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the future, today.



American
International
School of Zagreb

Annual Report

2022-2023



Table of Contents

Key facts	2
Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles	4
Letter from the Board of Trustees	6
Financial Review	8
Letter from the Director	10
AISZ 2023 Impact Perception Study	12
Strategic Plan	14
Letter from the LS Principal	16
Focus on Lower School Learning	22
Partnering with Parents	22
Letter from the US Principal	26
Focus on Upper School Learning	28
Math Hub	28
World Languages - Application for the MSA World Languages Program of Distinction ...	30
2022 Summary of IB Results	32
Class of 2023 AISZ Graduate Placement	33
Expertise	34
Graduation Pathways	34
Professional Learning Communities	36
Learning Support	38
Building Community	40
Building it Together: Rebuilding the AISZ Parent-Teacher Association	40
Athletics & Extra Curricular Activities	42
CEESA Rock Band Festival	47
Outdoor Education	48
Outdoor Education Guide	48
Duke of Edinburgh’s Award: What, Why & How?	54
Outdoor Education in 2022-23	56
Alumni	60
Transitions	62
Arriving Faculty	62
Leaving Faculty	63
Celebration	64

Key facts

EMPLOYEES

5

Nationalities

29

Bilingual/Multiple Languages spoken

35

Teachers with M.Ed degrees

35

Teachers with more than 10 years of experience

84

Total Employees

63

Faculty Members

5.5

Student Teacher Ratio

57

Years in Existence
opened in 1966

23958m²

Campus area

STUDENTS



358

Students
(for the whole year)



344

Students
(end of the year)

117
Elementary
School

Upper
School

227

241

Families

43

Nationalities

24

Class of 2022

10

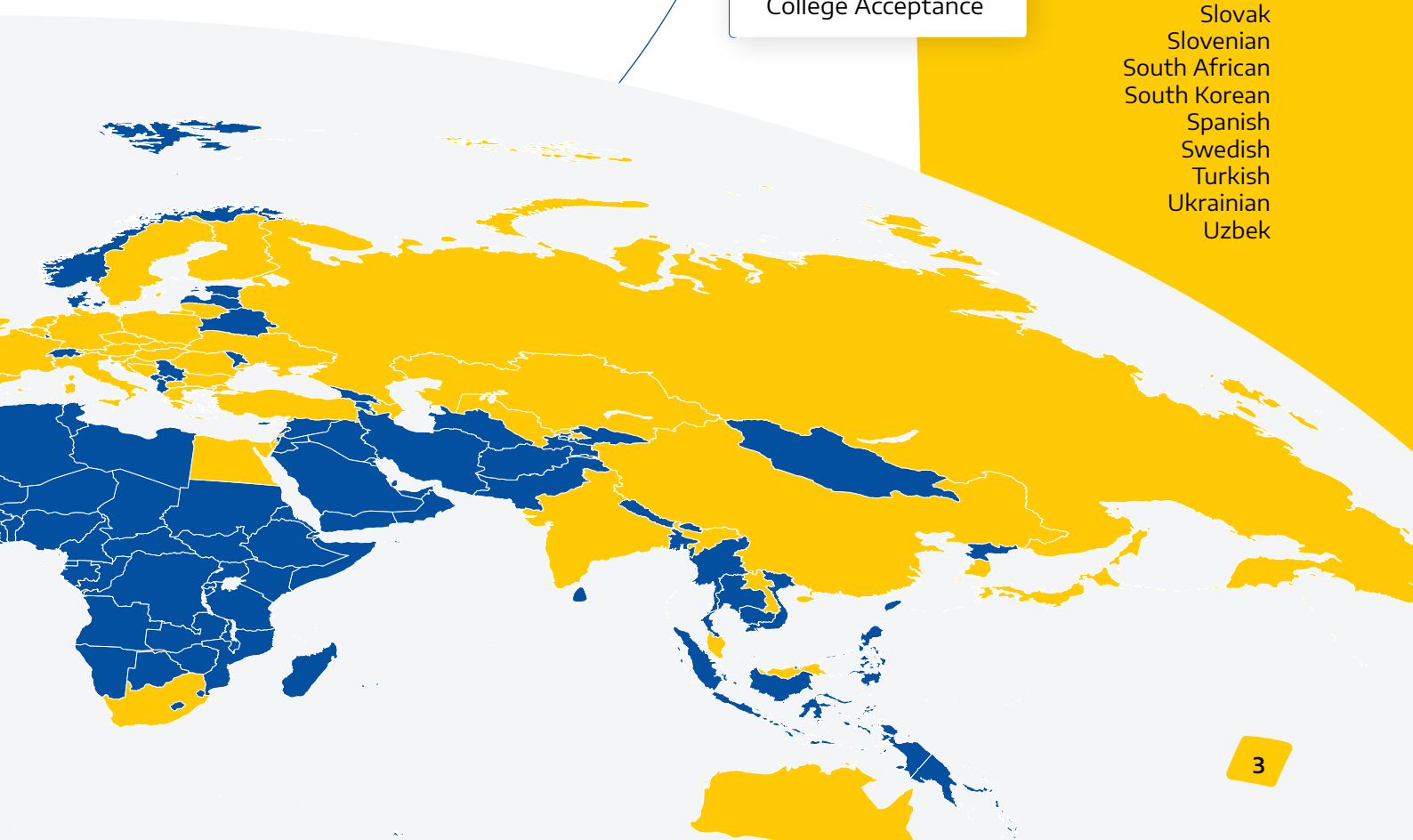
Croatian Young
Leaders Scholarship

15

Class of 2023
College Acceptance

NATIONALITIES IN 22-23

American
Australian
Austrian
Azerbaijani
Belgian
Bosnian or Herzegovinian
British, UK
Bulgarian
Canadian
Chinese
Croatian
Czech
Dutch, Netherlandic
Egyptian
Finnish
French
German
Greek, Hellenic
Hungarian, Magyar
Indian
Irish
Israeli
Italian
Japanese
Kazakh
Lao, Laotian
Lithuanian
Macedonian
Malaysian
Mexican
Polish
Portuguese
Romanian
Russian
Slovak
Slovenian
South African
South Korean
Spanish
Swedish
Turkish
Ukrainian
Uzbek



Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

With a fifty-seven-years connection to beautiful and culturally rich Croatia, The American International School of Zagreb provides an excellent internationally focused education.

OUR VISION

Experiencing the Future, Today

The American International School of Zagreb offers an academically rigorous international curriculum from Early Childhood to Grade 12. Our learning engagements are future-oriented, focused on acquiring the interdisciplinary skills and character dispositions necessary for a successful future in the age of innovation. We look to what is to come and ground our actions on the belief that learning is for now as well as the future. We also believe that balance and fun should always be present.

OUR MISSION

We develop skills and character for futures rich with promise.

We believe in all our students. We believe that the future our students have before them is filled with remarkable opportunities. We believe that the attributes of a successful international citizen are empathy, the making of ethical choices, a service-minded attitude to others, a concern for our environment and resources, a commitment to integrity, and the personal resilience to learn from disappointments and failures.

OUR LEARNING PRINCIPLES

At AISZ we believe:

1. We can all learn and have the right to do so.
2. Learning is a personal and social, as well as emotional and cognitive activity.
3. Learning environments have a significant impact on our learning.
4. Transfer of learning happens best in rich and relevant contexts.
5. Common learning cultures need to construct common meaning through a common learning language.

KEY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. A school community united around our Mission and Vision and more connected to the local and global community
2. Create learning opportunities indicative of a concept school for the future
3. Facilitate each student's growth through personal, self-directed, authentic learning.
4. Become a place that provides opportunities for emotional, physical and psychological balance.





Letter from the Board of Trustees

Dear Members of the School Community,

As the Chair of the School Board of Trustees and on behalf of the Board, I am honored to present our annual report for the academic year 2022-2023. This has been another year of growth and progress and we are excited to share our achievements with you. I want to thank my fellow Board members for their dedication and commitment to the strategic development of AISZ.

This year we had four major areas of focus. The first was soliciting feedback from the AISZ community by conducting the second annual Leading School's Survey. We value your feedback and will use it to better serve our community. We also started three separate, long-term programmatic reviews; Graduation Pathways; Learning Support and Intervention and Outdoor Education. The results of these reviews will inform the board's decision making as we strive to make the AISZ experience as inclusive as possible. You can learn more about these goals in the pages of this report.

Our Finance Committee continues to ensure AISZ's solid financial foundation. Despite this

year's inflationary pressures, thanks to their foresight and excellent management of our resources, we have been able to keep our tuition and fees stable. We say a fond farewell to board member Mrs. Katherine Crotty who, with her family, will be leaving Zagreb this summer. Katie was instrumental in the successful execution of the Leading School's Survey. Thank you Katie, for all your work and dedication to the Board.

I will also be leaving Zagreb this summer, returning to the United States. It has been an honor and pleasure to be a part of the AISZ family for the last two years. I have no doubt the future is very bright for AISZ and look forward to watching the progress continue from afar.

Finally, I want to give a warm welcome to Mr. Christian Lynch, who has taken over the Board Chair position as of May 1, 2023. Christian's commitment will continue serving the board very well, and I ask you to join me in wishing him the very best for his tenure.

Amy L. Lorenzen
Chair of AISZ Board of Trustees

AISZ SCHOOL BOARD COMPRISES



**Consular Section Chief,
Amy L. Lorenzen**
Chairperson



Christian Lynch
US Ambassador Appointee



Katherine Crotty
US Ambassador Appointee



Graciela Arroyo Nava
Parent Representative



Martin Walder
Parent Representative



John Gašparac
Board Appointee - Treasurer



Tomislav Matić
Board Appointee



Paul Buckley
AISZ Director, Ex-officio

Financial Review

HISTORICAL: 2021 -2022

The Audited Financial report for the 2021-2022 school year is healthy and strong, with total revenues of €5.6 million and 2% above planned. Operating expenditures were 8% lower than planned due to unrealized student activities and professional development travel, impacted by the COVID pandemic. Total operating expenses of €4.624k combined with net financial expenses of €217k resulted in a surplus of €788k. Part of the surplus is already invested into the capital improvement of the building, and the rest will be spent on further facility improvements.

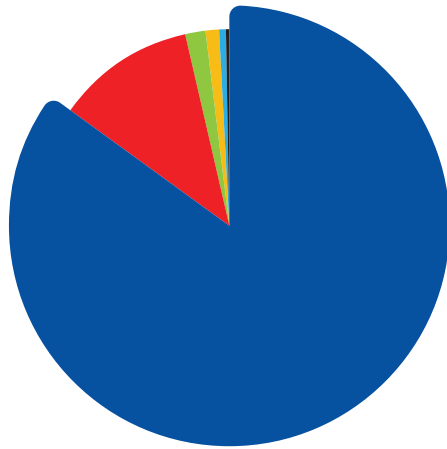
CURRENT: 2022-2023

Revenues budgeted for 2022-2023 estimated an enrolment of 336 students (7.7% increase). The current student level (344 students, 2.3% above budget) is generating stable revenue and enabling the possibility of maintaining our Capital and Operational reserves at the same level we started the year with.

Personnel expenses represent 67% of total expenditures and the majority of our budgeted costs. Our fixed costs represent 86% of total costs, consistent with CEESA school benchmarks. Educational expenditures are planned at levels prior to the COVID pandemic and are expected to meet the budget.

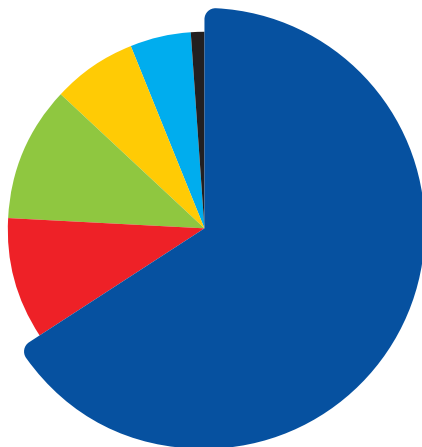
With higher revenues than planned, we are again expecting to have another strong and healthy financial year with a surplus that will be used for student education and activities.

The Finance and Facilities Committee, along with the AISZ Board as a whole, is committed to serving the AISZ Learning Community and providing the best possible educational experience for our students.



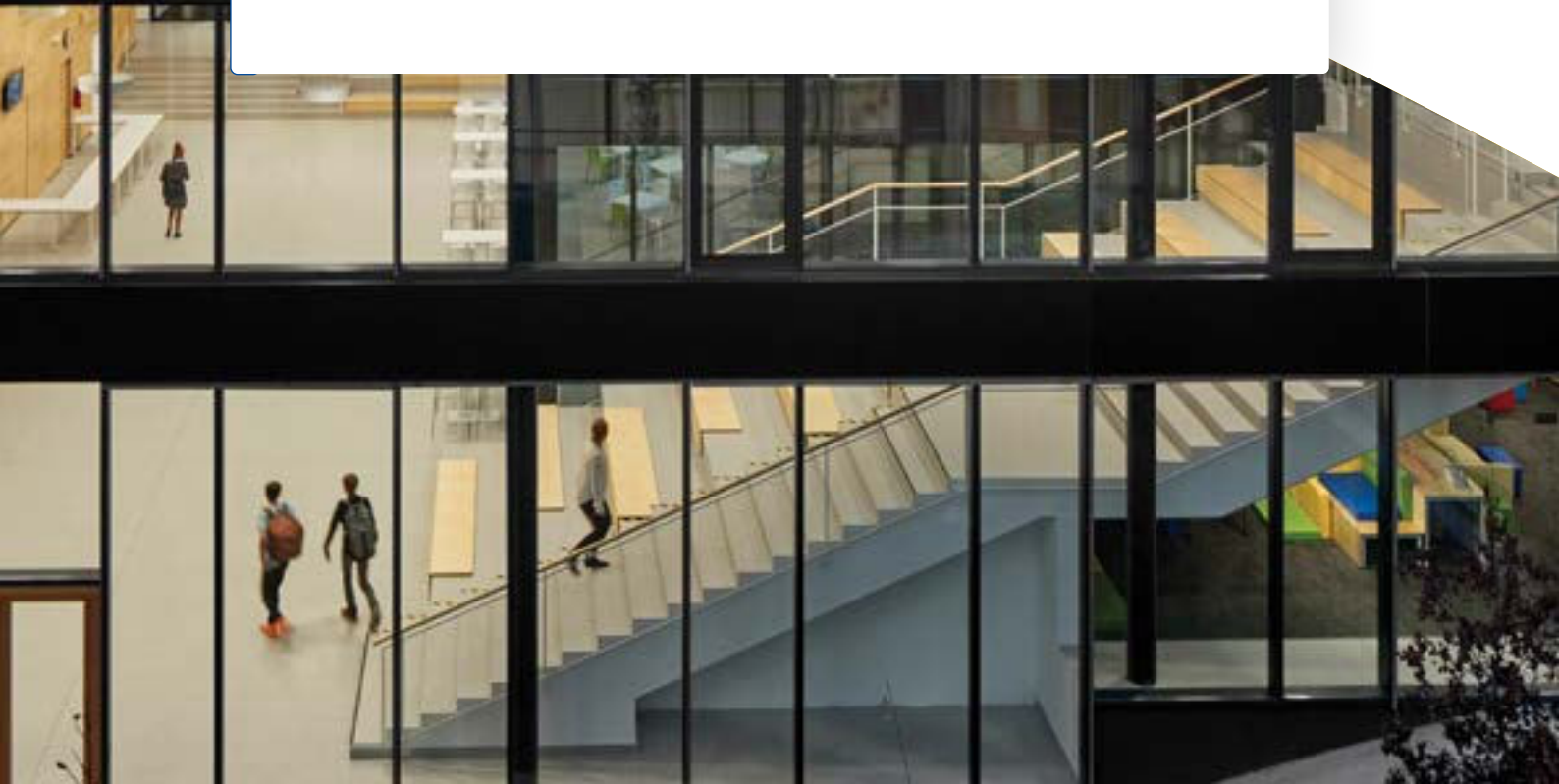
INCOME 2022-23

- Tuition Fee 85%
- Capital Fee 11%
- Application Fee 2%
- Other Fees 1%
- Grant 0.5%
- Miscellaneous Income 1%



EXPENSES 2022-23

- Personnel 67%
- Depreciation 10%
- School Operation 10%
- Educational Expenses 8%
- Financial Expenses 4%
- Technology 1%





Letter from the Director

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share some of the accomplishments and progress we have made towards our goals at AISZ. One of our main priorities has been to review and adjust student capacity in each division while upholding our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We are pleased to report that we have made significant strides towards this objective, with many classes reaching capacity or nearing capacity for the upcoming academic year. However, as a result of our growing student population, we anticipate needing to implement enrollment waiting lists for some grade levels moving forward.

To support this growth, we have developed a comprehensive facility plan that outlines key resources, equipment, and maintenance needs over the next few years. We are excited to be enhancing our athletic facilities by installing artificial grass on our football pitch, which will provide a safer and more optimal playing surface for our students. Additionally, we are upgrading the lighting rack in the black box theater to support our new Performing Arts and Drama program.

Continuing our Strategic Goals work, we are reviewing our Learning Support, Graduation Pathways, and Outdoor Education programs, with the aim of improving outcomes and experiences for our students. We are pleased to have rebuilt our PTA Executive post-COVID and to have hosted several successful community events and parent workshops, such as the Welcome Back Picnic and Parent and Staff Cocktail evening.

We have also prioritized supporting our students' personal and social well-being in the post-COVID world by hosting multi-grade student-led community meetings for our Upper School students to discuss the pressures and challenges they face. Similar, developmentally appropriate discussions have been held in the Lower School Community and Morning Meetings.

Furthermore, we are proud to have been a candidate for the Middle States and Colleges (MSA) *Program of Distinction for World Languages*, and we appreciate the organization's feedback and guidance in helping us reflect on and improve our language program.

Lastly, I would like to express our gratitude to the Board of Trustees for their ongoing support and strategic leadership, which has enabled us to have another successful year at AISZ. We would like to extend a special thank you to Ms. Katie Crotty and Ms. Amy Lorenzen for their outstanding service and contributions to our school and community. Katie was an important part of the Governance Committee and led the Leading School's Benchmark Survey process, while Amy was responsible for the overall leadership and strategic direction in her role as Board Chair over the last two years. We are fortunate to have a dedicated and focused Board of Trustees that has helped guide us towards our goals.

Thank you for being with us.

Paul Buckley
Director

Our Vision

Experiencing the Future, Today.

Our Mission

We develop skills and character for futures rich with promise:

1. A school community united around our Mission and Vision and more connected to the local and global community
2. Create learning opportunities indicative of a concept school for the future
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American International School Zagreb (AISZ) 2023 Impact Perception Study

Overview: In Spring 2023, the AISZ Community participated in a school-wide survey to garner insights to student, parent, and staff experience at AISZ to ensure we are demonstrating our mission and values, as they reflect school culture. The outcome is that AISZ is seen as a high functioning and performing school. The report found a strong belief in AISZ as a friendly and welcoming community forged on strong philosophical, learning, and community values. The Mission and Vision are alive and well within the community: broadly understood and endorsed.

Strengths to Celebrate: The report noted four core areas of AISZ strength that was identified by participants:

- **Teachers** who bring competence, approachability, and personalized student support as a cornerstone of their teachings, with 'kindness and care' making a strong community impression.
- **Campus** that inspires student/adult learning, community connections, and well-being, with a desired continuation of hybrid on-and-off campus experiences.
- **Learning Approach** as a distinguisher in the competitive landscape of international schools, with an emphasis on critical thinking, personalization, and competent and creative applied learning.
- **Community** that is closeknit, warm, and welcoming with an achieved focus on inclusion. Students, parents, and staff feel a universal sense of supportive community.

Opportunities for Growth: Respondents highlighted the following areas for additional AISZ support:

- **Operationalize Culture** by creating actionable, accountable deliverables around AISZ's Four Core Values of providing extraordinary care, developing expert learners, offering personalized learning, and supporting the dreams of our students.
- **Communication** that is dispersed in a cohesive, cogent manner via a system that is universally accessed and utilized.
- **Policies and Procedures** that uniformly clarifies performance expectations and enforces consistent disciplinary consequences for both students and staff.

Overall Recommendations: The community holds a strong belief in, and approval of, the AISZ Charter; the school has an opportunity to crystallize our values through clear policy refinement, follow-up, and an effective communication strategy that incorporates and informs all key stakeholders.



AISZ Takes Action: AISZ understands the importance of action and committing to the following initiatives to help address survey input. This is in no way all-encompassing and AISZ will roll out further programs and proposals, in addition to the following:

- In light of the recommendations revealed by the survey, AISZ will now actively pursue a *three Division separation rather than two*. Traditionally, AISZ has comprised a Lower School and an Upper School. It is now time we think of ourselves as three united, but different, divisions: Lower School, Middle School, and High School. Next year we will focus on developing a unique identity for our Middle School with an educational and activities program especially designed for Middle School aged students.
- Organizational structures have been reviewed and these structures will be either introduced as *new positions* or strengthened where they already exist:
 - Upper School Associate Principal and Schoolwide Student Services Coordinator
 - Lower School Learning Coordinator and Pedagogical Coach
 - Academic Subject Leaders and Grade Level Team Leads
- To clarify performance expectations and consistent disciplinary consequences, the Upper School has reviewed, clarified, and re-drafted the *Student Code of Conduct* which will be introduced in August 2023.
- In support of the students' desires for more learning off campus, our *Outdoor Education curriculum* adopted new standards, and enhanced the extended learning experiences for Unity Trips and community based environmental education for all school divisions.
- To bolster School Spirit, we are introducing *The Balkan Sports League* which will offer our students more opportunities in addition to CEESA competitions as well as enhancing our connections with local schools and clubs. These are CEESA schools within driving distance or one short flight.
- We will continue to build on the initiative *Time to Talk / Time to Listen*, a community block time where student voice and advocacy will be strongly encouraged so our students have increased opportunity to contribute to the growth of our school.
- While the survey results highlighted the importance of personalizing AISZ care, that in no way means that we are not continuing to commit ourselves to the highest academic standards. In March, AISZ was recommended for *Program of Distinction* status with the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges (MSA). There are only a small number of schools globally with this distinction and if we receive our status, we will be the first in Europe. Confirmation of this status will arrive with us in November.

These initiatives have been in development throughout this year, but we are pleased that the survey has also recognized these areas as opportunities for growth.

Path Forward: Next year we will be developing small, focused Tiger Teams to work with us on these initiatives and more information will be coming out early next academic year about these opportunities. AISZ relies on your insights to continue to reflect the values of our community and achieve our collective goals. Thank you for taking the time to provide your insights and continue to make AISZ a safe, inspired place to learn and grow.

Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC STUDENT IMPACT GOALS

Expertise

Every student becomes an expert in his or her learning.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Understand how they learn best and identify the personal influencers that enhance or inhibit their own high-level learning.
- Use this insight to set high-quality goals for themselves and strive for personal achievement towards rigorous standards.
- Build a character that supports high-level learning and preserve through intellectual challenges
- Grapple with and accommodate multiple perspectives
- Gather and use a range of data and data types

Extraordinary Care

Every student is known, advocated for and supported.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Have at least one significant adult mentor at school that contributes in positive and meaningful ways to successful development.
- Be recognized within our community as an individual who matters.
- Develop, maintain and improve healthy habits related to eating, exercise, hygiene and sleeping.
- Independently recognize and promote healthy lifestyle traits and choices.
- Be valued and listened to as a worthy member of our community.
- Feel valued within our community and have positive self-esteem.
- Contribute to the wellness of others.

The Imagined

Every student personalizes learning and pursues dreams.

Students who achieve this impact will:

- Employ multiple strategies to effectively address challenges.
- Pursue new knowledge and skills.
- See mistakes and failures as a natural part of learning and an opportunity to learn, grow and improve.
- Demonstrate curiosity toward their personalized learning plan.
- Investigate the source and solution to various challenges.



AISZ STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal #1: Strategic Growth

- ◆ Review and revise the capacity of the student numbers within each Division and the School overall whilst maintaining current diversity and the optimal student numbers
- ◆ Research and refinement of Graduation Pathways
- ◆ Enhancement of Outdoor Education and Environmental Learning
- ◆ Transformation of the Learning Support Program

Goal #2: Funding Our Dream

- ◆ Long-Term Facilities Plan

Goal #3: Strengthening Community Relations

- ◆ Community Relations



Letter from the LS Principal

One of my favorite times during the day is first thing in the morning when children arrive at school. Whether they are dropped off by parents, hop off of a bus, or arrive by walking or by bicycle, Lower School students can be seen smiling - and even skipping - onto campus. Their excitement to see their teachers and friends is obvious, and most importantly, they arrive ready to learn. The joy that students have as members of the AISZ community is gratifying for all of us who work so hard each day to bring the learning environment to life.

FOCUSING ON SUSTAINABILITY

Our world is changing, and it is becoming increasingly important for us to teach our children about the importance of sustainability. That is why this year we focused on sustainability as a six-week learning unit in the Lower School. Our goal was to help students understand what sustainability is, why it matters, and what they can do to have a positive impact on the environment.

We kicked off the unit on Friday, February 17 with a movie afternoon where students gathered in the Black Box to watch Bee Movie, and then learning in the classrooms began on Monday. Each homeroom explored different topics related to sustainability. Some of our specialist and world language classes integrated their learning into the homeroom topics while others chose a separate focus for their students. Some of the topics studied were:

- PreK and K: Protecting our environment
- Grade 1: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to keep our planet clean
- Grade 2: The Roles of insects and plants in a balanced ecosystem
- Grade 3: Supporting dog shelters for a sustainable world
- Grade 4: Save Me a Bottle Cap! and the importance of recycling
- Grade 5: What is our responsibility to the earth? as expressed through poetry
- Specials and World Languages: Designing dog toys from recyclable materials; Let's protect our planet; Endangered animals; The importance of waste sorting; Creating recycled instruments; Performing Agents of Change song

A highlight of the unit was a division-wide celebration on the evening of April 5. This was a time when students shared what they had learned and we came together as a community to recognize our students as the future stewards of our planet. The children's projects were displayed museum-style in the classrooms and other learning areas with the students acting as docents to guide visitors through the exhibitions. Our fifth graders took over the Black Box for their poetry slam, inspiring their audience through their passion for their topics and making everyone feel the urgency to take action and make a difference.

We wanted our students to not only learn about sustainability, but to also feel empowered to make a difference in their own lives. We definitely accomplished this goal, and we look forward to expanding this learning to encompass more service learning in the future.



TAKING LITERACY TO THE NEXT LEVEL

For the past few years, as a Lower School we've focused on ensuring that our literacy curriculum (reading, phonics, and writing) is grounded in research, based on best practices, and consistent in philosophy and approach across the grade levels. This year we added the position of Lower School Literacy Specialist to our faculty roster to ensure that all of these pieces are in place and to support the classroom teachers as they grow professionally, develop curriculum, and facilitate student learning. The goal is for our students to succeed to their full potential, and becoming fluent readers and writers is vital for their future success. And we believe that it's just as important that they develop a lifelong love for reading.

This year we've focused a significant amount of time on building a strong foundation for our literacy program from prekindergarten to Grade 2. We've used the body of research known as the science of reading as the basis for this work. Our literacy specialist, Sara Kirby, has led this work by consulting with and coaching our teachers, teaching small groups of students, and working with parents.






In October 2022, Sara hosted a workshop for parents titled, “What Parents Should Know about the Science of Reading.” She received positive feedback from those who attended and we are already planning to offer more literacy-focused parent workshops next year. Then in March 2023, Sara led a team to present at the annual conference for the Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA) in Vilnius, Lithuania on “Collaborating to Grow Lifelong Readers.” Presenting with Sara were Katie McNeil and Nela Puda, Grade 1 co-teachers, and Tamara Black, Lower School Principal. The session was standing-room-only as educators from around the region gathered to learn how our teachers are implementing the latest research into their teaching practice. AISZ is a leader in this area, and we enjoyed supporting colleagues from other CEESA schools on their journeys to enrich their literacy programs.

LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

In the AISZ Lower School, we believe that some of the best learning happens outside of the classroom, and that is why we offer a variety of off-campus learning opportunities. We hope that immersing children in nature will encourage them to build an appreciation for the world around them and help them understand their place within it. For example, on a regular basis, you'll find AISZ students with their teachers in Bundek Park. (We often think of the park as our front yard!) They might be gathered on blankets and reading in the shade of a tree, or they might be taking a walk to observe the change of seasons for a science unit.





Our physical education program takes our students outdoors as they practice ways that they can have an active and healthy lifestyle. For example, all Lower School students from PreK to Grade 5 participate in biking and hiking to build core strength and increase cardiovascular fitness and flexibility. Other activities for the various grade levels might include ice skating, rollerblading, snow skiing, swimming, and more as they take advantage of all that there is to do at our school and at the facilities available in our community.

Unity Trips in the Lower School allow our students to develop independence and experience learning in unique environments. This year our Grade 4 students had an on-campus sleepover that included pitching tents and camping on the fields. Many of the students experienced exciting firsts. For some, it was the first time they had ever pitched a tent and slept outdoors, while for others, this was the first time they had spent a night away from home and their parents.

For the first time since the pandemic, this year, our Grade 5 students traveled to Lake Bohinj in Slovenia. Their three-day, two-night trip was based at a hostel on the shores of the gorgeous lake. The students participated in kayaking, hiking, biking, swimming, and even zip-lining! The goals for the trip were to bring to life the AISZ mission of developing successful international citizens and to connect students to their environment and the natural world. Students learned about themselves as learners, became more independent and confident, and created memories that they will share for the rest of their lives.

I want to express my gratitude for your continued support of our school and your partnership in your child's education. We are committed to providing students with the best possible learning experiences and are excited to see the positive impact that these initiatives will have on our community as we continue to develop skills and character for futures rich with promise.



Focus on Lower School Learning

Partnering with Parents

LOWER SCHOOL: YEAR IN REVIEW

At AISZ, we value the partnership we have with parents in the education of their children. We know that parental involvement in a child's education is essential for children to reach their potential in many ways, including academically. Research tells us that students with involved parents are more likely to achieve at higher levels, have better school attendance, and have more positive attitudes towards school in general. Parents who are involved at school promote a sense of community and true partnership between all parties involved - parents, teachers, and students.

During the pandemic, nurturing a strong sense of community at AISZ was challenging because of the restrictions that kept parents from coming onto campus. Parents often struggled to know what was happening at school and how their children were progressing. So this year, with the rollback of pandemic restrictions, we were able to open back up to the community. In the Lower School, we thoughtfully took advantage of this by creating opportunities such as workshops and celebrations of learning so that parents would be better informed and once again able to actively engage at school.

In the Lower School, parent events and workshops were scheduled each month of the school year on a variety of topics for both educational and celebratory purposes. The events included:



SEPTEMBER 8

Back to School Night

We kicked off the year with our annual Back to School Night that was held in person and on campus. Teachers provided parents with essential information to ensure the school year started smoothly.

OCTOBER 27

What Parents Should Know About the Science of Reading

At this workshop led by Sara Kirby, LS Literacy Specialist, parents explored how the brain learns to read and how they can support their children in the process.

DECEMBER 1-9

Bring Your Parents to School Days

Parents joined their children in classes from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on their scheduled day. Each class had one homeroom session at the start of the day where they experienced a morning meeting, and then they participated in two additional special classes. The goal was to provide parents with a taste of what learning is like for their children at AISZ.

FEBRUARY 16

A Date with Data: Understanding Lower School Benchmark Assessments

Parents did a deep dive into the types of assessments we use in the Lower School to track their children's growth and inform their future learning goals, which was led by Dawn Melarvie, Curriculum Coordinator, along with Sara Kirby, LS Literacy Specialist, and Tamara Black, LS Principal.

MAY 25

Building Your RAFT: How to support your family's transition from AISZ to a new school or country

To support families that might be moving on from AISZ at the end of this year, LS Counselor Lauren Bastion led this session to provide strategies for families adjusting to this upcoming change in their lives. The RAFT strategy emphasizes the steps of reconciliation, affirmation, farewell, and think of your destination.

OCTOBER 3-5

Making Music with Your Child

Parents took on the role of students and joined their children during music class with Ms. Cyndi Campbell where they sang, danced, and played instruments.

NOVEMBER 7-9

Active Parenting with Matthew Turner

During this three-day workshop, topics included parenting styles, communication strategies, problem solving, and effective discipline. Parents learned a proven approach to parenting, plus indispensable techniques and insights for overcoming obstacles to help bring happiness and harmony into the home.

JANUARY 26

Yardsticks: Exploring Your Child's Physical, Social-emotional, and Academic Development

This parent workshop, led by Lauren Bastion, LS Counselor with Tamara Black, LS Principal, supported parents in understanding where their children are developmentally by presenting research about child development and then applying the new knowledge to situations they are currently addressing in their families.

MARCH 23

Inspiring Your Child to Learn and Love Math

This hands-on workshop for parents brought the world of mathematics to life as they learned more about our approach to teaching and learning. Dawn Melarvie, Curriculum Coordinator, and LS teachers Adam Strelec (Grade 3), Cara Driggs (Grade 2), and David Voltz (Grade 5) led this interactive session.





Parents have the power to have a significant and positive impact on their child's education by becoming more involved at school. Whether attending conferences, encouraging their child to read at home, or even chaperoning a field trip, there are many ways to become involved, and we want to help parents do just that.

Based on the feedback we received from participants, we've begun planning next year's series of monthly sessions for Lower School parents. We'll share the schedule at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year. We look forward to continuing to provide support and guidance as we foster a sense of community and partnership between parents, teachers, and schools.



Letter from the US Principal

Marcus Aurelius, one of the greatest of the Roman emperors, is attributed with the quote, “the obstacle is the way.” He led his people through pandemics, wars, and crises, always looking for the opportunity in each.

The reason that I joined international education was that I wanted to contribute to supporting the next generation of leaders that wanted to make a difference and to turn obstacles into opportunity.

We have a lot to celebrate at AISZ for providing a platform for these future leaders. It is a complex enterprise designing an educational structure that satisfies the needs of 43 nationalities with varied expectations about what it means to be educated. This work is at the heart of our mission of experiencing the future, today.

Our Math Hub model, for example, has experienced extraordinary success by pivoting away from the traditional model of working in isolation with a fixed set of students, to taking a more team approach to the point where the team is calling this cohort of learners “our students” as opposed to “my students.” By designing a more centralized model and scheduling students simultaneously with a team of teachers, a wide variety of instructional practices, personalized learning, and support is possible. We are looking to scale this idea to other disciplines in the future.





Our IB Programme introduced Environmental Systems and Societies this year, an interdisciplinary course designed to enrich our understanding of various sciences with sustainability through a societal lens.

Our newly introduced Workshop course in Grades 9 and 10 is providing students with the tools needed to make informed decisions about their future high school choices and developing the 'soft skills' necessary to be successful in life.

Our athletics program is redesigning its approach to become more regionally based so that we have more opportunities for local competition and seasons that will allow our students to compete in multiple sports over the course of the year.

Our electives in woodworking, forensics, public speaking, sports science, media & communications, design tech, and Croatian culture have added to the richness of the AISZ experience. Our decision to increase support for the visual arts and music by having students in middle school scheduled in both disciplines has created a strong foundation for creative expression and performance.

Our academic program is adopting the Professional Learning Community model so that we can guarantee that every student will meet the objectives of our learning standards in every discipline.

Our Community Blocks and pastoral times have significantly improved student socio-emotional wellness and connections, especially post-pandemic.

Our EAL and Learning Support teams have demonstrated remarkable success in designing a model that enables all learners to access our curriculum and learning goals.

And at the root of everything we are able to accomplish, is a gifted set of teachers, truly dedicated to their students and bringing a wide range of experience and professionalism to our community.

Thank you for joining us on the AISZ journey.

Focus on Upper School Learning

Math Hub

Due to the transitional nature of international schools, as well as the consequences of virtual and hybrid learning, the AISZ math team noticed gaps in mathematical understanding. In response to this phenomenon, they re-envisioned math instruction to utilize collaboration and flexible grouping. With this in mind, the administration relocated the math classrooms to a central location with an open island in the center, which we call the Math Hub. With the goal of making math accessible to all students, the teachers also introduced a co-teaching model that provides both sufficient challenge and appropriate support for all levels of learners in each class.

THE MATH HUB MISSION

To create a math-focused environment that meets the diverse needs of every student at AISZ by providing classes with multiple math teachers and flexible grouping options that shift as we move through the curriculum.

THE MATH HUB VISION

All upper school math classes are collaboratively taught by multiple math teachers and learning support staff, utilizing a co-teaching model that allows for constant formative assessment and targeted diversified instruction. As an outcome, we hope to develop math confidence, independent learning, self-advocacy, and honest self-awareness of skills in all of our students at AISZ.

THE PRESENT REALITY

The four math teachers, Anthony Anamelechi, Brandon Driggs, Scott McLaughlin, and Megan Kite, are the first to let everyone know that this is a “work in progress.” In March, they presented the AISZ Math Hub at the 2022 CEESA Conference. To a “standing room only” crowd, they optimistically stated, “We are only in Phase I - this is definitely a work in progress!”





In the eyes of the students:

While this is still in the piloting phase, this is what the students are noticing:

- Alexandra explained how the math hub works for grades 9 and 10: “The teachers teach a quick introductory lesson in class, then students complete a few practice problems. The teachers get together and put groups together from the two classes based on how we answered the questions.” She continued, “We work with students of a similar level for a particular skill, and we help each other progress. We can also self-select a group if we think we could learn more from a different group.”
- Many students agree that they feel more comfortable in math this year. Flora explained, “Having four math teachers in one place who are available to help at all times makes learning more comfortable as each teacher offers different strategies for approaching problems.” One student after another stated that having different teachers teaching gives them so many different perspectives. It makes the learning environment more comfortable.
- Alexander smiled, “I am never bored! I am always “fighting” for good results. In my other school, I didn’t have that. When I was finished with the basic questions, they just gave me more problems. In the math hub, if we do not understand a topic fully, we can stay in the group receiving more support. But as soon as we feel confident, we can show the teacher we are ready for more challenging work, and then we will change groups to get the extension needed. The math hub is pretty interesting.

The teachers reflected on the strengths of the program so far:

- More responsive to students’ needs with flexible grouping and differentiated instruction
- Increased feedback to students on their progress
- Unified teaching philosophy and practices
- Incredible professional development - they learn from each other daily

THE FUTURE

As the math team moves forward, the future is filled with ambitions of a more robust student-centered, inquiry-driven program. Our upper school math team spent this school year revolutionizing the math culture at AISZ. As one Grade 10 student said, “Last year our math classes were spread throughout the school. All learning was done in isolation with one teacher and one class. The math hub is an improvement. We get to work with our friends and help each other.” This is definitely a step in the right direction.

World Languages - Application for the MSA World Languages Program of Distinction

Working on the accreditation document helped us realize what wonderful things have been done so far, as well as what still needs to be done. *“This accreditation is not an end, it is a beginning, it gives you an obligation to share your path and continue to strive for excellence,”* said one of our accreditors.



AISZ WORLD LANGUAGES PROGRAM MISSION
The mission of AISZ WL classes is to enable students to become competent global **communicators** and **intercultural** mediators who make **connections** with people and the content they are learning in different disciplines, who have interlinguistic competence and can **compare** their own language and culture to others, and who can build better local and global **communities**.



AISZ WORLD LANGUAGES PROGRAM VISION
Students develop Competencies, Character and Conceptual understanding of their Identity within the complex world around them.



In the course of this academic year, encouraged by our administration, the World Languages team submitted the application for the MSA* World Languages Program of Distinction. It was a lengthy process that started last June, with the information about the PoD accreditation process and the initial questionnaires sent to students, teachers and administrators. Throughout the first semester, the WL team worked on filling in the application, compiling, selecting, and organizing evidence that supports the ways in which our school meets each of the criteria.

In May, two accreditors visited the school, one in person and one virtually. The accreditors spent time visiting classrooms, reviewing curriculum documents, looking at examples of moderated assessments, and speaking to all stakeholders of the school (students, parents, teachers, and administrators). In their report to the MSA, the accreditors recommended the AISZ World Languages program to be awarded this prestigious accreditation.

Among many other things, the Visitors commended the school for the following:

- High level of student engagement and involvement in the learning process
- Use of different effective instructional and differentiation strategies to account for students' different language needs
- The successful articulation of a long sequenced program merging different international frameworks (AERO, CEFR and IB)
- Teachers working collaboratively to plan and moderate student work
- Multiple entry points and multiple opportunities inside and outside the language class to enhance the learning of languages
- Active involvement in international initiatives
- Commitment and dedication of the WL team

The visitor report is submitted to the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and it will be reviewed (and, we hope, accepted) at their meeting in November.

AISZ Administrators and the World Languages team, after hearing the report recommending the school to be awarded the World Languages Program of Distinction



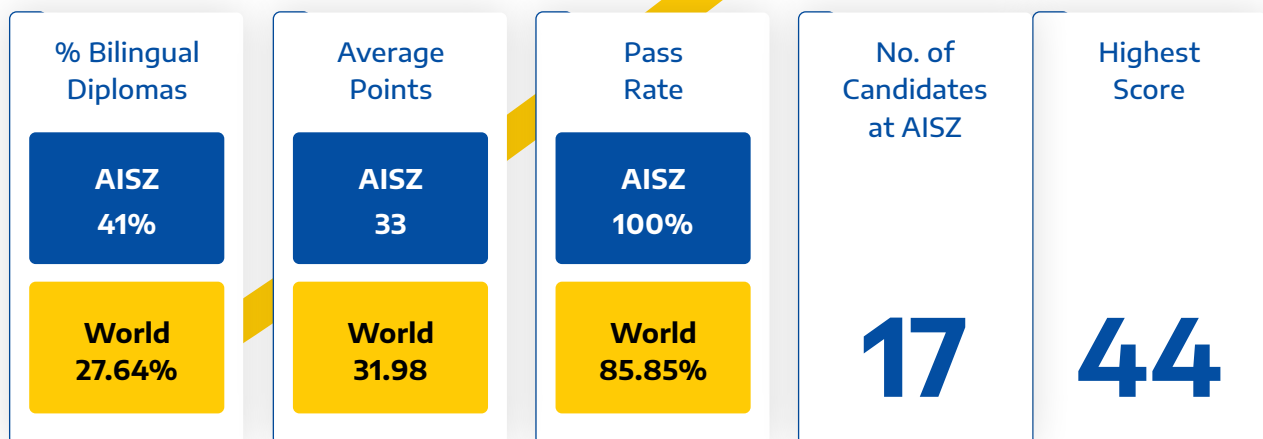
2022 Summary of IB Results

CURRICULUM

AISZ is a non-selective school, for both admissions and IB Diploma enrolment. AISZ offers AERO Standards based learning up to high school, and IB and college preparatory courses to international and internationally minded high school students living in Croatia. We offer Learning Support and English language support for identified students. In Grades 11 and 12, students may choose to take The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme or IB Certificates, both requiring the successful completion of external IB exams. Students who choose not to enroll in the IB programme, follow IB Standard Level course content, without the expectation of completing and sitting external assessments and exams. All graduates earn the AISZ American High School Diploma.

COMPARISON TO WORLD DATA USING THE JULY PUBLISHED RESULTS

(Taken from Diploma Statistical Bulletin, May 2022 Assessment Session)



RANGE OF IB SCORES

Score Range	24-29	30-34	35-39	40-45
Number of Students	4	8	3	2

RESULTS FROM THE LAST THREE YEARS, INCLUDING COMPARISON OF MAY 2022 JULY RESULTS

YEAR	Cohort size	% Diploma	% Bilingual Diploma	Average score	Highest score
2022	17	100	41	33	44
2021	15	93	47	32	39
2020	14	100	36	34	42

Class of 2023 AISZ Graduate Placement

Class of 2023 AISZ University Offers (Blue - Accepted Matriculations)

United States Of America

American University
University Of California San Diego
George Washington University
(American University Of Paris
-combine program-)
Arizona State University
Ole Miss University
Syracuse University
George Mason University
Lawrence University
University Of California Davis
University Of Miami

Croatia

Rochester Institute Zagreb
University Of Zagreb
University Of Rijeka

United Kingdom

City University London
Queen'S Mary University
Reading University
Durham University
St Andrews University
Brunel University
King'S College London

Spain

Esade University
Ie University
Escp University
St. Louis Madrid University

Germany

Frankfurt School Of Finance
And Management

The Netherlands

Tilburg University
Utrecht University
Maastricht University
University College Venlo
Hage University
Groningen University
Radboud University

Austria

Vienna University Medical School
Modul University
Webster University

Canada

Mcgill University
University Of British Columbia

Gap Year (2 students)



Expertise

Graduation Pathways

This year, we have launched a comprehensive review process to reimagine our four year high school diploma. This initiative has engaged students, parents and teachers to provide feedback on our current programs and aspirations for the future. The IB Diploma Programme (Grades 11 and 12) were not part of this study and shall continue to be a highly regarded offering of our high school academic program.

The work was guided by our AISZ Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan. A core team consisting of parents, students, school leaders and teachers has focused on several essential questions.



Diploma Review Guiding Question Examples:

- ◆ In what ways is our current diploma pathway supporting and/or inhibiting our ability to deliver on our mission and vision?
- ◆ What structures could be put into place that support student agency in the diploma pathway? These might include internships, personalized learning opportunities, travel, online learning, service.
- ◆ What are exemplar schools doing in this space (exemplars in innovation and exemplars in proven structure)?
- ◆ How do we define the “choice point” for students; when they choose IB diploma vs. the AISZ high school diploma and how do we prepare students and parents to make that choice?

A full report with defined recommendations for action will be available to the school community before the end of the year. The report will outline immediate action steps that could be implemented as early as next year as well as long-term implementation goals for the years to come. We are excited about the increased opportunities our students will have to “experience the future today” by participating in our revised AISZ Diploma program. Below is a sampling of some of the draft recommendations that are being considered.

Emerging themes of the review indicate a need for an increased variety of pathways to graduation, balancing foundational academics with flexibility and choice, interdisciplinary learning and professional connections to the local and international community.

The first research phase will end with recommendations with the development and implementation beginning in 2023-24.



*“The work of today
is the history of
tomorrow, and
we are its makers.”*

Juliette Gordon Low,
Founder of The
Girls Scouts (USA).

Professional Learning Communities

“The research has been clear and consistent for over 30 years, collaborative cultures in which teachers focus on improving their teaching practice, learn from each other... result in better learning for students.”

AISZ is excited to have relaunched our focus on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) this school year. This is a multi-year effort that encompasses every AISZ employee supporting the purpose of our school; student learning. The purpose of this work cannot be overstated. The research in education the last twenty years is compelling and overwhelmingly supportive of collaborative approaches to ensure learning. Every major education researcher in the last two decades supports this effort and we are proud to put that research into practice.

A PLC approach to learning encompasses three guiding principles and four guiding questions. The guiding principles include collective beliefs that guide us.

- **A focus on learning.** Agreement that we as a school exist for the purpose of student learning.
- **A focus on a collaborative culture, collectively responsible.** Agreement that we will get better results in student learning if we work together. We are collectively responsible for the learning of every student and we have systems in place so no student falls through the cracks.
- **A focus on learning.** Agreement that actual student learning data is the measure of our success, not intuition or hunches.

These principles are foundational as we do the hard work of ensuring each and every one of our students learns at high levels and meets their true potential.

The three guiding principles provide the philosophical underpinnings for our teachers working together in teams to answer these four guiding questions. The guiding questions systematically ensure that all of the key components of teaching and learning are addressed.

1. **What do we want students to know and be able to do?** *When PLC teams answer this question they systematically ensure that our curriculum is guaranteed and viable. Ensuring that what we want kids to learn is clear and attainable for every student.*
2. **How do we know when they have learned it?** *This question systematically ensures that assessment is aligned to our standards, that every student actually learns the most important standards, and allows teachers to compare data to learn from each other what teaching practices are working and which are not.*
3. **What do we do when students have not learned it?** *This question systematically ensures that teachers take action to intervene for students who have not learned the standards. It requires teachers to work together to reteach standards to students and fill the learning gaps.*
4. **What do we do when students already know it?** *This question systematically ensures that our highest performing students are identified and provided with more advanced and engaging learning opportunities in the classroom.*

The four driving questions in a PLC bring together, in a coherent way, the practice of teaching. Specific emphasis is given to assessment as this is the key to ensuring learning of the required standards, guides intervention and furthers professional learning. The important work on assessment that started last year is continuing under the umbrella of PLCs.

The key to success for acting on assessment data is teacher collaboration time. AISZ has taken considerable effort to provide this time to teachers both this year and in the coming years.

“The research base in support of collaboration is extensive both inside and outside of education. The collaborative team has been called the fundamental building block of a learning organization and the link between a collaborative culture and improving schools is well established.”

Richard Dufour - Education Leader and Researcher



Key Elements of PLC in the Lower and Upper School

- Addition of teacher collaboration time next year, including the use of early release days throughout the school year.
- Addition of an intervention block at the upper school to give time for teachers to conduct direct intervention based on assessment data.
- School alignment towards a goal of increasing student learning as measured by MAP Growth each of the next three years.
- Creation of a three year professional development plan to ensure we remain focused on student learning goals.
- Every teacher is placed in a PLC team focusing on learning. For example:
 - Science: Improving lab practices in all grade levels, these are essential for IB success and college readiness
 - Learning support: Tracking of student learning and identifying learning gaps requiring more significant intervention
 - Grades 3-5 Reading Comprehension Skills: Identifying where wholistic reading skills and grade-level standards align and where there are gaps
 - Grades K-2 Foundational Reading Skills:: Aligning instruction and assessment with research-based practices for phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency.

We are excited about the use of PLCs to systematically ensure we improve student learning for all students. To this end, AISZ has set a goal of achieving model PLC School status by the end of the 2025-2026 school year. This requires us to show documented improvement in student learning each of the next three years. Though this work will be challenging, we are excited about the focus on learning PLCs, and this collective goal is inspiring us towards.



Learning Support

“Inclusion and equality are positive behaviors that should drive our children to respect others and build. We should all have the same possibilities to develop our knowledge to become a stronger and better person. No matter the gender, the color of our skin, the physical disabilities or other characteristics, everybody deserves a wonderful life.”

AISZ Parent

This year, the Student Support Team thoroughly analyzed the schoolwide Learning Support Program to identify its strengths and areas of development. The review was conducted over the course of the year and involved students, parents, teachers, as well as the broader CEESA community. It is worth noting that this evaluation did not encompass the school’s English as an Additional Language or Counseling programs, as these will be examined through their own lens in the near future.

Learning Support Review Guiding Question Examples

- ◆ How does our learning support program reflect “experiencing the future today” and “developing skills and character for futures rich with promise?”
- ◆ Do we have structures in place that help us help all students?
- ◆ Does our current model of learning support reflect current research at each level of the school?
- ◆ How do we create an inclusive community within our school?

A full report and recommendations will be made available by the end of the school year and form the basis of an implementation plan for the coming school year.

One of our recommendations is to formally transition from using the nomenclature of Response to Intervention (RTI) to a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). RTI is an approach that provides early, systematic, and targeted support to students who are struggling academically. It involves using evidence-based practices to identify students who need additional support, providing them with targeted interventions, monitoring their progress, and making data-driven decisions about their continued need for support.

MTSS, on the other hand, is a broader framework that encompasses RTI and provides a comprehensive, multi-tiered system of support to meet the diverse needs of all students. MTSS involves using evidence-based practices at multiple levels, including academic, behavioral, and social-emotional domains, to ensure that all students have access to the support they need to be successful. MTSS emphasizes the use of data to inform decision-making and to continuously improve the effectiveness of the support provided to students.

We look forward to the results of the final report and the implementation of its findings in the coming school year.





Building Community

Building it Together: Rebuilding the AISZ Parent-Teacher Association

Riding on the heels of the wildly successful AISZ Welcome Back BBQ, we set out on a quest to rebuild our Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Everyone in the AISZ community has been thirsty for connection. The Goal: To build community involvement in a positive, uplifting, and inclusive way.

Mr. Buckley set the focus for the work. The PTA works in collaboration with AISZ to promote current initiatives. The three pillars of rebuilding the PTA are:

1. Support for Students
2. Support for Teachers
3. Support for Parents

With these pillars to guide us, 30 parents participated in our fact-finding Build It Together Workshops to spark inspiration and determine how best to rebuild our AISZ community. Our ultimate goal was to choose three or four schoolwide events we had the time, drive, and capacity to accomplish in the second semester. The challenge was to keep the events small enough to be manageable, sustainable, and enjoyable to put together and attend.

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents.”

Jane D. Hull,
former Governor of Arizona.

An executive team was also created (volunteer position) to guide and communicate each team’s progress. This executive team will be in place for one year with the purpose of being the organization/administrative hub of the PTA. Each team member is a member of one of the different committees. Our Executive Team members are Sophie Laureys, Anna Netzer, Martina Lukic, Dineke de Ruijter, Katia Keshishian, and Ronelle Drummond-Hay.

Each team has been working diligently to create fun and memorable events. Mostly, these workshops, committees, and events enable parents to plug into the AISZ community and be continually involved in their child’s education. Education truly is a partnership between parents and educators. A child’s success is dependent upon that collaborative success. We look forward to watching our participants grow!

Together we created four task force groups and volunteers signed up to make these activities come to life:

1. Parent Teacher Cocktails Team
2. Teacher Appreciation Day Team
3. New Family Transition Team
4. Celebration of Nations Team





Athletics & Extra Curricular Activities



After a hibernation period caused by COVID, this past year has been full of exciting events in the world of extracurricular activities. Our students were able to travel, make new friends, get to know new cultures, and present their skills and knowledge in various activities.

Our cross-country runners represented us in Krakow, MS mathematicians traveled to Skopje, and the MS Boys' basketball team attended a big tournament in Belgrade. MS Volleyball players represented us in Tirana, and HS volleyball players played in Skopje.

We hosted the CEESA HS Knowledge Bowl and the CEESA HS Girls tennis tournament.





Numerous friendly matches were played with local schools and clubs in sports such as futsal, volleyball, and basketball, and have had internal tennis tournaments for MS & HS students. We also performed at the Zagreb city championship in cross-country, volleyball, futsal and swimming.

We are especially proud of the basketball program formation in MS. In order to develop this program, and for the first time in history, we outsourced a basketball coach who, from the first moment, has proven to be a perfect fit for our Athletics program. The program that started with the MS Boys team soon became popular among the girls as well, so by the end of the school year, we also had an MS Girls basketball game.





This year, we launched an initiative to establish the Balkan League, which should further enrich the sports experiences of our high school students.

As for extracurricular activities (ASA Program), in addition to the usual activities, we have enriched the selection with activities such as American Football, Drama & Creative Movement, Croatian Language and Knitting Circle in Lower School, and Business Competition Club, Cooking Course, Medical Explorers and Rock Band in Upper School.

Overall, during the year 2022-2023, AISZ offered 37 After-School Activities per semester where approximately 250 students demonstrated their interest.





- P** Practice Respect
- A** Act Responsibly
- W** Work Diligently
- S** Stay Safe

BEARS
ZAGREE

CEESA Rock Band Festival

On March 2-4, 2023, AISZ hosted the inaugural *International Schools' Rock Band Festival*. This festival was a collaboration between AISZ and the Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA). It brought together high school rock bands from across the region to perform in Zagreb.

It was Director Paul Buckley who had this pioneering idea about bringing internationally-minded students together from all over Central and Eastern Europe to unite and rock out.

Director Buckley said, "We have come together to celebrate rock music and the soundtracks of our lives. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame describes rock music as being '*born from the collision of rhythm & blues, country, and gospel; rock & roll is a spirit that is inclusive and ever-changing*'. *This weekend we celebrate the sound of youth culture and honor the artists whose music connects us all.*"

This festival encouraged collaboration between students and teachers from different countries, backgrounds, and experiences. By working together, they created something truly special - something that will stay with them for years to come. The festival also provided an opportunity for teachers to mentor their students in the art of creating music, which can be an invaluable experience for any musician.

Thanks to Yamaha Music School and Audio Pro Artist, students have had access to the instruments and equipment needed to create an amazing performance.

After two days of workshops and masterclasses with well-recognized Croatian professional artists, the final performance took place on the stage at AISZ. This exciting event was live-streamed on AISZ Facebook page so everyone could jam and enjoy some great music with friends and family wherever they were.

With this festival, AISZ and CEESA Schools were hoping to create a vibrant atmosphere of music, art, culture, and friendship in Zagreb - to be immersed in the music, to be the best versions of ourselves and to make magic that will last a lifetime.



Outdoor Education

The Mission of AISZ is to *Develop Skills and Character for Futures Rich with Promise*. AISZ-Outdoor Education is one of many methods by which the school delivers our mission. One of our Strategic Goals this year was to review our Outdoor Education and Unity Trip offerings across the whole school. In the past, we have offered valuable learning experiences in the natural world, but these have perhaps been more discrete and disconnected than we would want and we were not offering a robust continuous pathway to outdoor education and environmental stewardship as we would have wanted.

As a result, we have adopted a new set of educational standards based on the learning standards of Outdoor Education Australia. We have also built the initial phases of a coherent and connected outdoor learning curriculum based on these standards:

- ◆ Exploration
- ◆ Outdoor Living Knowledge and Skills
- ◆ Group Dynamics Skills and Leadership
- ◆ Outdoor Activity Knowledge and Skills
- ◆ Safety and Wellbeing Outdoors
- ◆ Environmental Awareness
- ◆ Environmental management, conservation, and culture
- ◆ Ecological Literacy Key Themes
- ◆ Health and the Outdoors



We are also proud to run the parallel Duke of Edinburgh, International Award, for our older students.

AISZ Outdoor Education is a developmentally appropriate, cohesive Pre K - 12 program that provides students with the opportunity to explore and develop a range of essential skills and knowledge, vital in helping shape strong, self-assured, and happy young adults.

Each experience places the educational outcomes at the center of the program and allows a clear pathway of individual and social development unique to each student. By focusing on outcomes before activity, our programs ensure that each student is on a pathway of development regardless of their starting point.

Outdoor education provides opportunities for students to develop positive relationships with the environment, and enhance their personal and social competencies. By engaging students in practical active learning experiences, students interact with the natural world beyond the classroom and social media inputs.

Each multiple-day outdoor experience is facilitated by a professionally accredited outdoor education provider working in close collaboration with the school to ensure the highest levels of safety, professional knowledge and experience.





OUTDOOR EDUCATION – EXTENDED OUTDOOR EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

Lower School

Exploring the Outdoors

- ◆ PreK to G5 - Exploring the outdoors in our community throughout the year
 - ◆ Excursions to Bundek Park for biking, rollerblading, hiking
 - ◆ Field trips to area locales such as Eco house Bubamara and Medvednica
- ◆ G4 Introduction to Overnight Camping on Campus – (AISZ premises) - End of May/ Beginning of June
 - ◆ Introduction to camping activities
 - ◆ Sleeping in a tent for a night
 - ◆ 2 days and 1 night experience
- ◆ G5 Introduction to Overnight Trips – (Bohinj) - May 3-5
 - ◆ Experience of mountain tourism
 - ◆ Different short outdoor activities
 - ◆ Sleeping in a base camp hostel
 - ◆ 3 days and 2 nights trip



Middle School

Facing the Challenge - Land-Based

- ◆ G6 The Great Outdoors; An introduction to Backpacking – (Zumberak) - September 12-15
 - ◆ Preparatory journey type activities – land-based
 - ◆ Longer outdoor activities, hiking, biking, rafting
 - ◆ Sleeping in hostels, cabins
 - ◆ 4 day trip
- ◆ G7 Green Cycle Camping Journey - (Lika) - September 12-15
 - ◆ Preparatory journey type activities – land-based
 - ◆ Day trips hiking, orienteering, climbing, cooking
 - ◆ Sleeping in tents, base camp
 - ◆ 4 day trip
- ◆ G8 The Hero's Journey 1 - By Land – (Velebit) - September 12-15
 - ◆ Hiking journey type activity
 - ◆ Advanced hiking, caving, climbing, orienteering, cooking
 - ◆ Sleeping in the self-made shelters
 - ◆ 4 day trip with camping on the multiple locations on the way

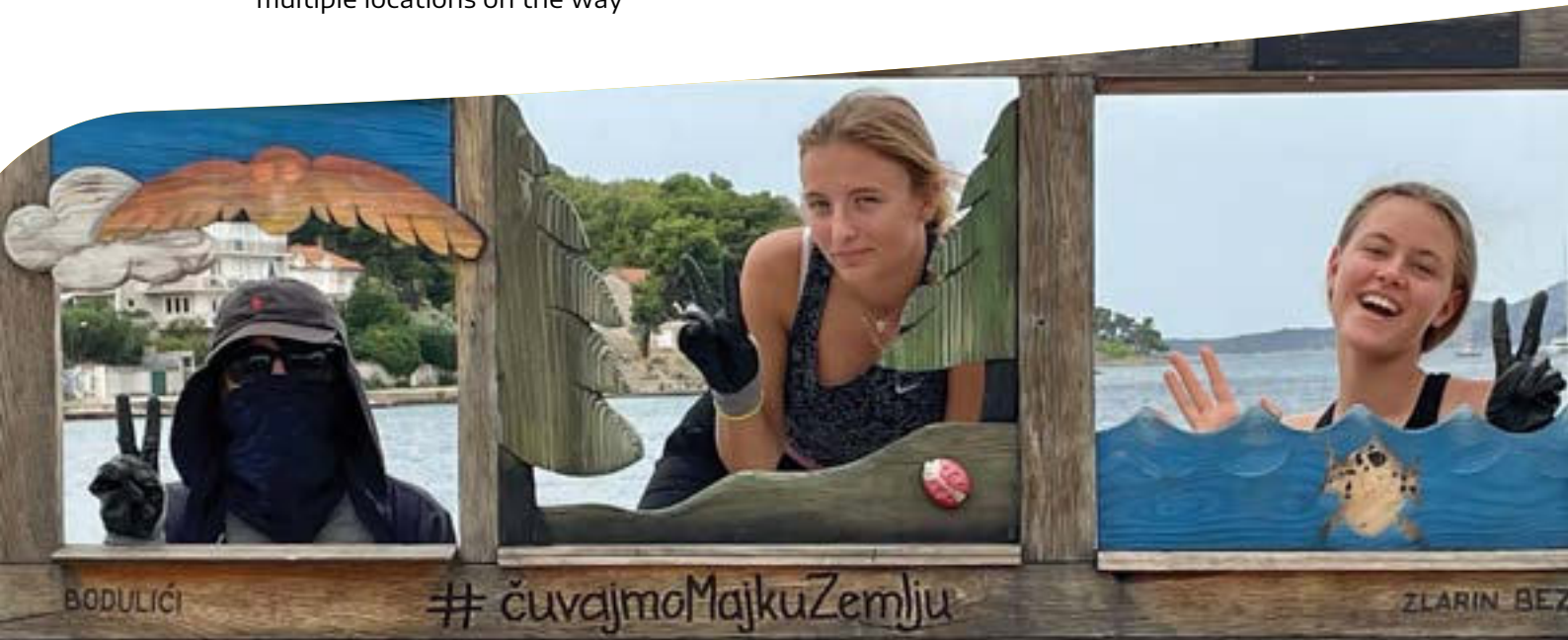




High School - Sea-Based

- ◆ G9 The Hero's Journey 2 - The Boundless Sea - (Rab) - September 12-15
 - ◆ Preparatory journey type activities - sea-based
 - ◆ Short sea based outdoor activities, coastal hiking, introduction to sea kayaking
 - ◆ Camping in tents, base camp
 - ◆ 4 day trip
- ◆ G10 The Island Journey - (Zlarin) - September 12-15
 - ◆ Kayak journey
 - ◆ Advanced sea kayaking - islands hopping, service project, cooking
 - ◆ 4 day trip with tent camping on the multiple locations on the way
- ◆ G11 Capstone Experience: Iconic Croatia - Introduction to Sailing - (Kornati)
 - ◆ 2 groups: Sep 9-12 & Sep 12-15
 - ◆ Intro to crew skills, team building, cooking, the adventurous journey
 - ◆ Sleeping on a sailing boat, traveling Adriatic
 - ◆ 3 ½ day trip with multiple ports
- ◆ G12 Preparing to Leave School - Meeting Personal Challenge, Forming Lifelong Bonds and Team Building

High School - The Final Year





Duke of Edinburgh's Award: What, Why & How?

There are currently about one million young people in 134 countries doing the international version of this award, called the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award.

Founded by the late Prince Philip, the DofE was one of the Duke's most remarkable achievements, and it has become woven into the fabric of the UK. "It's what I like to describe as a do-it-yourself growing-up kit," he once said.

This extra-curricular activity for teenagers and young adults involves plenty of effort, time (and sweat) at a time when students are studying hard for their grades – so why do it?

Yes, it's an adventure. (And yes, it's a chance to escape the parents for a weekend!) But, more importantly, it builds the skills to equip students for life and work.

WHAT IS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD?

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is an activity program for 14 to 24-year-olds. There are three progressive levels which, when successfully completed, lead to an internationally recognized Bronze, Silver or Gold DofE Intaward. Each award involves helping the community/environment, improving fitness, developing new skills, and planning, training for, and completing an expedition.





The Award is much more of a gradual climb than a race to the top. *The four main sections of the Award – Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition, focus on many different opportunities for personal development.* And with each stage lasting from six months up to more than one year, it's a long-term commitment.

For the voluntary service section, you must do something useful without getting paid – and that could be helping children to read in libraries, leading a voluntary scout group, litter picking, or working at an animal rescue center. Get ready to raise the heartbeat and break out a sweat for the physical activity, where *you can choose any sport, dance or fitness activity, from archery to windsurfing, from caving to ballroom dancing.*

The skills section is an opportunity to learn a new skill in the arts, gardening, fishing, first aid, and programming – the list continues and is as varied as it is long. And finally, for the expedition section, *you will need to plan, train for, and complete an unaccompanied expedition lasting from two to four days, which can be completed by foot, cycle, kayak, or horseback.*

No one forgets their DofE International – the connection they made while volunteering, campfire meals, or the exhilaration of communicating in a new language. Yet most important are the changes that happen inside you: recognizing how the skills, resilience, and self-belief you've built through your DofE International made you "World ready."

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD?

AISZ is a newly licensed Independent Centre licensed by DofE International to run the program. The school will run weekly training sessions during after-school hours, where students can plan for their future adventure trips, learn skills, and update their online DofE record book.

If you're interested in DofE International, you should browse web page <https://intaward.org/> or contact Ms. Rowe (tina.rowe@aisz.hr), Ms. Šabarić (tarin.sabaric@aisz.hr), or Mr. Šprljan (damir.sprljan@aisz.hr).

WHY SHOULD I DO THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD?

Universities and employers are looking for a strong combination of leadership and team working skills, long-term planning, and investment – and the Award allows students to demonstrate this in one go.

According to the DofE website, 62% of participants felt that the Award helped them make a difference in their community, and 82% felt that the award made them want to continue volunteering activities.

And did we mention that it's lots of fun, too?



Outdoor Education in 2022-23

E-Bike Smile is a term that is used to describe the unique sensation of riding an electric bicycle. There is nothing quite like it and our students in grades 7-10 had an opportunity to experience that sensation. Two passionate mountain bike downhill racers from Husqvarna demonstrated some tricks and jumps and then assisted the students as they tried out the different style e-bikes.

Apart from practicing many skills that could help students in countless outdoor activities, a few of our students were assigned a big project that took an entire semester to complete. Initially, the idea of creating a weather station for the school that was brought to them by their teacher and mentor, Mr. Šprljan, seemed way too complex for them until they researched it and were provided with examples from their other mentor, Mr. Kovač. For three months, the students worked on many aspects of the task every week. The whole process began with a few meetings with

both their mentors arranging what they would do and in what order they would do it. After that, they began to solder the electronic parts needed for the mechanics of the weather station. Completing that, they were able to review the code that controls the inner workings of the station; such as the sensors and solar panels. All that was left to do was to complete the external wooden structure in which the clockwork of the station is going to stay in. The weather station is situated in the central terrarium/garden of the school, the one that the school cafeteria looks out to so that the panels can get an optimal amount of sunlight without being damaged by other factors. At the end of the project, the students formed a website for the school that will include all the details about the weather station and the process behind it, along with pictures they took along the way. And, of course, they provided detailed readings of the weather station, including temperature, humidity, and pressure of the outside climate. They admitted to thoroughly enjoying the entirety of this task and are very excited to provide the community with a functional addition to the website.





From Grade 4 to Grade 12, all have a February day set aside to participate in a Ski Day with their grade level. Learning to ski can provide numerous physical, mental, and social benefits that can enhance your overall quality of life. Lower School skiing activities took place on Mt. Sljeme, just north of Zagreb, while the Upper School went to Pohorje, Slovenia.



The Maritime Heritage presentation workshop is aimed at outdoor education students as a demonstration of “out of school” learnable skills, which can be professional or hobby, and can enrich their life and career. Students came into contact with the volunteers passionate about the preservation of traditional Croatian shipbuilding methods and the preservation of Croatia’s maritime culture. Thus they connected learning of new skills (caulking and wooden boat construction), learning about volunteering options, and preparing themselves better for Unity Trips, which will guide them to the Adriatic Sea.





Kalnik field trip is a final “big” activity for the Outdoor Education students in which they are spending a day on an organized field trip in nature. Students were informed about all of the necessary steps of organizing a trip, and on the trip itself, they had the opportunity to practice some of the skills they were learning during OE classes, such as packing and hiking, climbing, knots, navigation, and orientation as well as enjoy the sweetness of self-made smores on the end of the physical active day.

In a joint venture with the Zagreb Association of Technical Activities on Water (ZATDV), students were able to try several forms of water activities, including stand-up paddling, windsurfing, kayaking, land-sailing and land-kiting, and the basics of sailing with Optimists and Lasers.



Alumni

Alumnae Interview with Hilary A. Swetz - Class of 2005

Can you please tell me what your full name is?

Sure, it's Hilary with one "L," and then my middle name is Alzbeta, and then my last name is Swetz. Alzbeta - it means Elizabeth in Slovak.

When did you first come to AISZ? Do you remember the year?

We came in 2001, that was our first year here. They offered my dad the director position, but because I had just graduated the 8th grade from Gambiya, West Africa, my dad said "I really want the job and to be the director/headmaster, but I am only going to do it if they can start a highschool because my daughter needs a 9th grade." They agreed so we started the 9th grade. At first, it was only Pre-K to 8th grade, I believe. They said okay and opened it up as a high school and every year we just kept growing and growing. I mean, it was small when I was there, but as I see now from the wall of fame it has really grown.

During your 4 years here at AISZ, what was the biggest takeaway or memory you have that you associate with the school?

I think the biggest thing I took away was that even though I had a very little group of friends, I really took the memory of friendship, community, and family away with me, and I had not been back to Croatia in a while. When I graduated, I would go and see my parents in the summer, but once they moved in 2007 and came to Turkey, I never went back to Croatia. Two years ago was the very first time I actually went back since 2006/07. It was absolutely how I remembered it. I did not go to the school or anything, this year was the first time I went and I came back to the school. At first, I was like "Yeah, I forgot about this." When



I saw my friends from high school two years ago, it was as if we only parted yesterday. It always stays there and that is how you know who your true friends are. If you can go back with them and it feels as if you were there yesterday, even though it was years before, then this is it. This is what makes it. Because of my friends there, they absolutely made those memories. Even just Zagreb alone as a city. Yes, I have had experiences everywhere growing up, but every time I come to Zagreb it is home for me. It is so welcoming and small, and I probably had some of the best years of my life there.

Is there a specific skill that you developed during your time in the school that you can attribute back to the school?

I honestly believe there was. When we took CAS, I was like "I hate this, I hate CAS with a passion and I do not understand why I have to do it." And this is sort of the mindset of a teenager, you're thinking how you don't want to do this service, but after the earthquake struck here (in Turkey) and did more than damage, my father said, "Why don't you do a CAS project with AISZ and let me try to arrange it?" He wrote an email to me proposing this idea, and the minute he proposed this I thought I absolutely want to do that. It was like I spent all my highschool years hating CAS to now really appreciate and understand it and see the good that it actually does. You know, in highschool I thought, "I am never doing anything

with CAS again,” but now being able to do something and see the effects of it is something I love. I love that we have collaborated with AISZ. It involves my high school and where I work now. It is perfect and I love it. I feel as though AISZ, even though I did not feel like it at the time, gave me the appreciation for CAS and made me think, “No, this is a really good thing you did, and it is good you had this advantage and opportunity to do this.” We did Habitat for Humanity when we were there. We went out to build a house in Hungary. And TOK, when I took TOK, I walked away loving it, and I love TOK to this day. Due to my teacher at AISZ, I love TOK with a passion. I can’t go and watch any other TOK lessons, I do not want it to damage my image of what I had from my teacher.

[Are you currently doing what you thought you would be doing as you were graduating from AISZ?](#)

I helped in first grade at AISZ because there was a student there who had a physical disability. He had heart surgery when he was a baby, so he spoke differently and I met him at a summer camp. That night after I met him I went home and cried. My dad realized that I was very fond of this one child, really wanting to help him and had befriended him. He (Dad) said that every time you have free time you can go down to the first grade and help out as long as the first grade teacher says it is okay. I went down there and I used to be there only for him, and then I realized that I was there for all of the children. I then thought when I go to school, I really want to go into an Early Childhood Education program. I went to Mitchell College in New London, Connecticut, and they made me dislike the program. I was not able to be hands-on with the kids and I was not able to hold them. I was told to observe and I did not want to observe. I did not feel as though observing and watching were ways for me to learn. Going out into the world and doing it is the way that you learn everything. I can watch a movie, if you wanted me to, about what to do if a child falls. I would rather watch a movie than sit there in real life and not help them. I quit that major. Hospitality and Tourism came along and I decided okay, let me go

into Hospitality and Tourism because this seems much better for me. I went into that, and I could either go towards event planning or hotels and I decided to go towards hotels. When I graduated, I got a job immediately that my professor had set up. After being there for some time, and after having them put me in housekeeping, I did not want to do this anymore, this is not for me and not what I want, I want to go back to teaching kids. I started looking online for different jobs in daycare that were in the area that I was living in. I started working in daycares and I was in daycares from 2011 until 2016, and then from 2016 to 2017, before I moved to Turkey, I was in a Montessori School. I absolutely loved it, but I am qualified with ages 6 weeks to 7 year olds because when I moved to Turkey I was placed in first grade, and now I am in the kindergarten. I never thought I would be working with kids again, I thought Hospitality and Tourism was absolutely my calling, but I realized that is not true. I did not know what I wanted to do with my life until I was 30 years old. Only 7 years ago was when I figured out that I wanted to work with kids.

[What advice would you give to our current Grade 11 and 12 students, or the future generations as they go into the final years of their high school experience?](#)

Oy vey! I would honestly tell them not to stress and worry because it is not until later that you know what you want to do in your life. I had no idea I wanted to work with kids until I was 30. After working with them, I got my major in Advanced Learning. I then got my CELTA, which is a certificate you can get from Cambridge University to teach adults English. I really would not worry and stress about what you want to do with your life right now because everything will fall in place and even at times when you feel as though life is stressing you out, you don’t know what you want in life, you are thinking is this what I want, is this not what I want, it will be okay. Life has a funny way of working out, it really does, and I never understood that expression until I got older, then I thought it really does have a weird way of working out and being able to do everything.

Arriving Faculty

We welcome our new Faculty, arriving in August 2023..



Cassandra Nutini

Lower School Learning Support



Vanja Jarni

Lower School Principals' Assistant



Joelle Schwartz

Lower School English as an Additional Language



Ana Željeznjak

Upper School Principals' Assistant



Angela Talarn Zaragoza

Upper School Mathematics



Iva Vego

HR Manager
Maternity Leave Coverage



Jodie Ringrose

Upper School Performing Arts Teacher



Petra Crnčki

Middle School Student Support Services



Derek Davies

Athletics and Activities Director



Kaitlyn Bradly

Lower School Homeroom Teacher (Grade 2)



Richard Day

Upper School Mathematics



Katarina Gubo

French Teacher

AISZ social media



#aiszagreb



@aiszagreb



AISZ ZAGREB



@AISZagreb

Leaving Faculty

The end of the year always brings mixed feelings. In June, we say goodbye to some of our faculty and staff. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavors and look forward to seeing them either online or in person at one of our alumni functions. Our entire AISZ Community says thank you for your contributions.

Once a Bear, always a Bear.



2 years

Laurie Lavins

Lower School
Learning Support



2 years

Julia Davis

Grade 5 Teacher



5 years

Elizabeth Jackson

Lower School English as an
Additional Language



6 months

Kevin Callahan

US Counselor



2 years

Anthony Anamelechi

Upper School Mathematics



1 year

Kaylee MacKenzie

IB Psychology/
MS Humanities



11 years

Jelena Horvat

Pre Kindergarten Teacher



25 years

Bernadette Kenderić

French Teacher



2 years

Anita Torbarina

Principals' Assistant



7 years

Ines Šitum

US Educational Assistant
for EAL



Bernadette Kenderić

Thank You for 25 Years of Outstanding Service

Our dear Bernadette is retiring after 25 years of outstanding service to AISZ. During her exemplary career, she has taken on many roles, and each and every one of them with the same passion and dedication: from Grade 2 classroom teacher, music teacher, Croatian culture teacher, and finally to French teacher in all sections of the school.

A teacher by vocation, we are lucky to have had our colleague Bernadette as part of the World Languages team at AISZ. Multilingual, multitalented, multi-skilled, and with a multitude of interests, Bernadette has been an inspiration and driving force for us all.

"And I have done it all," she says, from Grade 1 to Grade 12. Huge high schools, small high schools,

Teacher's Faculty in Zagreb, giving workshops, sponsoring many clubs, including the school newspaper, graduation, a trip to France, and many more. She continues by saying, that while teaching over the years has gone through one fire, two floods, countless blizzards and school shutdowns, one war, COVID, and one earthquake ---- the tornado happened during the summer when school was out, so the tornado doesn't count!

We will miss Bernadette so much. Mr. Buckley says his morning will not be the same, as Madame Kenderić is always the first person who greets him as he enters the building - and all of us share the same experience.

Au Revoir et Merci Beaucoup!



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