



**July 2015**

**From the Principal's Desk**

*When we strive for excellence, our journey is a continuous pursuit that strives to do better through effective actions.*

Dear Parents,

Members of the Core Team were back to school on 20<sup>th</sup> July to initiate and welcome all new teachers who joined us on 21<sup>st</sup> July. After an icebreaker session in each program the teachers attended an induction session that was followed by a workshop on Classroom Management. In the Senior School, the teachers met the various Department Heads who briefed them about what has been planned for the First Term.

**Professional Development Programs** - During the Professional Development, all teachers attended a two day workshop on Differentiation for students with Special Needs conducted by Mr. Brennen Gage, a specialist in Teacher Development. Mr. Gage is the founder of a lead school in Austin, USA, which focuses on Project Based Learning and trains staff and teachers on a variety of teaching methodologies. He is also the founder of "RISE High", a program that partners students with successful entrepreneurs to create businesses.

The PYP team attended a three day session conducted by Ms. Kathy Short on 'Inquiry as Curriculum' Ms. Short has worked extensively with teachers all over the world to develop inquiry-based curriculum and has authored multiple books and articles, including Creating Classrooms for Authors and Inquirers. She is currently the President of the National Council of Teachers of English. The other workshops for teachers included Goal Setting and the Significance of Professional

Learning Goals to the Teaching Community, Effective incorporation of Assessment for Learning Strategies to gauge Student Learning and one on Understanding the Values, Ethos and Culture of Indus Institutions.

Naviance training was also conducted for the members of the Placement Cell, Heads of School and Coordinators in the Senior Section. This was conducted by Ms. Elizabeth Shuman who is a Lead Training Specialist from the Naviance Summer Institute, USA. This training has helped to provide important insights which will support our students in their career planning through university placements.

With more emphasis on Approaches to Learning by the International Baccalaureate a workshop was conducted on 27<sup>th</sup> July to help teachers incorporate ATL (Approaches to Teaching and Learning) in their Unit Planners. This will help students develop skills that have relevance across the curriculum that help them “learn how to learn”. A concept-driven curriculum that uses ATL skills effectively enables all students to become stronger and more self-regulated learners.

Apart from the outsourced workshops, several were conducted in-house to further promote teacher excellence like Assessment for Learning, Behavioural Counselling, Classroom Management, Instructional Strategies, Mentoring, etc.

**CEO’s Address** - As is customary, the CEO, Lt. Gen. Arjun Ray addressed all members of the staff. **He stressed the purpose of education and the role of teachers.** Teachers should be life-long learners, engaged in self-directed learning, committed to self-renewal that will help unlock the potential of not only oneself but also that of the students. Teachers he said must role model values, identify and nurture talent and develop twenty first century competencies. It is important to set challenging goals to reinvent oneself, find purpose and give meaning to life. Happiness he concluded will result.

**In my Opening Address to the Teachers,** I welcomed them to the year ahead. After explaining what makes Indus different, I outlined our achievements and emphasized that it was because of a clear vision and the understanding of the purpose of education. My goals were defined as:

- **Goal 1** – To Improve Student Performance in all areas of Academics
- **Goal 2** – To Further develop Students and Teacher Leadership through the Leadership Curriculum and Mentoring Programme; to enhance Community Service through House Visions; to enhance training and participation in sports and continue and support the Professional Development of teachers
- **Goal 3** – To Enhance Aesthetic Development through Music, Dance, Drama, Activity Clubs, the School Orchestra and Visual Arts

There will be an emphasis on Persuasive Communication. Students from Grades 2 to 8 will be trained to meet the requirements of the Trinity Guildhall Course to develop and refine expertise in different registers of communication through spoken English. The Course will be in three levels, one period a week during the regular school day. Level 1 is Foundation and will include Grades 2 and 3, the Intermediate for Grades 4 and 5 and the Advanced for Grades 6, 7 and 8.

**New Initiatives:** With the aim to seed and germinate a data conscience culture in school and apply scientific data model that will enable us to make informed decisions based on data collected scientifically we have introduced **Data Analytics** this year. Through this we would measure student performance with a motive to enhance student learning. This would help us address areas of concern, plan timely interventions and support, study trends and predict student performance pattern. We have revamped **Mentoring** with a focus to nurture students on the path of 'self-growth'. We are sure the revised structure will help our students cultivate values like empathy and resilience, enable them to manage emotions, and develop into responsible citizens. **Gap Year**, a popular concept in the west, is another initiative Indus is taking this year where in our students would be given an opportunity to take a year off after completing their IB DP. During this time they will engage themselves in social projects and leadership initiatives which would further strengthen their prospects.

More about my goals and initiatives will be shared on SIMS shortly.

**IB DP Results** - The Highlight of the month was our result of our ninth batch of students in the IB Diploma Programme. We are elated that our top score was 44 points and we have 10% of our students who have scored 40 points and above. We

have surpassed the world average in almost all subjects and about 58% of our students have secured 30 points and above. We will continue with our efforts to excel and improve student performance with each passing year. Special support classes will be held on Saturdays and details will follow from the Coordinator.

We have also welcomed on board Mr. Hector Leon, who has been appointed in place of Ms Ann Wenger as Director Placement. The Placement Cell continues to be busy with meeting students and parents. As mentioned earlier, Ms. Elizabeth Schumen conducted the Naviance Training to the members of the Placement Cell, Heads of School and Coordinators in the Senior section.

**Chess Competition** - When students do well in competitions that rank them high we take pride in sharing such an achievement. Aaryaman Kakar of Grade 10 played in the Commonwealth Chess Championship 2015 at New Delhi from 22nd June to 30th June, in the Open U-14 Category and he gained a whop-ling 32.4 fide rating points thus making his second Fide Master Norm. Since he has two Fide Master Norms we are confident that with one more norm he will soon become a Fide Master.

**Chess Camp** – A five day Phase one Chess Camp was conducted from 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July. Six boys and one girl from the PYP attended the camp which focused on a chess opening, “Sicilian Defense.” These budding players will move into the next phase and improve their learning.

**Trip** - 11 students along with Ms. Florence Johnson from the department of Chemistry, attended a Science Summer Camp at Singapore. The highlight was a hands-on exposure into 3 D Printing, Forensic Science, Nanotechnology, the Mathematical concept of Odds and the classification of animals. The trip was an enjoyable fun-filled learning experience.

We will continue to encourage our students to dream deep as we believe that every dream precedes a goal. As we welcome a new academic session it will be our endeavor to continue to encourage our students to create a value-based future.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarojini Rao', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the name.

Mrs. Sarojini Rao

Principal

Indus International School, Bangalore