

ISZL Magazine 2023-2024

 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF ZUG AND LUZERN
respect | motivate | achieve





ISZL's Annual Report 2022-23 was published at the start of 2024.
You can download the publication, including our Audited Consolidated Financial Report,
by scanning the QR code.

Cover photo: ISZL Middle School students.

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Change is Constant

*How do we prepare our students for a fast-changing world?
ISZL's Director, **Barry Dequanne**, argues that it starts by
encouraging children to embrace their own strengths.*

At the recent summit of leaders from international schools, universities, and educational agencies, the common theme framing our discussions was the pervasive nature of change as a constant in education.

It is true that this year, globally and for our school, change continues to be at the forefront. We have shifted from talking about the effects of artificial intelligence in the abstract to working out the ways in which this transformative advance can enhance our school experience. AI technologies are reshaping how we deliver personalised learning experiences, enabling us to tailor educational content to meet the unique needs of each student. This dynamic approach not only enhances learning outcomes, but also prepares our students for a world in which technology and human interaction are deeply intertwined.

Continued overleaf →







Critical to ISZL's mission is empowering students to engage in open and honest debates on crucial issues. Such discourse is not only about expressing one's own ideas but also about listening to, and empathising with, others. This requires the strong academic preparation that we are committed to providing, equipping students with the ability to analyse, debate, and understand diverse perspectives on complex topics like global conflict and climate change.

These skills will continue to be critical, as 2024 promises to be a landmark year for electoral processes. Over two billion people will participate in more than sixty national elections worldwide, including in the United States, India, Mexico, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. These elections occur amid a backdrop of traditional media being bypassed in favour of unregulated – and often unreliable – information sources. Our students are growing up in a fast-paced social media landscape where apps like WhatsApp are integral, yet raise significant concerns about safety, privacy, and content.

The development of intercultural competencies also remains a priority, as these skills are essential for our students to succeed in a globalised world. At ISZL, we are committed to cultivating an environment where students learn from each other's differences, fostering a deep respect for diverse cultures and viewpoints.

With all of this fast-paced change, how can we, as educators and parents, best prepare our students?

One answer was provided when Professor Yong Zhao visited our school. He told us straightforwardly that there was little point in attempting to mould your child's interests and academic goals in the direction where you believed the future was going. Put simply, you would probably be wrong about that. What we can do, he told us, is encourage our child's passions and strengths. They can then adapt to the world as they experience it.



This is what we mean when we talk of being a lifelong learner, and where ISZL's inquiry-based approach to learning will stand our children in excellent stead as their generation seeks to tackle long-running social issues such as poverty, sustainability and climate change – plus a few things we have not even thought about yet. At ISZL, children are taught to think holistically and to solve problems. Our learning is designed to help them think across traditional academic disciplines, with the courage to believe they have the right to be heard.

Each year, over a hundred ISZL graduates step forward to embrace their future and new challenges and opportunities. ISZL's mission challenges our students to make the world – or their corner of it – a better, kinder place, and it is inspiring to see how our students continue to enhance their communities and, by extension, the world. As we observe the ongoing contributions of our students, we are reassured that the future is indeed in capable hands.



Barry Dequanne
Director



ISZL
AT A
GLANCE

FOUNDED IN

1961

3-18

AGE RANGE OF
STUDENTS

Mountain Based
Outdoor Education
Centre in Wengen



4.0

AVERAGE
AP SCORE



THREE
INTERNATIONAL
BACCALAUREATE
(IB)
PROGRAMMES

24

ADVANCED
PLACEMENT
COURSES OFFERED

STUDENTS ENROLLED
2023-24

1260

35

AVERAGE
IB SCORE

97%

ISZL STUDENTS
ACHIEVING
IB DIPLOMA

2 CAMPUSES



IN CANTON ZUG

68

STUDENT
NATIONALITIES

87

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

OVER

500

DAILY SCHOOL
BUS RIDES

3

AUTHORISATIONS

9

ORGANISATION
MEMBERSHIPS

50

FIRST LANGUAGE
CLASSES

2

ACCREDITATIONS

International
Baccalaureate (IB)
World School

College Board

Pearson

Educational Collaborative for International Schools (ECIS)
Council of International Schools (CIS)
Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS)
Sports Council of International Schools (SCIS)
European Sports Conference (ESC)
Association for Music in International Schools (AMIS)
Exam Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM)
International Schools Theatre Association (ISTA)
Duke of Edinburgh's International Awards

Accredited by

Council of International
Schools (CIS)
New England Association
of Schools and Colleges
(NEASC)

ISZL's Mission



We are a community of learners determined to make the world – or our corner of it – a better, kinder place. We reflect our values in everything we do so that we make the most of opportunities and challenges in a spirit of enthusiastic inquiry.

The Year in Pictures

August
2023

First day of term, Zug Campus.



Grade 3 students visit an apple farm in Cham



Grade 7 Personal Development Week on
Lake Annecy



Volleyball friendly against ZIS

September 2023

October 2023

IB Geography Field Trip



Dr. Stuart Lawrence, brother of murdered UK teenager Stephen Lawrence, talks to Middle School students about racism, wellbeing and self-esteem.



Our Director carves one of the turkeys as part of ISZL's annual Community Celebration.



At the event, community members donated food to the local charity Schweizer Tafel.

November 2023



Ski tryouts in Verbier

December 2023



Kindergarten students take part in the traditional Lichterweg (path of lights) in Baar



Primary School at the PA Festive Shop

January 2024

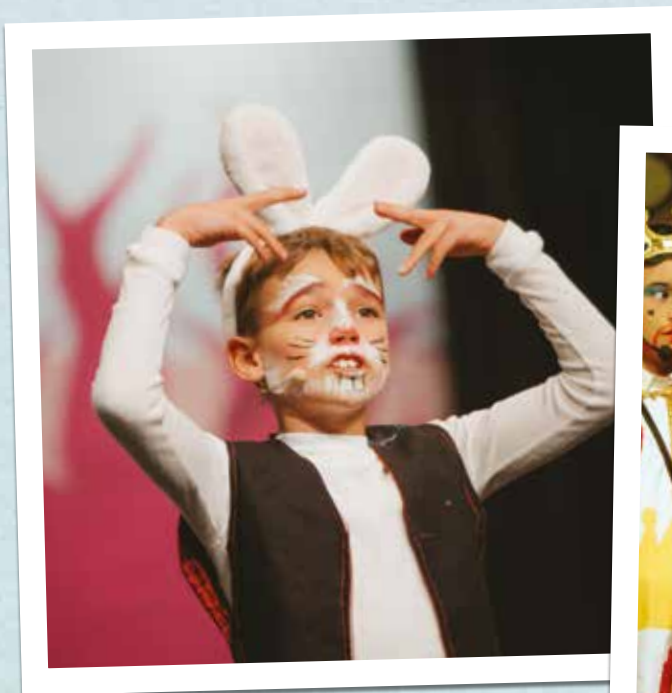
Two-time North Korea defector and democracy campaigner, Timothy Cho, addresses the seventh Youth Forum Switzerland.



ISZL Alumni Connor and Charlotte return to Lake Zug for a weekend getaway - where better to ask the question?



February 2024



The Primary School Musical - Wonderland

The High School production, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time

Students gather in fancy dress to celebrate the Swiss Fasnacht carnival



March 2024



Middle School Musical: students performing the 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.

OUR PROGRAMMES

ISZL educates children aged 3–18 on two campuses in Zug, Switzerland. We are an International Baccalaureate World School, offering three programmes – the Primary Years Programme, the Middle Years Programme and the IB Diploma Programme. We also offer Advanced Placement® (AP) pathways, a BTEC programme and our ISZL High School Diploma. Scan the QR codes below to discover more about our curriculum.

ISZL Primary Years Programme

ISZL Primary School encourages our students to explore the world around them, from the ages of 3–11. Read our guide to the PYP curriculum, including Units of Inquiry, our German language programme, Mathematics, Language and outdoor learning.



An Introduction to Middle School

The Middle Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate explained – as well as how ISZL Middle School supports students from the ages of 11–14. The MYP programme starts in Middle School and continues through to Grade 10 in High School. It is a challenging framework which encourages students to make connections between their studies and the real world.



ISZL High School Course Guide

This guide details the options for our High School students between Grades 9 and 12. Our High School students finish the MYP in Grade 10. From Grade 11, there are two pathways: the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, or the ISZL High School Diploma which includes Advanced Placement® qualifications, the BTEC in Creative Media, and ISZL's own courses.



ISZL Podcast

Our podcast invites you into the classroom (and the staff room) at the International School of Zug and Luzern. We talk about the ways in which we create an extraordinary education for children in central Switzerland, and our attempt to make the world – or our corner of it – a better, kinder place.



Building the High School community

*Grade 9 Team Leader, **Jaima Holland**, and Assistant Principal for Grades 9-10, **Louisa Radford**, look at the steps being taken to ensure ISZL's High School is a place students feel secure and accepted.*

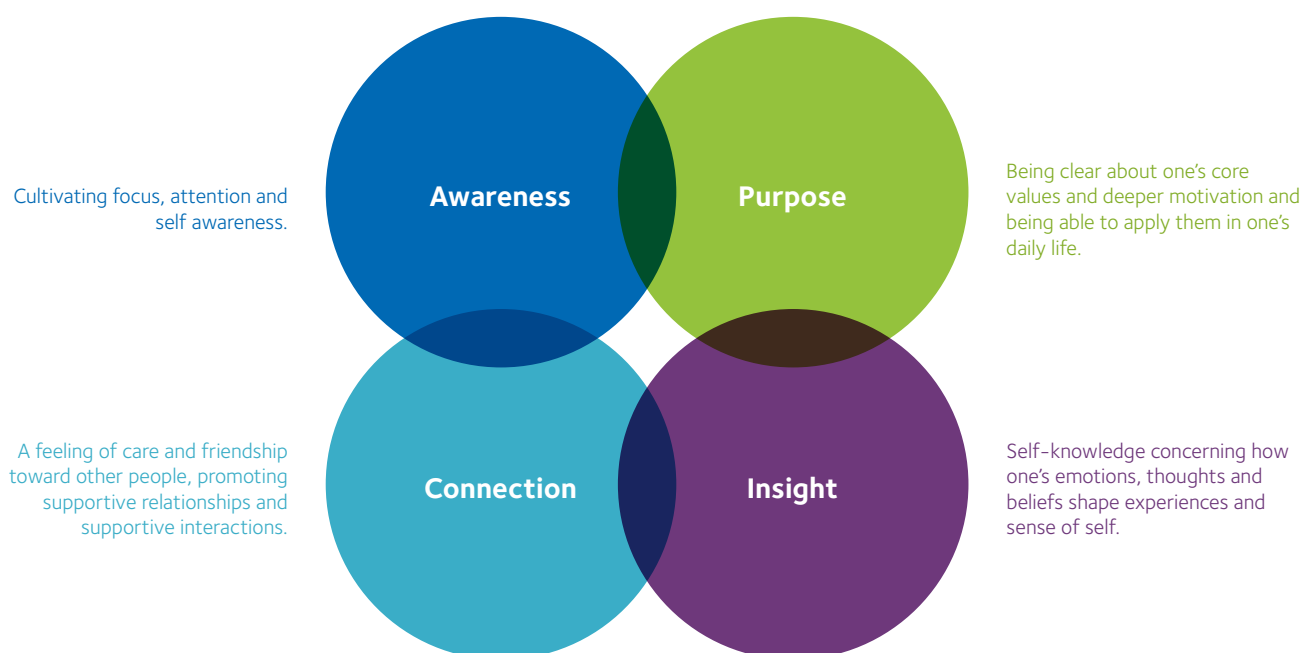
Belonging is an important part of life at ISZL. In High School, students form relationships that will sustain them through the last years of their school education – and beyond, as they take their final steps towards young adulthood.

While at school, building wellbeing can often be enhanced by the structures of the school day, and this year in the

High School we have made changes which we can already see are fostering better school-wide connections, building closer relationships between staff and students, and enhancing the High School environment and culture.

As part of our focus, these are ISZL's four dimensions of wellbeing:

The 4 Dimensions of Wellbeing





As new students arrive at the High School for the first time, they are met by student ambassadors. This is particularly powerful for our new students. Each newcomer is paired with an ambassador, and we try to match them with peers who have similar profiles and interests. A student ambassador will contact each new High School student before they arrive – sometimes, depending on travel plans, even in the holidays. This ensures that by the time they arrive at ISZL, there is always at least one familiar face in their new homeroom, and some of their questions have been answered.

Homeroom is an important part of our pastoral care at ISZL, and one of our most impactful moves has been to restructure the High School timetable, allowing for more homeroom time. Meeting every day of the week, for longer periods of time, with smaller numbers of students, has empowered students and teachers to get to know each other better and to develop positive mentoring relationships.

Another important aspect of this model has been to reduce the size of each homeroom to ten students, enabling more frequent one-to-one check-ins, and the development of a stronger sense of ‘family’ within the group.

Alongside these structural changes, the deeper, more meaningful shift has been in the evolving conception of what it means to be a homeroom teacher. Our homeroom teachers play a pivotal role in building culture, providing mentorship and fostering group cohesion, hopefully leading to more student involvement and ownership and building community and a sense of belonging.

“The 30 minute daily homeroom allows us time to share announcements and be present with each other. We celebrate birthdays, play games, and have important conversations about individual and school topics. Most importantly, we are setting a strong foundation and building a culture that we will grow into over the next four years together.”

– Derek Blackmore, Grade 9 Homeroom Teacher

As the High School settles into this new routine, we are seeing some really positive trends. Walking around homerooms, you will see teachers having individual mentoring conversations with students, group listening circles to facilitate discussion about various social and emotional educational topics, and homeroom groups playing a range of games (Werewolf, Codenames, playing cards, and quiz competitions tend to be popular choices). There are also birthday celebrations, homeroom challenges, assemblies, and Friday Funday when students can play games out on the pitch when the weather is nice.

However, building community within Grade 9 is only one layer. Having this regular homeroom time allows for students to interact with other grade levels, too. One example of this was the Links Programme, an incentive aimed towards Grade 9 and Grade 12 students.

Throughout the first semester, students in Grade 9 and Grade 12 had several opportunities to meet in organised pairs and small groups so that they could chat about their experiences within school, and share wisdom and worries. Problem-solving together enabled them to build connections and to empathise with each other, and deepen understanding about what it means to be part of the broader ISZL community.

A key reason for building relationships among students in different grade levels was the recognition that over the past few years the school had become less integrated. While Grades 9 and 10 spent lunch and socialised together, this was at a different time to Grades 11 and 12, meaning interactions between these two groups was limited.

We wanted to create opportunities for students of different ages to see each other, and spend time with each other, in those more informal shared times and spaces.

Doubling the number of students eating lunch at the same time came with some challenges, but the evidence so far suggests that impacts on school culture have been positive and significant. It is increasingly common to see cross-grade level groups of students playing together on the sports field or in the gym at lunchtime, and other groups (including some of our service groups) have started to meet together.

Older students have embraced their newfound responsibility as role models, demonstrating through their interactions with each other, and the rest of the community, the ways in which we show respect and care for everyone.

Perhaps the most marked effect has been with our Grade 9 students, who have had the benefit of the increased homeroom time and started their High School experience with a whole school lunch.

We have found they have settled in faster, and are more able to understand the increased expectations of independence and responsibility that come with the move from Middle to High School. In part this is due to increased contact with a more mature group of peers.

ISZL's school mission calls on us to make the world – or our corner of it – a better, kinder place. It feels as if these changes have encouraged everyone at the High School to be just a little more aware, and a little kinder both to each other and their environment.





Our expanded time for homeroom allows students to connect.



Festive celebrations at the end of term.

ISZL's Vision



We help every student turn their learning into action, creating the opportunity to stretch themselves further and achieve more than they believe possible.

FIRST LANGUAGES OF STUDENTS

English - 43%

German - 13%

Spanish - 6%

French - 5%

Dutch - 4%

Russian - 4%

Swedish - 3%

Italian - 3%

Danish - 3%

Portuguese - 2%

Mandarin Chinese - 2%

Hindi - 1%

Greek - 1%

Hebrew - 1%

Fewer than 1% of each of the following: Polish, Norwegian, Finnish, Afrikaans, Catalan, Turkish, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Arabic, Korean, Estonian, Icelandic, Vietnamese, Bengali, Croatian, Flemish, Japanese, Serbian, Telugu, Filipino, Gujarati, Malay, Marathi, Persian, Slovenian, Bulgarian, Burmese, Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Luxembourgish, Punjabi, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, Tamil, Urdu

WHERE OUR FAMILIES LIVE

Top 10 postcodes in Canton Zug

This page is one of our most popular regular features, as new families work out where they would like to move to. This year, we asked our existing families – what do you like most about your part of Canton Zug?

1

6300

Zug

"Zug is a beautiful little town with a number of cafes and restaurants with beautiful views on Lake Zug. It is very international and you always hear a lot of different languages when walking at the lake promenade. Zurich is only 20 minutes away by train if you are longing for big city life!"

2

6340

Baar

"Baar is in a great location, with access to lots of outdoor walks. It is the closest town to Zug Campus, which makes drop off and pick up easy. It has good transport links, with direct trains to Zurich and is only 10 minutes to Zug by car. Baar also has a beautiful indoor and outdoor swimming complex, the Lättich, a great destination all year round but especially in the summer months."

3

6330

Cham

"Situating on Lake Zug, with several easily accessible badis, the stunning Villette Park and views of Rigi and the mountains to the south, mean that Cham is a haven for families to live, work and play. Zug, Zurich and Luzern can be quickly reached by the excellent public transport network."

4

6315

Oberägeri

"I love the proximity and aspect of the beautiful lake. It provides a comfortable, friendly small village feel with convenient access to the larger shops and services of either neighbouring Unterägeri or close by in Zug. A frequent, efficient bus service runs to the main Zug station."

5

6314

Unterägeri

"I love the sense of community, the stunning badi and beautiful Lake Ägeri. The Ägeri valley has a thriving expat community and a good social life. It has a thriving high street with two supermarkets and a post office, and great places nearby to hike or cycle."

6

6318

Walchwil

"Walchwil is a beautiful area, nestled around the lake on a steep hill with the most gorgeous views of Mount Rigi. Despite its size, you have a very international community. Just nine kilometres from Zug, you have easy access to its train and bus connections. Walchwil recently was voted the 8th best municipality in Switzerland for its quality of life."

7

6312

Steinhausen

"Discover the charm of a fast-growing small city, boasting the newly renovated Zugerland Mall, perfect for shopping enthusiasts. Enjoy kilometres of scenic walking paths and abundant nature, all conveniently located close to the highway for easy access."

8

6343

Risch-Rotkreuz

"Beautiful and tranquil, with a growing international community of families that is really starting to thrive. It is right at the foot of Mount Rigi, with beautiful year-round hikes for all the family."

9

6331

Hünenberg

"With mountain views and family-friendly badis, Hünenberg has a lot to offer. Exceptional transport links mean you can reach Luzern and Zurich quickly via the motorway. There is a close-knit community feel, great sports clubs and all the benefits of lakeside life. Plus a fantastic international school campus!"

=10

6333

Hünenberg See

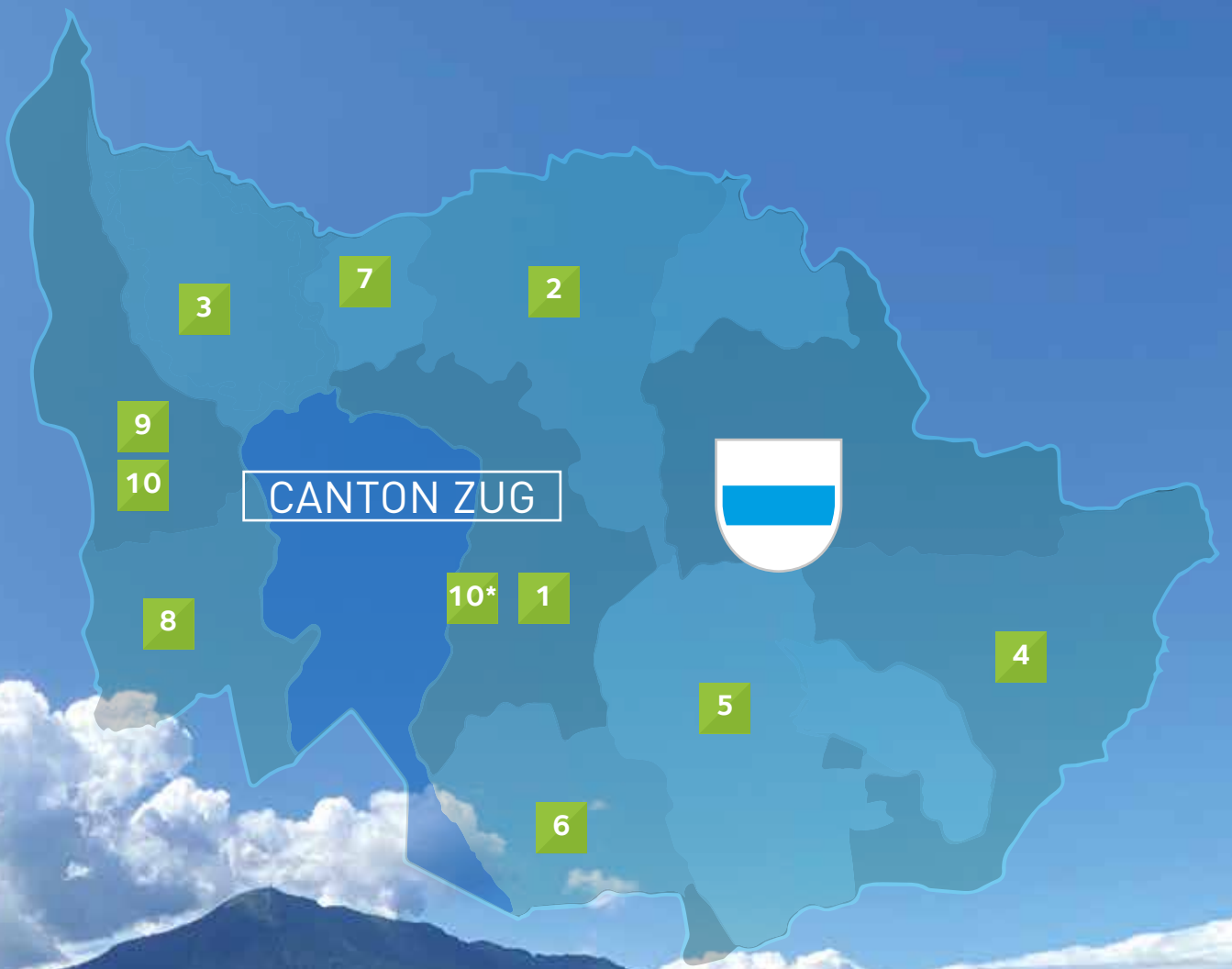
"Situating on Lake Zug with a magnificent view of the mountains and the countryside is Hünenberg See. In this suburb of Hünenberg, you can enjoy the Badi Hünenberg within walking distance, the nearby Golfpark Holzhäusern, and many hiking trails in the surrounding area. There are great connections to Luzern and Zug by car or train and with proximity to the High School Campus."

=10*

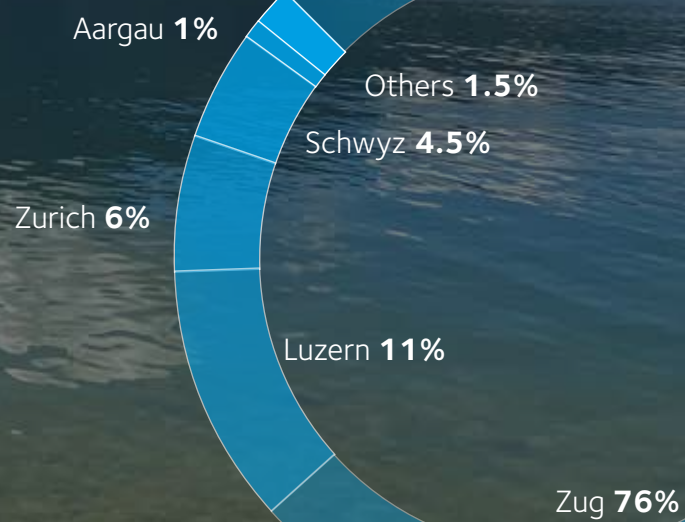
6317

Oberwil bei Zug

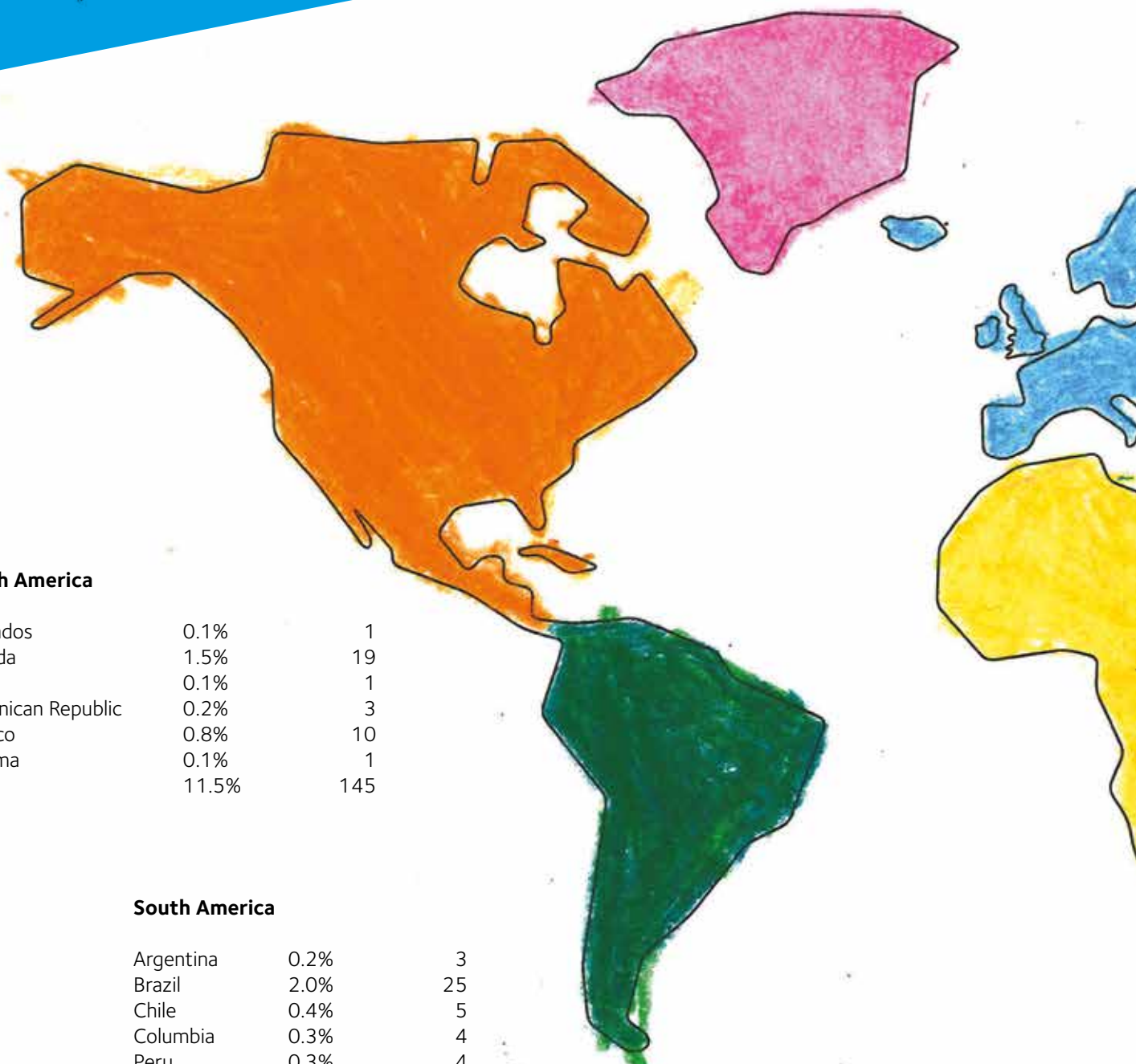
"Oberwil is Zug's best kept secret, nestled at the base of Zugerberg and only minutes from Zug's Altstadt and city centre. Forest trails and a choice of quiet badis on your doorstep – the best place to enjoy the long summer evenings watching the sunset over lake Zug. Well connected to Zug with buses and train, Oberwil remains a peaceful village community with a friendly mix of locals and internationals."



Where our families live by Canton



Student Nationalities



North America

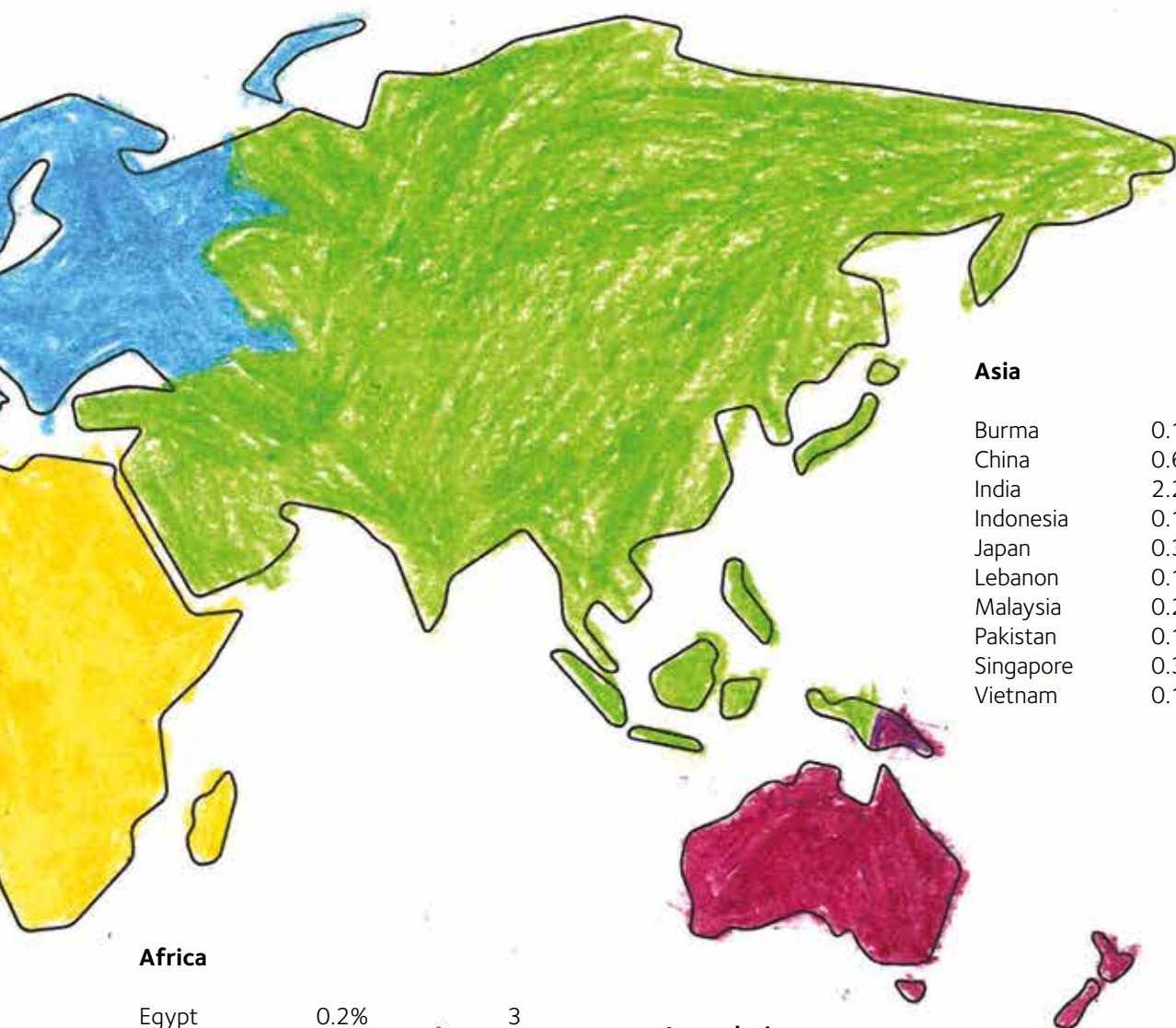
Barbados	0.1%	1
Canada	1.5%	19
Cuba	0.1%	1
Dominican Republic	0.2%	3
Mexico	0.8%	10
Panama	0.1%	1
USA	11.5%	145

South America

Argentina	0.2%	3
Brazil	2.0%	25
Chile	0.4%	5
Colombia	0.3%	4
Peru	0.3%	4
Venezuela	0.5%	6

Europe

Austria	0.7%	9	Greece	1.3%	16	Portugal	0.5%	6
Belgium	2.3%	29	Hungary	0.4%	5	Russia	3.4%	43
Bulgaria	0.1%	1	Iceland	0.3%	4	Serbia	0.2%	2
Croatia	0.4%	5	Ireland	1.1%	14	Slovakia	0.2%	3
Cyprus	0.4%	5	Israel	1.3%	17	Slovenia	0.2%	3
Czech Republic	0.6%	8	Italy	3.9%	49	Spain	2.5%	32
Denmark	3.4%	43	Latvia	0.2%	2	Sweden	3.3%	42
Estonia	0.2%	3	Lithuania	0.2%	2	Switzerland	6.3%	79
Finland	1.2%	15	Luxembourg	0.1%	1	Turkey	0.6%	8
France	4.9%	62	Malta	0.1%	1	Ukraine	0.6%	7
Germany	7.1%	90	Netherlands	4.8%	60	United Kingdom	16.5%	208
			Norway	1.1%	14			
			Poland	1.1%	14			



Asia

Burma	0.1%	1
China	0.6%	8
India	2.2%	28
Indonesia	0.1%	1
Japan	0.3%	4
Lebanon	0.1%	1
Malaysia	0.2%	3
Pakistan	0.1%	1
Singapore	0.3%	4
Vietnam	0.1%	1

Africa

Egypt	0.2%	3
South Africa	2.1%	27

Australasia

Australia	3.4%	43
New Zealand	0.5%	6



ENROLMENT 2023-24

Families
at ISZL

811

Number of
August Starters

181

Number of
June Leavers*

87

*Excludes graduating class

Student
Nationalities

68

Students' Average
Stay in Years

5

Division

Division Total

Grade

Grade Total

Early Years

118

Early Years 1
Early Years 2
Kindergarten

34
39
45

Primary

347

Grade 1
Grade 2
Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5

57
63
67
72
88

Middle

320

Grade 6
Grade 7
Grade 8

85
117
118

High

475

Grade 9
Grade 10
Grade 11
Grade 12

120
120
119
116

ENROLMENT OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

2019-2020

1219

2020-2021

1197

2021-2022

1200

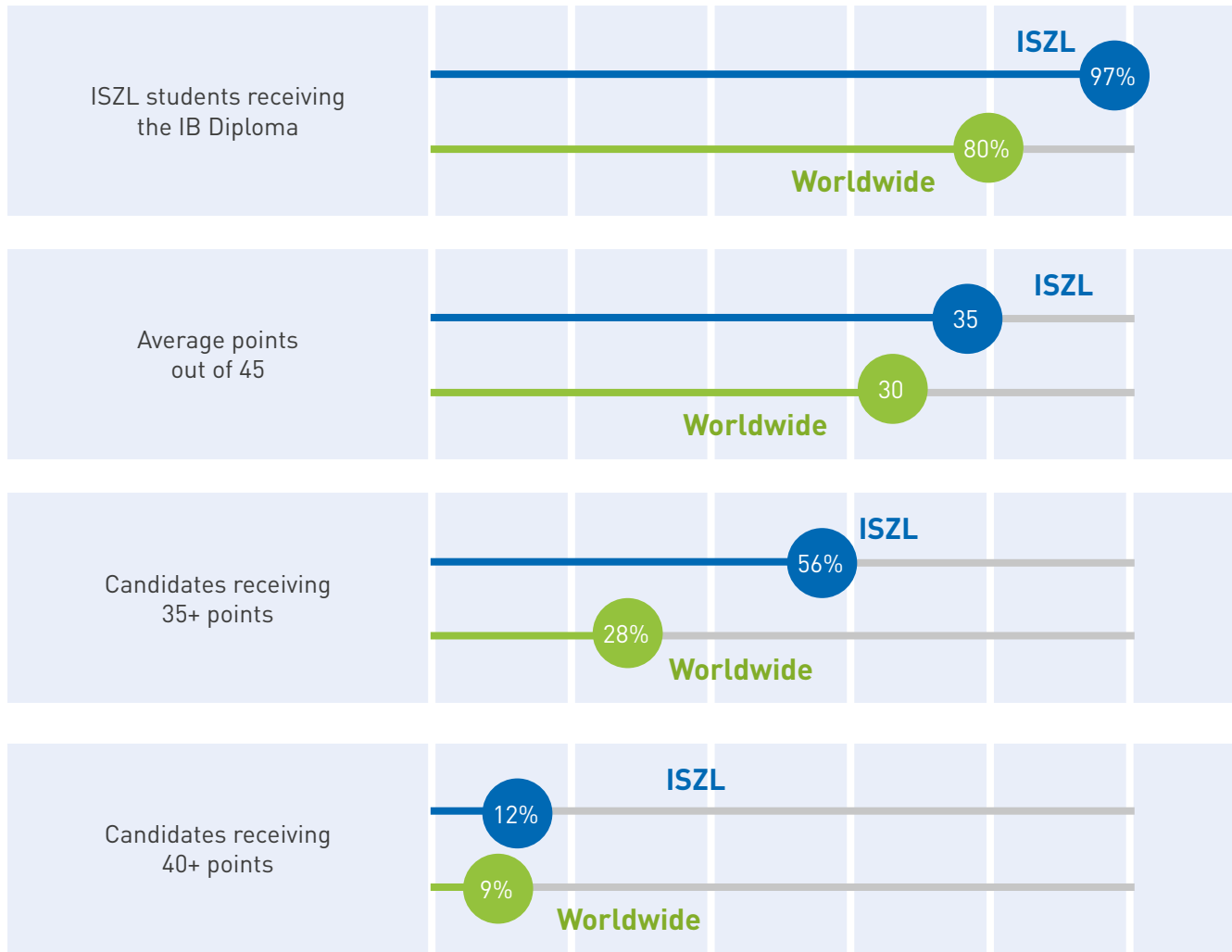
2022-2023

1225

2023-2024

1260

IB Diploma Results 2023



42

Highest points obtained by an ISZL student

19%

Bilingual Diplomas

61

Number of Grade 12 IB Students

BTEC Diploma in Creative Media Production

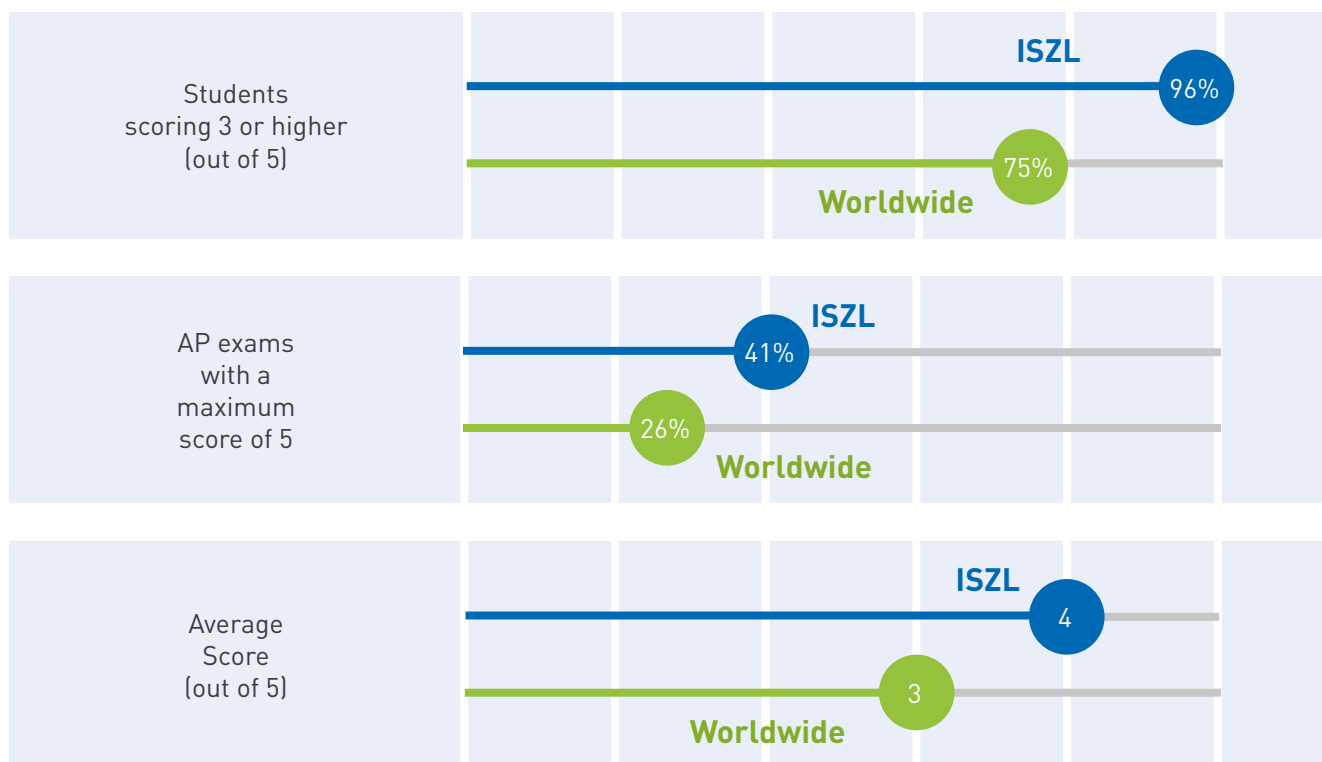
100%

Pass rate

50%

Starred Distinctions

Advanced Placement Results 2023



18

AP Scholars

12

AP Scholars with
Honours

28

AP Scholars with
Distinction

10

AP International
Diploma Recipients

UNIVERSITY ACCEPTANCES AND MATRICULATION 2020-2023

AUSTRALIA

University of Technology, Sydney
Australian College of Applied Psychology

BELGIUM

Ghent University
KU Leuven

CANADA

Concordia University
Emily Carr University of Art and Design
McGill University*
McMaster University
Trent University
University of Alberta
University of British Columbia*
University of Guelph
University of Toronto*
University of Waterloo
Queen's University
York University

CHINA

Fudan University

FRANCE

American University in Paris
EDHEC Business School
ESCP-Europe - Paris*
Paris College of Art
Collège Universitaire de Sciences Po

GERMANY

Bard College Berlin
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences
Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich
Mittweida University of Applied Sciences
MSH Medical School Hamburg

GREECE

University of Crete

HONG KONG

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
University of Hong Kong

HUNGARY

Semmelweis University of Medical Sciences

IRELAND

Trinity College Dublin

ITALY

Accademia Italiana
Istituto Marangoni
Università Bocconi*

NETHERLANDS

Amsterdam University College
Breda University of Applied Sciences
Eindhoven University of Technology
Erasmus University College*
Erasmus University Rotterdam*
Fontys University of Applied Sciences
HAN University of Applied Sciences
Hanze University of Applied Sciences
Leiden University*
Leiden University College The Hague
Maastricht University*
Rotterdam Business School
Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences
Technical University of Delft*
The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Tilburg University*
University College Roosevelt*
University College Venlo
University College Tilburg
University of Amsterdam*
University of Groningen*
University of Twente*
Utrecht University*
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Windesheim University of Applied Sciences

SPAIN

Abat Oliba CEU University
EAE Business School
ESADE Business School*
European University of Madrid*
IE University*
University of Navarra*
Universidad Alfonso X El Sabio

SWEDEN

Luleå University of Technology
Lund University
Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)
University of Gävle

SWITZERLAND

École Hôtelière de Lausanne*
ETH Zurich*
EU Business School - Geneva
Franklin University Switzerland*
Glion Institute
Lucerne University of Applied Sciences
University of Lausanne
University of St. Gallen*
University of Zurich*
Webster University Geneva

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

New York University - Abu Dhabi

UNITED KINGDOM

Abertay University*
Arts University Bournemouth
Aston University
Birkbeck, University of London
Birmingham City University
Bristol University
Brunel University London
Buckinghamshire New University
Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff University*
City University of London
Coventry University



Durham University*

Edinburgh Napier University

Fairfield University

Goldsmiths, University of London**Hartpury University**

Heriot-Watt University

Imperial College London***Istituto Marangoni London****Keele University****King's College London***

Kingston University

Lancaster University

Leeds Arts University

Leeds Beckett University**Leeds Trinity University****Liverpool Hope University****London School of Economics and Political Science****Loughborough University***

Manchester Metropolitan University

Middlesex University

Newcastle University**Norwich University of the Arts****Nottingham Trent University****Queen Mary University of London**

Ravensbourne University London

Regent's University***Robert Gordon University****Royal Holloway, University of London****Royal Veterinary College, University of London****Sheffield Hallam University**

Solent University

Staffordshire University

St. George's, University of London

Swansea University

University of Aberdeen

University of Bedfordshire

University of Central Lancashire

University College London***University For the Creative Arts*****University of the Arts London*****University of Bath*****University of Birmingham***

University of Brighton

University of Bristol***University of Cambridge*****University of Dundee****University of East Anglia***

University of East London

University of Edinburgh***University of Essex****University of Exeter*****University of Glasgow*****University of Leeds***

University of Leicester

University of Lincoln

University of Liverpool

University of Manchester***University of Nottingham***

University of Plymouth

University of Salford**University of Sheffield*****University of Southampton*****University of St. Andrews***

University of Stirling

University of Strathclyde

University of Surrey

University of Sussex

University of Warwick***University of Westminster, London**

University of West London

University of York***UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Arizona State University

Babson College**Barnard College****Bentley University**

Boston College

Boston University

California College of the Arts

Carnegie Mellon University

Case Western Reserve University

College of William and Mary

Cornell University

Detroit Institute of Music Education

Drexel University

Emerson College

Emory University

Florida Institute of Technology

Fordham University

Georgia Institute of Technology

George Washington University

Harvard University

Indiana University at Bloomington

Ithaca College**Los Angeles College of Music****New Jersey Institute of Technology****New York University*****Northeastern University*****Parsons School of Design**

Pennsylvania State University

Purdue University

Rhode Island School of Design**Ringling College of Art and Design**

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rollins College*

Sarah Lawrence College

Savannah College of Art and Design

Stanford University**Syracuse University**

University of California, Davis

University of California, San Diego

University of Colorado Boulder

University of Denver

University of Massachusetts Amherst

University of Miami

University of Michigan Ann Arbor*

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

University of Pennsylvania

University of Pittsburgh

University of Puget Sound

University of San Diego

University of San Francisco

University of Vermont

University of Virginia

University of Washington

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Virginia Tech

Wake Forest University

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Bold indicates matriculation.

* indicates more than 1 student attending



Fostering Student Agency: Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

*From an early age, ISZL Primary School students are encouraged to think critically and assume responsibility. Our Primary Years Programme Coordinator, **Margriet Faber**, explains how student agency is nurtured in our youngest learners.*



In the vibrant learning community of ISZL's Primary School, student agency lies at the heart of our educational approach. From the Early Years to Grade 5, our students are encouraged to explore, create, and lead, shaping their learning journey with autonomy and purpose.

The philosophy of student agency is deeply ingrained in the Primary Years Programme (PYP). We believe that empowering students to take ownership of their learning fosters essential skills and dispositions crucial for success in the 21st century. Agency, student voice and student choice are not just buzzwords – they are the core of our programme.

But what does student agency look like in action? In our classrooms, students exercise agency in a variety of ways, from organising their learning environment, to choosing how they learn, to choosing how they show what they have learned.

In Grade 1, our students immerse themselves in a world of creativity. Imagine the scene: Red Riding Hood, Grandma, and a friendly wolf sharing chocolate cookies during a captivating performance. It is a familiar tale with a twist, reflecting our students' creative expressions. In the same classroom, a student wrote a story where the heroine defied the traditional narrative by choosing not to marry anyone. Two other classmates illustrated their story through character voice recordings, illustrating the many ways our students engage with storytelling. All students in Grade 1 were assessed on the same creative process for creating a performance. Each student's planning, drafting, getting feedback, revising and editing may have looked different depending on their individual or group choices, as did their final project and performance.

community helpers

Teacher helpers 	Don Diego	iPads and Chromebooks 	Emma Xenna
Chair stackers 	Tessa Ansel	Headphones 	Aed Joel
Table cleaners 	Theo Basti	Book corner 	Viktorix Hannah
Floor 	Diego Urrutia	Hallway 	Ela Nipon

Sofa sign up

Monday	Hannah	Diego	Tessa
Tuesday	Don	Siago	Joel
Wednesday	Emma	Siago	
Thursday	Joel	Basti	Joel
Friday	Viktorix	Ela	Urrutia



Our Grade 2 students collaborate to decide on weekly classroom jobs, fostering a sense of responsibility and shared ownership. Even everyday decisions, such as allocating who sits on the classroom sofa, are reached through discussions and agreements. These experiences empower students to navigate social dynamics, see the perspectives of others, negotiate, and develop a deep sense of community.

Beyond the classroom walls, our students embrace leadership opportunities with enthusiasm and determination. In Grades 4 and 5, student leaders take charge of planning and organising after-school clubs. These are mentored by teachers, but students are empowered to lead independently. Pictured on page 32 is a Grade 5 club leader, who worked with her mentor Adam Lawrence to put together a series of club-friendly baking recipes for her club attendees. Below they are making cake pops – a fun end to the club season.

Students learn how to manage a group, including the difficult life lesson of assuming responsibility in a group of your peers. Reflecting on the experiences, one student leader said that it is “quite hard to make a big group listen to your instructions.” This is something many adults will relate to! It is an invaluable lesson in effective team leadership and communication.

Our commitment to student agency extends far beyond leadership roles. It is about empowering students to translate their learning into tangible action, creating positive change within our school and beyond. Take, for instance, the Grade 3 “rubbish collectors” who work together to clean the school field and playground every day, embodying the principles of environmental stewardship that they have learned in class.

Meanwhile, Grade 2 students create and look after worm habitats, constructing covers to protect the worms from predators. These initiatives not only reinforce classroom learning but also instil a sense of responsibility and empathy for the world around them.

ISZL has recently joined Eco-Schools, a global sustainable schools programme. Together with 49,000 other schools around the world, ISZL is empowering students to become agents of change. Facilitated by teachers but led entirely by students, the Eco-Schools action group spearheads projects aimed at making our school more sustainable and our world a better, kinder place. From more sustainable food and reducing waste, to promoting biodiversity, our students are putting their learning into action and honing essential skills along the way.

In the PYP, students with agency are more than just learners; they are leaders, innovators, and changemakers. Assuming responsibility gives our students a sense of purpose and self-belief, collaborating with peers, respecting diverse perspectives, and championing positive change. Through encouraging student agency, we are not just shaping tomorrow's leaders; we are empowering them to shape the world.





We Are All Artists

Exploring our students' artistic journey,
from Primary School through
to Grade 12

Primary School:

*Coordination, exploration and linking to
Units of Inquiry*

By **Karen Richardson**, Primary School Art Teacher

The Visual Arts programme in the Primary School offers students many opportunities to express their creativity. Pablo Picasso once said, 'Every child is an artist'. It is important to provide children with a variety of experiences to discover the possibilities of art for themselves.

Students develop their art skills, dexterity and hand-eye coordination through many projects. There are opportunities to work independently, in pairs and in small groups. Students will have a chance to draw, paint, print, sew, model and construct through observational and imaginative lenses. They work in 2D and 3D, learning new skills and techniques with different materials. They also develop their passions and interests through personal projects.

Art projects frequently link to the Units of Inquiry which are ongoing in the homeroom. For example, students in Grade 5 explore and create paper and ceramic mosaics whilst learning about past civilisations and cultures. In Grade 3, a focus on art discoveries, such as the Lascaux cave paintings, Tutankhamun's tomb and the Terracotta Warriors inspire stone painting and clay sculpture. Students in Grade 1 develop their observational drawing skills through plant studies. An appreciation of post-modern art styles, movements and techniques places art in a historical context for Grade 2 students. Students in Grade 4 create animal imagery through a variety of materials and processes such as graphite observation drawing, 3D paper collage and clay modelling.

The application of technology is a growing focus. This year working collaboratively with the IT teachers, Grade 5 students have explored ways to create self-portraits through graphic design platforms. Students in Grade 1 have explored light effects and reflection through photography.

Finally, we enjoy celebrating our creativity in the Primary Art Exhibition for students from Grades 1 - 5. This takes place in late spring and is a great opportunity for students to take pride in their work, and reflect on their journey as artists.


Middle School:

Visual Communication and Creative Problem-Solving.

By **Lowell Sipes**, Middle School Art Teacher

Exploration and critical thinking is the foundation of art in the Middle Years Programme. Students develop communication and self-sufficiency through an interdisciplinary approach to production of visual works, preparing for their transition to the High School Visual Arts programme.

This year in Grade 6, students have been creating works inspired by Pop Surrealism; in particular the juxtaposition of two or more elements from different sources organised into one composition. They have explored mediums and processes including the balancing of shades of graphite pencil, the creation of layers of transparent paint washes as a means of adjusting hues and creating value in colour, and the use of gloss medium for the transfer of digitally rotated images.



Our Grade 7 students created Assemblages, or collages consisting of 2- and 3-dimensional elements. Students started with a strong and positive memory – something they felt was a strong part of their identity, and which formed part of their personality. This could be a recurring interest that has positively affected decisions they have made (for example activities, purchases, or themes they embrace).

From this memory they built a concept, collecting source images, objects, and other related items to support their idea, and then created their visual work from these materials. These ‘identity assemblages’ were created in boxes made mostly from repurposed materials, and were displayed, connected together, as interdependent structures to metaphorically support our school theme of ‘Belonging’.

For Grade 8 students this year, the focus is on screen printing, and preparing a shaped surface for presentation of the imagery, with the ‘hackboard’ as a possible template. Hackboards were the earliest skateboard decks of the 1970’s, crafted from repurposed wood by surf enthusiasts like Tony Alva from the legendary ‘Dogtown and Z-Boys’, as a possibility for a template for an art surface. So many possibilities!



High School:

Concept-Driven Experimentation and the Individual Artist Voice

By **Anna Thain**, High School Art Teacher

The fundamental belief that underpins the ISZL High School Visual Arts programme is that “we are all artists.” As such, our curriculum builds upon the knowledge and expertise that students have developed in the Primary and Middle Schools. It widens their experience of the artistic process, develops concept driven artworks, encourages self directed inquiry and makes space for the students to evolve their own, unique, artistic voice.

Grade 9 students experience a broad range of projects, from exploring clay construction and glazing techniques to digital drawing, photography and painting. Every unit begins with an exploration of the Statement of Inquiry (for instance, our clay project’s statement is “Artistic expression can represent natural forms to highlight our relationship with the natural world”) and then students are encouraged to take inspiration from artistic practice across the globe. This leads to them developing their own personal responses through vibrant and technically proficient artworks.

As students move into Grade 10, they will start to develop more independence over their artmaking, exploring concepts such as how artists use the human figure to convert, critique or reflect social values through sculptural media, or how non-traditional art techniques lead to self-expression. Final artworks are often dictated by the ideas of the students themselves. This culminates in a final project which is entirely student-directed, and reflects who they have become as visual artists.

Beyond the MYP, students are able to continue their Visual Art journey in either the IB or AP programmes. Here, their individual voices come to the fore as they self-select the skills they want to experiment with, develop and refine. Students have far more ownership over the messages they want to communicate in their work as well as how their work should be curated and presented to an audience. Often conceptualising both their own experiences as well as the world around them, their artworks are personal, thoughtful, and exciting.



Anastasia Crichton-Watt (artwork detail)



Alanis Plimpton

The Year in Sport at ISZL

*Our interim Athletic Director, **Assad Irshad**, looks back on the year in sport at ISZL.*

One of the wonderful things about competitive sport at ISZL is the opportunities students have to compete around Europe. Within our Middle and High School programmes, student athletes get the chance to travel to different countries, coming back with memories which go beyond the experience of sport and competition, whether it is hospitality in other international schools or simply finding a new friend during the course of the event. This year, our Varsity Boys Soccer and our Swim team had the pleasure of travelling to Lisbon, while our Varsity Girls Volleyball team finished their season in Barcelona, with similar fixtures for our rugby and soccer teams.

One of the sporting highlights of the year was the opportunity to host the Varsity Boys Volleyball End of Season Tournament for the European Sports Conference. Hosting schools from Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Italy and France gave us a truly international experience.

At ISZL we have a great student community, with a packed gym creating an unforgettable home atmosphere supporting our team, also showing kindness and respect to our guests. Beyond cheering on our players, ISZL students also run our concession stand, keep score, set up, take down, and clean up, which makes them an integral part of the event.

After two days of exciting, nerve-wracking competition, the cherry on top of the cake was lifting up the well-deserved Championship trophy by our ISZL home team.

Given the landscape and culture in Switzerland, most international families quickly realise that skiing is one of the biggest sports in Switzerland in a variety of capacities, both competitive and recreational. One special part of life at ISZL is our school's annual competitive Ski Race, the Völkl Cup, which has become an integral part among the Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS).

This event could not run as smoothly as it does without the support of the ISZL parent community, who make this event possible in the first place with announcements, photography, videography, results and much more. They also help out with "sliding" – skiing down the piste to smooth it out between races. ISZL is a dominant force at the Völkl Cup, winning nine out of ten races as the overall champion. The driving force is usually our Primary School racers, where we have a very strong programme.



The Völkl Cup was the brainchild of our outgoing Athletic Director, Hans Engl, and presenting the cup was one of his last tasks here at ISZL. The sporting roundup of the year would not be complete without paying tribute to Hans, for all he has done for ISZL in the past 13 years. I will miss him as a colleague, and we wish him well.

From trying it out to attending try-outs

Looking more widely at our competitive sports programme, our youngest students start after-school sport purely as an enjoyable activity, but in Grades 3-5 students begin to join teams in sports such as basketball, badminton and swimming. Meanwhile, the Physical Education Programme gives them a wide range of opportunities to try out different sports, in order to find the ones which suit them best. The competitive teams in Primary are available to all who are interested, and our hope is that

they grow to enjoy the team spirit of our sporting competitions, and become enthusiastic about representing the school.

The opportunities at the heart of central Switzerland mean that students can try out many different ways of being active, and it is a privilege to join our students as they take part in competitive sport at ISZL. While joining a sporting team has many benefits, not least resilience and team spirit, ISZL values all our sport and all achievement – and the accomplishment which comes from trying something new.

Go Eagles!



SPORTS RESULTS



KEY

EISSR	European International Schools Ski Race
ESC	European Sports Conference
JV	Junior Varsity
HHC	Heinrich Harrer Championships
HS	High School
ISSL	International Schools Sports League
ISST	International School Sports Tournament
MS	Middle School
PS	Primary School
SCIS	Sports Council of International Schools
SGIS	Swiss Group of International Schools
V	Varsity

Rugby	U16 Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ISST	ISSL 2nd / ISST 1st
	U18 Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ISST	No Team 23-24
Soccer	PS Girls	ISSL, SGIS	Indoor ISSL 2nd
	PS Boys	ISSL, SGIS	Indoor ISSL 5th & 9th
	MS Boys A	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 1st / SGIS 2nd / ESC 1st
	MS Boys B	ISSL, SGIS, ISSL II	ISSL 5th / SGIS 8th / ISSL II 2nd
	MS Girls A	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 2nd / SGIS 5th / ESC 1st
	MS Girls B	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL II 4th
	JV Girls	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 3rd / SGIS 3rd / ESC 2nd
	JV Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 2nd / SGIS 2nd / ESC 2nd
	Varsity Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 2nd / SGIS 7th / ESC 5th
Cross Country	PS	ISSL	ISSL Festival
	MS	ISSL	ISSL 3rd
	HS	ISSL / SGIS / ESC	No Competition
Unihockey	PS	ISSL	No Competition
Basketball	PS Boys	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL Festival, SGIS 4th
	PS Girls	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL Festival, SGIS 1st
	MS Boys A	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / SGIS 2nd / ESC 1st
	MS Boys B	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 3rd / SGIS 6th / ISSL II 4th
	MS Girls A	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / SGIS 5th / ESC 2nd
	MS Girls B	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 2nd / ISSL II 3rd
	JV Boys	ISSL, ESC	ISSL 3rd / ESC 5th
	JV Girls	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 3rd / SGIS 5th / ESC 4th
	Varsity Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / SGIS 4th / ESC 4th
	Varsity Girls	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 3rd / SGIS 5th / ESC 6th
Swimming	PS	ISSL	ISSL 1st / ISSL II Participation
	MS	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 3rd / SGIS Boys 1st Girls 5th
	HS	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 3rd / SGIS Boys 2nd Girls 6th / ESC 5th
Skiing	PS	Tiger Cup, Völkl Cup	Tiger Cup 1st / Völkl Cup 1st
	MS	EISSR, Völkl Cup, HHC	EISSR / Völkl Cup 2nd / HHC 2nd
	HS	EISSR, Völkl Cup, HHC	EISSR / Völkl Cup 3rd / HHC 3rd
Badminton	PS	SGIS	SGIS Festival
	MS	SGIS	SGIS Festival
	HS	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 1st / SGIS 1st / ESC 3rd
Softball Girls	HS	ISSL	<i>Match date after time of printing</i>
Volleyball	PS	ISSL, SGIS	
	MS Boys	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 3rd / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
	MS Girls A	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 5th / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
	MS Girls B	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 4th / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
	JV Girls	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 5th / SGIS 1st / ESC 7th
	Varsity Girls	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / SGIS 3rd / ESC 4th
	Varsity Boys	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 2nd / SGIS 1st / ESC 1st
Track & Field	PS	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL / SGIS / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
	MS	ISSL, SGIS, SCIS	ISSL 2nd / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
	HS	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
Golf	MS+HS	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 4th / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>
Tennis	MS	ISSL, SGIS	ISSL 2nd / SGIS 2nd
	HS	ISSL, SGIS, ESC	ISSL 2nd / <i>Match date after time of printing</i>

Inside, Outside and Beyond: Outdoor Learning at ISZL's Primary School

The US poet and environmental activist Gary Snyder said that 'nature is not a place to visit. Nature is home.'
ISZL's Assistant Principal for Grades 2-5, **Christine DeLuca**, reflects on the ways ISZL is keeping nature at the heart of every part of the Primary School curriculum.

While school is the place children go to learn, nature is one of life's greatest teachers, providing an environment with endless possibilities to wander and wonder. Being able to combine the best of both worlds is the inspiration for ISZL's development of the outdoor learning programme in the Primary School. The concept of inside, outside and beyond is helping to guide our outdoor learning practice as we develop rich opportunities for students to experience learning about nature, through nature and in nature.

To share a bit of history, the Early Years at ISZL has led the way for the Primary School with the development of a strong forest programme and the focus on play as a natural learning pathway for children. Outdoor learning is an integral part of the Early Years curriculum and is scheduled as a regular part of the school day.

Our proximity to the forest allows us to take learning beyond the school grounds. Forest learning in the Early Years can take many forms, but focuses on giving children access to the natural environment as an extension of themselves, as a place to explore and as a place to learn about their responsibility to other living things. It is also a place to hone skills such as self management, fine motor skills, resilience and adaptability. Having seen the benefits of outdoor learning in the Early Years, the school now aims to embed outdoor learning across the whole of the Primary School.

Over the past three years the outdoor learning programme has grown exponentially in Grades 2-5, with many classes making regular trips to the forest, using the school grounds more creatively and offering more extensive off campus field trips to link in to our Primary Years Programme Units of Inquiry.

An example of this was a Grade 3 trip to a nearby farm to learn more about the systems and processes put in place to create the products we consume. The children were able to milk cows, pick apples and prepare cake made with the apples. The students made memorable links to the concepts embedded in the Unit of Inquiry, *How We Organise Ourselves*, which could not have been replicated within the classroom walls.





Another example of taking the learning outdoors was the Grade 4 week of Mountain Maths. This provided a very hands-on experience, the aim being to involve and engage students by presenting many non-routine problems and puzzles using the school grounds as the environment for exploration and problem solving. As mathematics is all about patterns and relationships, nature provides the perfect mirror to explore these concepts and generalisations. In fact, Pythagoras was the first philosopher to offer this description of nature: he considered numbers as the origin of everything and one can see numerous examples of this in the natural world.

Sometimes we simply take the learning outside for a change of scenery and to feel the open sky above us. When the weather allows, classes have the opportunity to use our outdoor classroom as a learning space. Last year, the Primary School received a Fund for Excellence (FFE) grant to create an outdoor classroom space along with teaching materials and tools to use when out exploring in nature, such as tarps for shelter building, binoculars, field guides, compasses and bug jars. Teachers may use this space for a writing or reading session, for a creative project or to launch an expedition further afield. This space will continue to evolve over the next year to include a gardening area.

Outdoor Learning isn't an add-on to what we do, it's an enhancement to our curriculum and a way to deepen children's learning by getting them to experience lessons in a new and exciting way. Here is what a few of our students have to say about outdoor learning:



Frederik: *I like it when we go skiing or ice skating when you learn a new skill; I am more confident to ice skate now.*

Jemima: *I like going to the forest more than learning in the classroom because there is more to see and more to do, and you can use your whole body. It makes me feel like I am doing something active.*

Aisha: *I like it when we go geocaching because it is always fun to look and find the treasure and learn orienteering skills.*

To quote the author David Sobel, we must "give children a chance to love the Earth before we ask them to save it". By taking students out into the natural world we allow them to experience all the beauty that surrounds us. Moving away from screen time and the virtual world, our goal is to provide students with an experience of deep connection and love for the natural world while also exploring new ideas and ways of applying their learning in an authentic context.





Grade 5 Reflections on Time in the Forest

The Forest – Charlotte H

The forest, as quiet as the trees
With a soft summer breeze.

The singing of the birds makes me shiver,
Like the sound of the little river

A world with peace,
smiling and enjoyment
with no competition

The sun is bright,
keeping us warm with its light

Everyone was talking for a while
Saying things with a big smile.



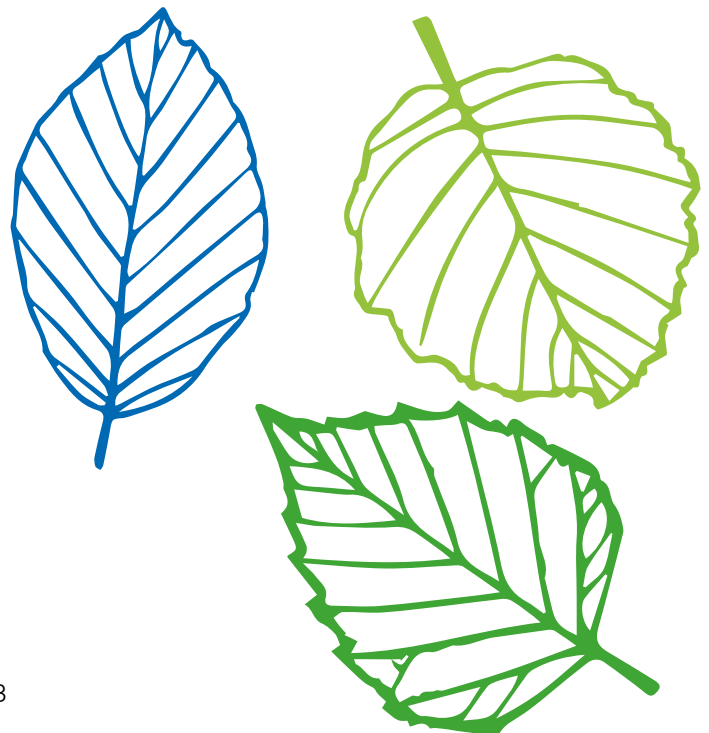
Forest Poem – Diane J

The forest is sleeping but the river runs like a cheetah
The children rush in like an elephant stampede
All is calm till we arrive

The forest is ...
A place to play
A place to learn
A place to stay
A place where you can be yourself

I see children...
Playing
Talking
Walking
A place where logs become trains

The forest is a place to be when you need time
When you take a breath you feel like you're floating
Like a deer ran through your heart



The Forest – Clara B

Going for a walk hoping it will clear my mind.
There's a door made of trees. I wonder what's on the other side?
I walk through the forest.
Damp trees so tall you can't see the end.
My feet step on the soggy leaves and I feel them getting squished.
The children running and playing, no one to ruin it.
I feel calm like all my worries just disappeared.
The soft wind brushing against my face.
I hear the kids talking.
I realised all I needed was on the other side of the door.

Connection Through Circles


*The practice of communicating in circles is now used throughout ISZL, but was adopted first in our Middle School. Its Assistant Principal, **Pete LaFrance**, explains how the concept has transformed learning and interpersonal relationships.*

Earlier this school year, I posed a simple request to a group of ISZL Middle School parents: “Please raise your hand if Middle School was your favourite period so far in life”. Not a hand went up.

It’s common to think of Middle School (the years from 11–14) as a struggle – a time to endure, and certainly not one to celebrate. But don’t our students deserve for Middle School to be more than this? Can’t it be a period defined by growth in the ability to make positive relationships and meaningful connections, instead of a time remembered only for struggle and social challenge?

Three years ago, our Grade 7 team began to experiment, using “circles” as a tool to help make our Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) curriculum more relevant and impactful for students. Desks would be pushed aside, and students would sit knee to knee and face to face, to engage with each other around essential topics in an open and respectful discussion.





The basic idea of a circle is quite intuitive – relationships are built when people have time and space to speak openly and honestly, and communication skills are developed in a safe and supportive environment.

Indeed, research demonstrates that the consistent use of proactive circles builds the relationships and skills students (and adults) need to support one another, collectively addressing the challenges they face. By setting the stage for positive conversations built around our PSHE curriculum, our Grade 7 team was helping students develop the skills and relationships needed to be successful in Middle School and in life.

In the 2022-23 school year, circles were rolled out to the entire Middle School.

Teachers across the Middle School were asked to devote PSHE time to foster open communication and dive into topics that students often struggle to navigate.

The consensus emerging was that circles were becoming an integral part of who we were as a school.





Students went from wanting to skip PSHE to demanding it. Indeed, I ran a circle with half of a Grade 6 homeroom for much of last school year that transformed my relationship with those students and allowed for proactive conversations about managing relationships that enabled us to avoid more serious discipline situations – and students seemed to enjoy it. Truly transformational.

With the arrival of Maria Voutos as Deputy Director of ISZL in 2023–24, circles were elevated through staff training across the school, with a further unification around common circle practice. Students were asked to speak and listen from the heart, to be mindful of the impact of their words and to be considerate of the time that they were using. Staff were asked to serve as “circle keepers” to guide and redirect the circle to maintain its flow, while not influencing what was said.

Circles were dedicated not just to Middle School PSHE topics, but also used as tools to help delve into the subject area curriculum and to repair student relationships that had been damaged. The practice has been integrated into our practice to such an extent that it is common for staff members to use circles to communicate with each other and also with school leadership.

The simple and effective framework of circles has helped make the ISZL Middle School more proactive and responsive to the needs of our students, while helping our students develop into more effective communicators. For our current cohort, this transformative practice may not be enough to make Middle School the best time of their lives, but it is safe to say that it certainly has made it better. And that is something to celebrate.





MEET ISZL'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS

ISZL's Board of Trustees supports the school's Mission and Vision. Its members are guided by the best interests of students, staff and the wider ISZL community.

The Board appoints the school's Director, oversees the financial stability of the school, and plans for future development.

Our Board members, and the professional expertise they bring to our school, are profiled below:



Daniel Urech (Chair)

Member of the Finance and Audit Committee and Facilities Committee

Dan Urech served on the Board of the Riverside School from its establishment in 1990. He was ISZL's first Board Chairman from 2008 to 2012 and re-joined the Board in October 2018. Dan is a Swiss citizen, who studied languages and law in Geneva, international relations at Princeton University and graduated from law school in Bern. After many years in insurance and banking, he started his own law practice in 1981 and is an active member of the Bar Associations of Zurich and Switzerland, while also serving on the boards of Swiss companies and foundations. He has a daughter and a son; the latter was a member of the first generation of students at the Riverside School.



Alessandra Eliot (Vice-Chair)

Member of the Governance Committee (Chair)

Alessandra Eliot is a British and Italian citizen. Her two children are ISZL alumni. She has a long-standing interest in education and has been involved in programmes in South America and South Africa as well as being active in her children's school communities. Alessandra has a degree in Physiology from King's College, London. Her professional background is in Management Consulting and Strategic Marketing. Alessandra joined the Board in March 2015.



Jennifer Bayard

Member of the Facilities Committee and Fundraising Committee (Chair)

Jennifer Bayard is a Swiss citizen and has been a resident of the Canton of Zug since 2003. Since her daughter joined ISZL, Jennifer has been an active member of the community. She has served on the Primary School Parent Advisory Council and regularly volunteers in different capacities to support school events. Jennifer has a degree in Law from Fribourg University, Switzerland. She has worked for many years in the financial services sector, where she has held different roles, including in governance compliance and quality management. Jennifer joined the Board in December 2018.



Roger Bosshart

Member of the Facilities Committee (Chair)

Roger Bosshart, a Swiss national, has called Zug home since 1973. He is the proud parent of three grown children. Roger holds a Graphic Art degree from Zürich University of the Arts and has been at the helm of DYNAMITE AG, an advertising and communications agency in Steinhausen, since 1995. In his role as CEO, he specialises in developing innovative branding and communication strategies. Roger served as a member of the parish council in the community of Neuheim for a commendable 14-year tenure. Roger joined the Board in July 2018.



Barry Dequanne

ISZL's Director

Barry Dequanne sits on the board as a non-voting member. Turn to page 55 for more on our School Director.



Michael Egermann

Member of the Governance Committee

Michael Egermann is an Austrian citizen and has lived in Zug with his family since 2010. His daughter has graduated from ISZL and his son is currently in High School. Michael has a Master's degree in Psychology from the University of Vienna (Austria), with a specialisation in Industrial and Organisational Psychology. He also holds a Master's degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations from the University of Minnesota (USA). He has spent most of his professional career in Human Resources in the Pharma and Biotechnology industry and currently leads Human Resources for Amgen's Europe, Latin America, Middle East Africa and Canada organisation. Michael joined the Board in May 2018.



Val Hackel

Emeritus board member

Val Hackel is a British citizen. Val and her late husband, Alec, founded the Riverside School in 1990 and initiated the merger with the International School of Zug, which created ISZL. They have provided leadership and financial support to the School from its inception. Val has two grandsons, both of whom are ISZL alumni.



Christopher McKinlay

Member of the Finance and Audit Committee (Chair), Fundraising Committee

Chris McKinlay is a British citizen and has lived in the Canton of Luzern with his family for most of the last 18 years. He has a son in High School at ISZL and a daughter at university in the UK who is an ISZL alumnus. Chris has a Masters' degree in Economics from the University of Cambridge, is a Chartered Accountant and a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. He has more than 25 years of experience in finance, accounting and auditing, mainly in the healthcare sector, and is currently VP and CFO for Kenvue's EMEA business and its Global Supply Chain operations. Chris joined the Board in March 2020.



Andrea Vavassori

Member of the Finance and Audit Committee

Andrea Vavassori is an Italian citizen with two children who attend ISZL. Andrea has a degree in Business Administration from Università Bocconi in Milan and the CEMS Master in International Management from ESADE in Barcelona. Andrea has over 25 years experience in business finance, based in France, Italy, Spain, and since 2011, Zug. He is currently VP and CFO EMEA at Crown Packaging European Division. Andrea joined the Board in March 2016.

Our board members sit on the following committees

Facilities

Roger Bosshart (C)
Daniel Urech
Jennifer Bayard
Barry Dequanne

Finance and Audit

Christopher McKinlay (C)
Daniel Urech
Barry Dequanne
Andrea Vavassori

Fundraising

Jennifer Bayard (C)
Daniel Urech
Barry Dequanne
Christopher McKinlay

Governance

Alessandra Eliot (C)
Daniel Urech
Barry Dequanne
Michael Egermann

Professional Growth

Michael Egermann (C)
Daniel Urech
Alessandra Eliot

Val Hackel (Emeritus)

LEADERSHIP

The ISZL leadership team consists of eight staff members, each bringing their own expertise to their division of the school.

The team ensures the smooth day-to-day running of the school and plans for ISZL's future, keeping the best interests of students at the forefront of decision-making.

The leadership team is responsible for the implementation of ISZL's Mission and Vision.

Barry Dequanne
School
Director

Angela Steinmann
Primary School
Principal

Stuart Byfield
Middle School
Principal

Chris Vincent
Director of
Technology



Stefan Dittli
Director of
Operations

Maria Voutos
Deputy
Director

Andrea Gerlich
Director of
Admissions,
Communications
and Marketing

Linsey Lawrence
High School
Principal

Stefan Dittli, Director of Operations

Stefan Dittli is a Swiss citizen who was born in Zurich. He has a Master's Degree from ETH Zurich, a Swiss Federal Diploma in Information Technology and an Executive MBA in Digital Transformation from the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons. A former High School teacher, Stefan joined ISZL from Swiss Re, leading global projects, and regional and global teams of up to 150 employees. Stefan is married, and the proud father of two teenagers. He speaks German, English and some French.

Barry Dequanne, ISZL Director

Barry Dequanne is the Director of the International School of Zug and Luzern. Prior to Switzerland, he worked at schools in Brasilia, São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Swaziland. Originally from Canada, Barry has worked in the field of international education for over twenty years. Barry's academic background is in Mathematics and Computer Science. Shortly after graduation, he realised where his professional passion was to be found. He is currently working on his Ph.D. in Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota.

In addition to his work at ISZL, Barry also served or is serving in the following roles:

- President, Board of Directors – Association of American Schools of South America (AASSA)
- President, Association of American Schools in Brazil (AASB)
- Advisory Council – AdvancED International School Accreditation
- Board Member – Kohinor International School
- Board Member – The International Educator (TIE)

Maria Voutos, Deputy Director

Maria arrived at ISZL in 2023 as our new Deputy Director. She joined us from Atlanta International School, a K-12 International Baccalaureate institution. During her tenure at AIS, Maria founded the school's full immersion Early Years programme and later led the Primary community as Head of Primary School. Maria has taught and led in China, Thailand, Korea, Canada, and the US. Maria is a strategic thinker, community builder, trained Restorative Practitioner and Intercultural Development Inventory administrator, and an effective communicator who is thrilled to be learning alongside the ISZL community. Maria has a background in Early Childhood and Elementary Education as well as a Master's Degree in International Education. Maria is originally from Canada, where her father immigrated from Greece. As such Maria speaks English, French, and Greek. She enjoys travelling with her wife Tina, who works as an educator in the Primary School, and their dog Sacha.

Angela Steinmann, Primary School Principal

Angela Steinmann studied Linguistics in Queensland, Australia, and completed her Master's in International Education at Bath University in the UK. She began her teaching career in state schools in Queensland, and has taught all grades from preschool to Grade 7. She has had 21 years of international experience, with senior leadership posts in Munich, Istanbul, and Beijing. Angela has a strong IB curriculum background. One of her strengths is building relationships with people and she enjoys the challenge of leading teachers toward active participation as part of a professional learning community. Angela has two grown children aged 28 and 25. She finds balance through scuba diving, swimming, exploring new languages, and taking risks cooking creatively.

Andrea Gerlich, Director of Admissions, Communications and Marketing

Andrea is an experienced admissions professional with over 14 years working in the international school sector. She joined ISZL in September 2021. Prior to joining ISZL, Andrea served as Head of Admissions and Marketing at The International School of Azerbaijan. She also worked as a consultant on international projects in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan after moving abroad in 1997 from her home country of Germany. Outside of work, Andrea enjoys hiking and running in Switzerland's beautiful countryside, exploring new places, going to the gym, and reading. She has two daughters, who are now at university.

Stuart Byfield, Middle School Principal

Stuart has been a member of the ISZL community since joining in 2010 as Grade 7 Team leader and teacher of mathematics. He served as Assistant Principal of the Middle School working closely with staff, students and parents for 7 years before taking on the Middle School Principal Role in 2019. Previously, he was part of the senior leadership team at Ranby House School with responsibility for curriculum development and leading a traditional UK prep school towards a more modern and student-focused approach to teaching and learning. Stuart is married to Nikki, who runs an arts and craft business within the Swiss community and they have three boys.

Linsey Lawrence, High School Principal

Linsey Lawrence worked as High School Principal and High School Vice Principal at UWCSEA (Dover) in Singapore for seven years before arriving at ISZL in 2022. She has also worked as an international educator in Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand. Linsey loves teaching Global Politics and Sociology, History and Personal and Social Education. She is passionate about holistic education and nurturing wellbeing. Linsey has two children at ISZL and her husband works as an educator in the Primary School. In her free time Linsey enjoys reading, cooking (and eating), cycling, yoga, weights, but mostly movie/ Nintendo and ice cream nights with her daughters.

Chris Vincent, Director of Technology

Chris hails from the island state of Tasmania, Australia, and has an academic background in computer science, mathematics, robotics and education. He has a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. Chris's 30+ year teaching career has taken him from rural state schools in Tasmania to four different countries. The majority of his professional life has been dedicated to school-wide technology leadership and secondary divisional leadership. Chris has three children, two of whom are ISZL graduates. On a personal note, Chris loves a pot of tea, relishes outdoor activities particularly sailing and walking, finds solace in the pages of a good book and cherishes time spent with his family and close friends.

A WORLD-CLASS LEARNING COMMUNITY

The International School of Zug and Luzern (ISZL) is an independent co-educational, non-profit day school serving the international community of Central Switzerland by providing a comprehensive education from Early Years to university preparation, from ages 3 to 18.

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, ISZL is authorised by the IB Organisation to offer the Primary Years, Middle Years and IB Diploma Programmes. In addition, students in Grades 11 and 12 have the option of taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams, which are audited by the College Board.

ISZL has been accredited by the prestigious and highly respected Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). ISZL is a member of the Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS) and the Educational Consortium of International Schools (ECIS).

ISZL is supervised by the Educational Authorities of the Canton of Zug and operates with their approval.

A NON-PROFIT FOUNDATION

ISZL is registered as a non-profit foundation (Stiftung) in Switzerland.

EINE LERNGEMEINSCHAFT DER WELTKLASSE

Die International School of Zug and Luzern (ISZL) ist eine unabhängige, gemeinnützige Tagesschule die der internationalen Gemeinschaft der Zentralschweiz eine umfassende Ausbildung vom Vorschulalter bis hin zur Universitätsvorbereitung für 3 – 18 Jährige anbietet.

ISZL ist als International Baccalaureate (IB) World School durch die IB Organisation autorisiert die Primary Years, Middle Years und Diploma Programmes anzubieten. Ausserdem haben Schüler der 11. und 12. Klasse die Möglichkeit, Advanced Placement (AP) Kurse zu belegen und Examen abzulegen. Alle AP Kurse werden vom College Board überprüft.

ISZL ist akkreditiert vom renommierten und hochangesehenen Council of International Schools (CIS) und der New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Die Schule zeigt damit, dass ihre akademischen Programme von höchster Qualität sind.

ISZL wird von der Bildungsbehörde des Kantons Zug beaufsichtigt, und wird mit deren Genehmigung geführt.

EINE GEMEINNÜTZIGE STIFTUNG

ISZL ist nach schweizerischem Recht als gemeinnützige Stiftung organisiert.

