



The Bear Essentials



The ISB Weekly Newsletter 2024/25

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IMPORTANT DATES

24th - 26th January - EAISAC HS Basketball Tournament at ISB
Monday 27th January - PD Day (school closed on this day)
28th - 31st January - Seollal Lunar New Year Holiday
Monday 3rd February - Battle of Busan HS Basketball
Thursday 6th February - Battle of Busan MS Volleyball Finals
Monday 10th February - MYP Personal Project
10th - 14th February - ISB Open House
13th - 16th February - EAISAC MS Volleyball in Fukuoka

Featured Story



Welcome back to ISB! The EAISAC HS basketball tournament kicked off on Thursday afternoon, and the excitement ramped up this morning with an opening ceremony that featured outstanding performances by the Music Monkeys and the ISB Cheer Squad, setting a vibrant tone for the games. The tournament is currently underway and continues through Saturday, showcasing thrilling basketball and fostering valuable cultural exchanges. Shout out to the Media Team and the Bears Club for their stellar organization. It's wonderful to see our community come together, showing strong support for the athletes and guests.





ISB LIVING LIBRARY, FEBRUARY 17TH 2025

Join Our "I Am the Story" Living Library Event!

The ISB Libraries invites you to share your personal stories with Middle School students during our "I Am the Story" event, part of Home and Family Languages Week! This is a unique opportunity to connect with students and celebrate the diversity of our community.

Event Details:

- When: Monday, February 17, 2025, from 11:45–12:40
- Where: Secondary Library, 3rd floor, C-11, and nearby rooms

Share your experiences, such as a pivotal life moment, a cultural reflection, or an unforgettable adventure. Each session is 12 minutes with small groups of students, and props are welcome!

Sign up to participate: [ISB Living Library Sign Up Form](#)

We need many "Living Books" to make this event a success. Thank you for helping bring our stories to life!

ISB OPEN HOUSE

Our upcoming Open House event offers prospective families a chance to discover what makes ISB such a special place for learning and growth. During the Open House, visitors will explore our state-of-the-art facilities, meet our dedicated faculty, and gain insight into how ISB fosters both academic excellence and holistic development. This is a fantastic opportunity for families considering ISB to see firsthand why we are the premier choice for international education in Busan.



Registration is simple: [interested families can complete the form linked here](#). Individual admission information sessions will also be held during the event. Families can select their preferred date on the application form, and we'll follow up to confirm a convenient time. If you know families who might be interested, we would greatly appreciate it if you could share this opportunity with them.

For additional details, they can contact our Admissions Office at 051-720-1100 / 051-720-1101 or email admissions@isbusan.org. Thank you for your continued support of ISB.



Parent Workshop

On Wednesday, January 22nd, ISB hosted a parent workshop titled "How Do We Use AI at ISB?" led by Dale Plotzki, the school's Technology and Learning Innovation Coordinator, the session explored how AI is thoughtfully integrated into teaching and learning at ISB. The discussion focused on how the school ensures AI is used responsibly, supporting students in developing digital literacy while prioritizing safety, ethics, and accountability.

During the workshop, parents were introduced to Flint, an AI tool that was used to gather their insights and turn them into practical strategies for supporting children's use of AI at home. These strategies included modeling appropriate AI use, encouraging critical thinking when evaluating AI outputs, and establishing clear expectations for its use at home. Parents left with actionable ideas for helping their children use AI as a tool for learning and growth.

The event was well attended, with parents engaging in meaningful conversations about AI's role in education. Many stayed afterward to continue discussions over coffee during the PTA Coffee Morning. The workshop reflected ISB's commitment to fostering a shared understanding of how technology can enhance learning while equipping students with the skills they need to navigate an increasingly digital world.

Important Re-Enrolment Information

On Wednesday 22nd January, a re-enrolment letter from the 'Open Apply' platform was sent to all ISB parents. The letter contains a link with a survey asking you to confirm re-enrolment for the 2025-26 academic year.

Both leaving and returning families should complete this survey. Completing the survey helps us to plan our programmes and resources more effectively for the 2025-26 Academic Year. It also ensures that you have confirmed your child's place at ISB. We would be very grateful if you could check your email and respond to this letter as soon as possible.

Bids Open for School Bus and Cafeteria Services for 2025-26

Please note that bids for the operation of our school bus services and school cafeteria services for the 2025-26 school year have been advertised. For further information, please visit: [ISB Bid Announcements and Application Procedure](#) Thank you for your continued support of our school community.

Recruitment for the 2025-26 Academic Year

This week, I attended the Search Associates recruitment fair in London. This event provided a valuable opportunity to conduct in-person interviews with over 20 prospective teachers applying for positions at ISB. Our recruitment efforts reflect the usual turnover of international educators at the end of each academic year, as well as the addition of new positions to support our school's continued growth. I am delighted to share that we have hired two additional outstanding educators who will join us in August 2025: Gilbert Kaburu and Isabelle Hutrel.



Simon McCloskey



Gilbert Kaburu will join the ISB community as our new **Whole School PHE Teacher and PHE Coordinator**. Originally from Uganda, Gilbert holds a Master of Education from the College of New Jersey, where his thesis explored the impact of physical education and sports participation on academic performance. He also earned a PhD in Multicultural and Global Education from Ohio State University. Currently serving as the Athletics Director at the American School of Kinshasa (TASOK), Gilbert previously worked as the Athletics & Activities Director at the United World College of East Africa (UWCEA) in Tanzania. He has extensive experience teaching PYP and MYP PHE at IB World Schools in Kampala, Bangalore, Khartoum, and Beijing. Beyond teaching, Gilbert has coached basketball, soccer, swimming, and rugby. Impressively, he speaks six languages and is learning a seventh! As a former athlete, Gilbert has represented Uganda on the international stage, competing in the Beijing Olympics, FINA World Swimming Championships, All Africa Games, World University Games, and Commonwealth Games. Gilbert will be joined by his wife, Kezia, a UK-qualified/IB-trained teacher, and their two children.



Isabelle Hutrel will join ISB as a **Lower Elementary PYP Homeroom Teacher**. Originally from France, Isabelle holds a Bachelor of Education specializing in Inclusive Education and Science & Technology from NHL Stenden University in the Netherlands. She is currently completing her International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS) certification through Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK. Additionally, she holds a degree in Chemistry from University Lyon in France. Isabelle is currently teaching at the International School Hannover Region in Germany. Outside the classroom, Isabelle has actively contributed to extracurricular activities such as coaching badminton teams, leading a debate club, providing after-school mathematics support, and teaching French as a home language. Fluent in English and French, Isabelle also has basic proficiency in Korean, German, and Dutch. Please join me in welcoming Gilbert and Isabelle to ISB!



We are pleased to announce that our new **Secondary Principal, Paul Horkan**, will be visiting Busan for a transition visit on Wednesday 21st May. Paul will be available to meet with students, teachers and parents. He will also be meeting with key personnel at the school to ensure that the transition to his new role goes smoothly in August. Paul will be attending the AGM meeting on Thursday 22nd May and the Grade 12 Graduation Ceremony on Saturday 24th May.

From the Elementary Principal

This week in Elementary school has been both productive and instructive. Classes have been focused on their inquiries, with examples to be found below. Our Korean department has been working especially hard to prepare for the Lunar New Year assembly, which was a vibrant celebration of Korean culture and tradition.

To all those celebrating, I wish you a joyous Seollal. Spend quality time with your family and loved ones. We look forward to seeing you back on February 3rd for more exciting learning experiences.



Kevin Smith



Elementary Learning Focus

Korean Language Acquisition Class

We celebrated the Korean Lunar New Year, Seollal, by learning how to say "Happy New Year" in Korean, reading Seollal-themed books, discovering zodiac animals, playing traditional games, enjoying Garaetteok (rice cake), and singing New Year's songs. What a fantastic way to celebrate Seollal!





Early Years 2: How We Organize Ourselves

Central Idea: Communities work better when members follow shared agreements and routines.

Last week, snack time sparked a lively chat about healthy food and how our body works. Inspired by their curiosity, we set up a body system provocation, and the children eagerly created their own doctor's office! They worked together to assemble body and skeleton puzzles, asking questions like, "What's this part of the bone?" and "What does this part of the body do?"



With a little help from books, the children discovered more and worked collaboratively, turning their doctor's office into a hub of learning and creativity. They imagined what a doctor's office needs, asked about roles like doctors and nurses, and even made their own stethoscopes! This activity links beautifully to our unit of community, as the children explored how shared roles, materials and routines help things run smoothly—whether in a classroom or a doctor's office. Their ideas and teamwork are helping bring the unit's concepts to life in an exciting, hands-on way.

Early Years 1

On Thursday morning, we found out that the classroom light wasn't working. Ms. Son asked, 'What should we do?' Evan quickly responded, 'We need somebody to fix it.' Ms. Son said that she would make a call right away to have the light fixed. She also explained that there was no light in the bathroom, so we would need to use it in the dark. After our morning routine of washing hands, we gathered on the carpet, and a teacher asked, 'How was it using the bathroom in the dark?' Some children were excited by the unusual experience, while others expressed that they preferred having the light on.

As we were discussing, Mr. Kim from our maintenance team arrived to check the lights. During Free Flow, some children noticed Mr. Kim



working and wanted to help. Charles thoughtfully went to the kindergarten class to grab a flashlight for Mr. Kim. Thank you, Charles, for your kind and helpful gesture!

The children were curious and engaged as they observed Mr. Kim working to solve the problem. This experience demonstrated the importance of the people in our school community who help us every day. It also provided a meaningful connection to our current unit, How We Organize Ourselves, encouraging the children to further reflect on how everyone works together to keep our school running smoothly.

Grade 1 Math Fun!

Our Grade 1 students have been having a blast with their math lessons! They've been learning how to add and subtract numbers up to 120, and recently they put their skills to the test with a fun, interactive game. Students rolled dice, moved their game pieces around the board, and added or subtracted the numbers they landed on. They were all so engaged and excited to practice their math skills in a new and different way! For an extra challenge students tried playing the game with a die that went up to 6 and then with one that went up to 9. After playing both games students shared ideas about which dice they would rather use to play their game.



Grade 2 Mathematicians

This week the students in Grade 2 have been learning about different ways to represent 3-digit numbers. We have worked hard to share and discuss our understanding of hundreds, tens and ones. It was lots of fun learning a new maths game and playing together with different partners. We are working on our communication skills so that we can explain our understanding that in a place-value number system the value of a digit depends on its place in the number. We love being Mathematicians!



Grade 3 Persuasive Writing

We have been working hard on our Grade 3 persuasive writing over the past few weeks. This week, we presented our writing pieces to Mr. Smith, aiming to convince him to let us choose a field trip destination of our choice. We focused on making our writing captivating and linked it to our upcoming unit of inquiry, Forces and Motion. Fingers crossed that our persuasive efforts will be successful.



Grade 4 Students Prepare for “The Last Song” Musical Performance

Our Grade 4 students are hard at work preparing for their upcoming musical, The Last Song, which will be performed for parents on February 13th. As part of our How We Express Ourselves unit, this project has been a fantastic way for students to showcase their creativity and teamwork.

This week, we had a special visit from the Grade 10 drama students, who led warm-up games, watched our final scene, and worked with small groups to offer constructive feedback. It was such a great experience for the Grade 4s to perform for their older peers and learn from them. The collaboration has really given the students a boost of energy and confidence as they head into the final stretch of preparations. We’re so proud of their hard work and can’t wait to share this special performance with our school community.



From the Secondary Principal

Another busy and productive week in the Secondary School! It was wonderful to welcome our students and faculty back from the fantastic EAISAC Creative Arts Festival in Ulaanbaatar. They returned with exciting stories and memories of the wonderful experience, a testament to the power of collaboration and creativity between our schools. We look forward to hosting this event at ISB next school year. This week also saw the Middle School volleyball teams take part in the Battle of Busan on Tuesday, displaying their skills and sportsmanship. Well done to all who participated!



Gilles Buck

On Thursday, we celebrated the Lunar New Year with a beautiful whole-school Seollal assembly. This was a wonderful opportunity for our community to learn more about and appreciate this important cultural holiday. Special recognition goes to our Korean A and B teachers and students for their contributions in helping the community understand the traditions and significance of Seollal.



Finally, this week we also welcomed the EAISAC HS basketball tournament teams on Thursday afternoon, and the games began right away. On Friday morning, we held the kickoff ceremony, followed by two days of exciting basketball and valuable cultural exchange. It was great to see our community come together to support our athletes and welcome our guests.

This week was also a significant one for professional development. Many faculty members engaged in valuable learning experiences. Our Group 1 and 2 teachers participated in the Rafael Angel CBCI workshops on Monday and Tuesday, focusing on enhancing their instructional practices. Mr. Plotzki also hosted informative lunchtime PD sessions on new developments in AI for interested teachers and the AI champions, keeping our faculty at the forefront of educational technology.



It's clear that there's a great deal of positive energy and engagement across the secondary school, and I'm continually impressed by the dedication of our students and staff.

From the PHE department

This semester in PHE, students have explored two dynamic and impactful units: Team Dynamics and Communication and Health and Well-being. Through these units, students have developed essential life skills that lay the foundation for personal growth and success.

In Team Dynamics and Communication, the focus was on building teamwork and communication skills. Students learned how effective collaboration and clear communication contribute to stronger team interactions, both on and off the court. They practiced these skills in various activities, emphasizing the importance of working together to achieve common goals.

In our Health and Well-being unit, students turned their focus inward, exploring the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of health. They've learned to assess their own well-being, practicing self-awareness and identifying when to check in with themselves. By reflecting on the interconnected components of health, students are learning to make balanced choices that support their overall development.

These lessons in teamwork, communication, and personal health are invaluable not only in the classroom but also in daily life. It's been inspiring to see our students grow as individuals and as members of our school community. Looking ahead, we will be diving into the Mind-Body Balance unit, where students will explore the connection between physical movement and mental focus. This unit will challenge them to choreograph dance or movement routines to music, fostering creativity, coordination, and mindfulness. We're excited to see how students apply their growing self-awareness and teamwork skills to this engaging and expressive unit.



This week's PTA Coffee Morning was a lovely get-together. It was wonderful to see so many of you there. Thanks for coming!



Thank you message from Mr. McCloskey

We would like to extend our appreciation to the incredible members of our PTA who came together last night to cook a delicious dinner for all the students competing in the EAISAC tournament. Their hard work and dedication ensured that over 100 participants, including students from Ulaanbaatar, Fukuoka, and Nagoya, were treated to a fantastic meal of mouthwatering burgers, enjoyed by everyone. What's truly inspiring is that some of these generous volunteers don't even have children participating in the tournament - they simply stepped up out of kindness and community spirit. This is a wonderful example of the heart and dedication that make our school community so special. Thank you, PTA, for your incredible support and for making our school such a welcoming and caring environment for all!

