

30 November 2020

Dear Parents,

We have finally reached the end of our Academic year with all the challenges it presented us, and as we draw the curtain on the unforgettable 2020, let us remember that we also have lots to be grateful for.

Whilst we managed to deliver our academic curriculum virtually and finally face to face, we remain mindful that many students in our own country and around the world did not have access to this privilege.

We have managed to:

- Develop COVID -19 protocols that allowed us to function in a clean and safe environment when our students returned to boarding and face to face learning at school.
- Run successful and uninterrupted external CAIE examinations.
- Successfully completed our internal examinations without any glitches.
- Collect and return students to and from boarders and airports and they have all reached their final destinations safely.

For all of the above I wish to extend my appreciation and gratitude to our parents of the International School of South Africa who stood by our side through this tumultuous journey. I thank and admire our students for showing extraordinary resilience in dealing with the disruption from the norm and adjusting to the virtual reality of online learning.

I also extend my gratitude and admiration to all our teachers who were stretched for new responses week after week as the new demands of teaching in this space continued to challenge them on a daily basis, and they never gave up on our children.

Thank you to our Administration staff for dealing with all the concerns and stresses of our parents and students. Thank you to our Grounds and Maintenance staff for keeping the campus clean and safe. Thank you to our Catering team from Fedics for providing 'meals on wheels' to our students in the residences, and a very big thank you to our Screening team who have worked tirelessly for the last 8 months.

Finally, a big thank you to our Board of Governors for providing sound leadership and direction to the school through these uncertain times.

It is through these difficult times when you see the value of a school and its community, its unbreakable spirit and commitment to its mission and I wish to thank all of you for the unwavering support that you have shown for this community.

School Fee increases

After careful consideration and deliberation, the Board decided to increase fees by 4.5% for the 2021 Academic year, with a moratorium on the general purpose fee for the same year. This increase has been unavoidable as there have been many unintended deficits in our budget. We are hopeful that we will soon be able to turn this around.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

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"If it's important to the child, it's important to us."

SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Parents, I look forward to your support in this regard and thank you for standing by us during this unprecedented year.

“Every storm runs out of rain,” Maya Angelo.

STAFFING

High School

The appointment of the two internal Deputies in the High School created openings for opportunities of growth within our HOD and DOS structures which will allow us to manage our Academic programme in a more streamlined way.

In the past Academic structure, we had six Directors of Studies, and these have now been reduced to three people under the following new title, 'PHASE HEADS'.

PHASE HEADS

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the new team of Phase Heads that will lead our students in 2021. These are very strong appointments and I am confident they will add growth and strength to the Academic programme next year.

Mrs. Unami Simba - Forms 1-3

Mr. Phillip Baka - Forms 4-5

Mrs. Naomi Buys – AS and A Level

Heads of Departments

Mrs Naomi Buys - (Creative Arts, Drama and Physical Education) (new position)

Mr Memory Nyemba - (Humanities) (new position)

Mr Phillip Baka - (Sciences) (existing position)

We are pleased to offer Mr. Yongama Feni a full time position as an ICT and CS teacher in 2021, he has developed tremendously in this space in the last two terms.

Primary School

We are delighted to inform parents that we have appointed a dynamic Setswana teacher in Mrs. Malekanyane Evelina Mokoena, who comes with tremendous experience in teaching Setswana in the Primary school. This appointment will allow us to increase the number of periods offered to Setswana in the lower grades.

With the expansion of the Grade 1 numbers, we will be running 3 streams in 2021.

We look forward to welcoming Ms Nadine Lebartie who was appointed at the end of the third term, she formally joins us in January 2021.



We are pleased to appoint Mrs. Michelle Swart who did an excellent job with the Grade 1 class during the third term as a replacement teacher for Mrs Karodia.

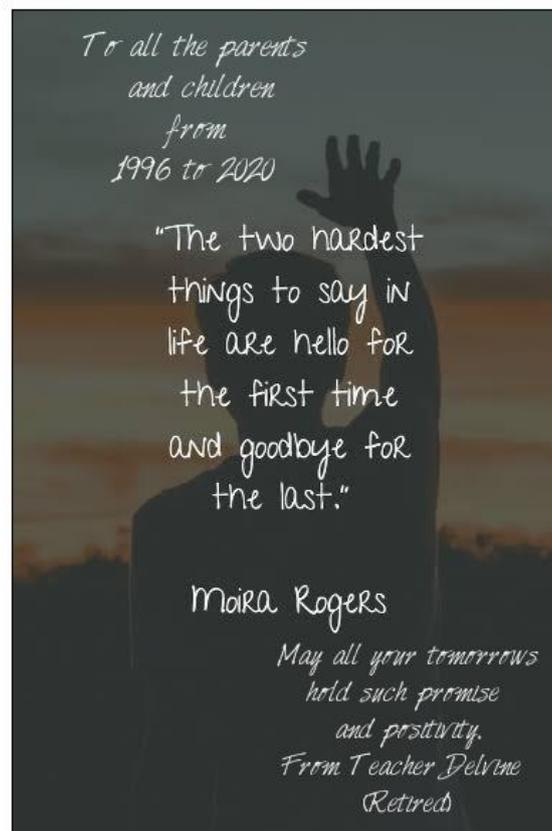
We welcome Ms. Kerisha Bhugwatepersad into Grade 3 on a full time basis in 2021, after her sterling contribution to our school during Term 3.

Farewell

We bid farewell to Mrs. Delvine Schuster who has served the ISSA community with great distinction for the past 25 years. I share a comment from one of our parents to Mrs. Schuster.

"Morning teacher, thank you for your dedication and hard work, for your contribution to our son's basic education. We both know how difficult it has been, but your dedication has been commendable."

We wish Mrs. Delvine Schuster a happy retirement and thank her for 25 years unbroken service here at ISSA. She asked me to share this with you.



Plans for 2021

The Strategic Plan: Vision 2023 - deliver quality, diverse, globally minded education which empowers the future leaders of Africa and the World, will be shared with parents in 2021.

Music Department Proposal

In 2021, we look forward to welcoming four new Peripatetic teachers from the University of Potchefstroom to extend our offering in the Music Department. They will be offering additional weekly classes in Music theory and instruments ranging from strings, brass, woodwinds, including voice from the beginning of February 2021. Last week they paid a brief visit to the school, where they exhibited to excited classes what they will be offering in their lessons.

The bigger vision for the department is to start forming music ensembles: Wind Bands, String Ensembles, Jazz and Marimba Bands and Vocal Groups.

As the great Mick Jagger said, "I believe we should encourage our children to sing and play instruments from a young age."

Sign-up sheets will be distributed at the beginning of the year with all the relevant information.

Important dates for Term 1 2021

- Admin offices will be open from the 4th January - 8 January from 08:00 -14:00 till the end of the week
- Boarders return on Sunday the 10 January 2021 - Busses will leave ORT airport at 15:00.
- School starts on 12 January 2020 at 07:30 sharp for all students.

Conclusion

I look forward to continue strengthening ISSA internally in 2021 and to consolidate on the positive gains that we have made in 2020, this can only be achieved if we continue to work as a TEAM.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful and restful holiday with your children and for those who celebrate Christmas, I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas.

Remember to maintain the safe pandemic protocols we have all become accustomed to, and safe travels if you are going to be on the road in your respective countries.

Yours sincerely



Bruce Wells
CEO/Headmaster
International School of South Africa