of school normalizes, students and staff begin **yearbook and school i.d. photo sessions** on YIS's lawn and in the auditorium. Looking to the future, the **calendar for next year** is a hot topic of conversation as YIS teachers are polled on-line to determine the best educational arrangement of teaching days for the benefit of student learning.

### ***International Schools Group Dammam (ISGD)***

Extending an enthusiastic invitation to all parents, students and staff, Principal Barnhouse announced the upcoming **22nd Annual Speak Out scheduled for Wednesday November 25<sup>th</sup>**.

This week is also **Child Study Team (CST)** time at ISG Dammam during which Principal Barnhouse meets with department Vice Principals and Counselors at the Elementary, Middle, and High School level to review student progress. "Once a concern has been identified," Barnhouse explains, "we set up a meeting with the parents and the student regarding our concern. [CST] is a great way for me to stay in touch with our large student body."

"Service," is one area for further education and character-building; creating opportunities and value for ISGD students to "give back". To this end, ISGD proudly announced that 16 Middle and High School students and five staff volunteered their time to assist the "very worthwhile" **Saudi Cancer Foundation**. On the evening of November 19<sup>th</sup>, students lead art storytelling activities and served as photographers and guides for an estimated 200 patients and their families.

In other news, Principal Barnhouse congratulated **Coach Ashton Dutoit** and the **varsity boys volleyball team for winning the SAIK-AC tournament**. "One more banner for Dammam!" Gratitude was also directed to **Mrs. Sonia Bool, Mrs. Rema Venugopal** and **Ms. Sumera Sartaj** for making the **school-wide book fair** such a great success!

ISGD is living up to its motto..."Committed to WORLD CLASS Education." The recent **Parent's Macro-Analysis Survey** found that 94% of parents agree with the statements: "My child enjoys attending ISG Dammam" and "Overall, ISGD is preparing my child well."

Within ISG Dammam High School, staff was busy preparing for parent teacher conferences which took place on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Vice President Vineeta Dambal reported that the **NESA Virtual School** system, which played a major instructional role during the previous school closure, continues to serve as a powerful medium leading into the holiday season. Acting proactively and demonstrating the

independence gained from virtual week, some students are requesting that assignments be posted on NVS so they will not miss important class work while away. Parents, in turn, are pleased that their children are tapping into this flexible resource to keep in touch with the school and teachers.

This past week ISG Dammam also sponsored meetings of **HS Child Study Team (CST)**, comprised of the Principal, the Vice-principal and respective counselors. CST is a great way for administrators to assess student progress and identify areas in which some students may need additional assistance.

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

DBGS experienced another full week with events carrying over from the recent **International Week celebration**. On Sunday, the **Year 2 Red class** put on a super Assembly for children and parents featuring lovely costumes, songs and information to celebrate the diverse nationalities of their classmates.

Exploring the concept of habitats, **Year 4 children** enjoyed a **science field trip to the BAE Beach** in which DBGS Headteacher Ian Jones reports that the students “managed to bring most of the beach back with them.”

On Wednesday, the entire school participated in DBGS’s annual **Walkathon** to raise money for the school’s two charities: **The Loretto School in Kenya** and the **Ronald McDonald House in Bristol** where DBGS sponsors two rooms. “It was a great event for worthwhile causes,” commented Headteacher Jones. Photos from both events can be found on the DBGS blog at the following link: <http://dhahranbritish.wordpress.com/>.

Staff-related activities continued beyond the traditional school week. Headteacher Ian Jones reported that “fingers were crossed” as staff entered student academic data into the new **Serco Reports system** on Thursday. The Serco system is being implemented throughout the ISG District as a coordinated database to track student achievement. A week full of learning was topped off on Friday when **DBGS Year 11 students completed their modular science tests**.

### ***Dhahran Elementary Middle School (DEMS)***

As active and involved as ever, DEMS Principal Jana Barnhouse highlighted the work of fifth through eighth grade students, under the supervision of **Mrs. Sniazhana Shcherba** and **Mrs. Kim Butler**, who performed for a full house at the **Fall Music Concert** on Monday evening. Grade five students played recorders, grade six choir students sang, while seventh and eighth grade band students rounded out the evening with an instrumental performance.

During this past week the fifth and sixth grade students also held their **first bazaar** of the school year in the middle school dome while middle school students participated in a lunch time **table tennis and dodge ball tournament** in the gymnasium. Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 were honored Tuesday for their first quarter academic achievements, in this year’s first **Honor Assembly** while preschoolers kicked off the **Thanksgiving season** with a performance and feast for their families.

The week was concluded with the successful first meeting of the **parent-sponsored after school Arabic program**.