

Experiencing
the future, today.



American
International
School of Zagreb

Annual report 2019-2020

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

With a fifty-four-year 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 a 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.

Strategic Plan

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 students' growth through personal, self-directed, authentic learning.
4. Become a place that provides opportunities for emotional, physical and psychological balance.

STUDENT IMPACT GOALS

1. Every student becomes an expert in his or her learning.
2. Every student is known, advocated for and supported.
3. Every student personalizes learning and pursues dreams.

SYMBOLISM OF DESIGN

The values and essence of AISZ are intentionally incorporated into our image.



Key facts

54

Years in Existence
opened in 1966

23958 m²
Campus area

8

Central & Eastern
European Schools
Association events



STUDENTS

292

Students
Whole year

279

Students
End of the year

179

Families

17

Class of 2020

19

Class of 2019
College Acceptance

19

Croatian Young Leaders
Scholarship

125

Elementary School

154

Upper School

EMPLOYEES

66

Total Employees

48

Teachers

39

Teachers
with MEd degrees

1

Teacher
with Doctoral degree

39

Teachers
with 10+ years experience

5.8:1

Student Teacher Ratio

30

Bilingual/Multiple
Languages spoken

109

Laptops

14

PCs
In the computer lab

29

Android tablets

95

Apple iPads





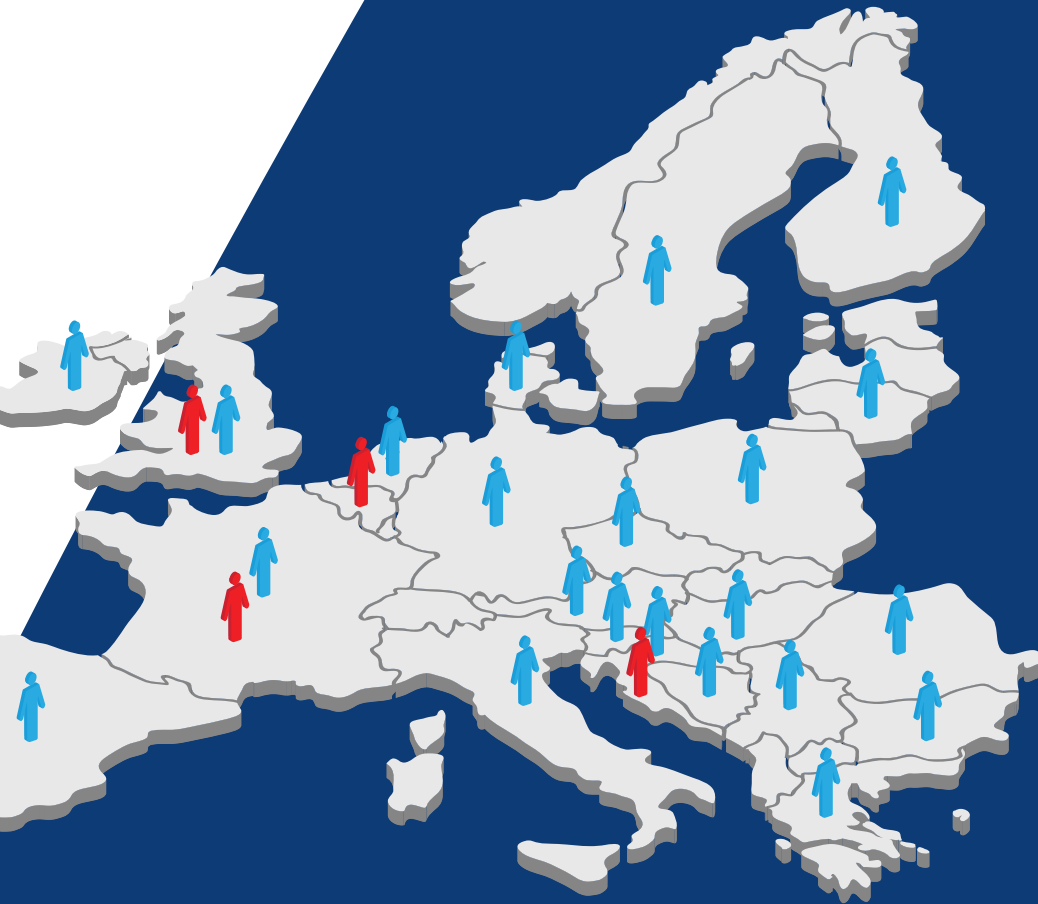
EMPLOYEES

- American
- Australian
- British
- Belgian
- Canadian
- Croatian
- French



STUDENTS

- American
- Australian
- Austrian
- Bosnian
- Brazilian
- British
- Bulgarian
- Canadian
- Chinese
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Indian
- Indonesia
- Irish
- Israeli
- Italian
- Ivory Coast
- Japanese
- Kazach
- Korean
- Lithuanian
- Malaysian
- Mexican
- Moldovian
- Polish
- Qatar
- Romanian
- Russian
- Serbian
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Ukraine



Letter from the Board of Trustees

Dear Parents and Community,

Thank you for the support and resilience of our teachers, parents, and children during this unprecedented year. Despite the unexpected challenge of the pandemic and the earthquake, AISZ made important strides this year. As a Board, we remained focused on our three strategic goals. Now that AISZ is in a new state of the art school building, we continue our focus on academic excellence and ensuring AISZ's students are prepared for success beyond the classroom.

Our first goal was, and is, to provide an academic experience on par with the top international schools in Central Europe. Our Finance and Facilities Committee focused on maintaining the school's financial health and producing sound financial planning. To ensure that AISZ continues to raise the bar, we supported AISZ's effort to recruit and retain the best faculty. As a school, we revised, adopted and improved several curriculum areas and commenced our Accreditation Self-Study.

Our second goal was to provide students with enhanced opportunities to experience a range of learning situations outside the classroom. By expanding service learning and extracurricular activities, our students will build the skills and resilience for future success. We increased our participation rate in afterschool activities by 10% as well as the overall number of activities available for students to enjoy. Please see the section on activities and athletics which celebrates this achievement.





Our third goal was to strengthen AISZ's operational efficiency. We not only focused on the accreditation process, but both the administration and the board worked to improve efficiency and strengthen continuity of operations despite transitions in staff and board members. As a board, we strengthened our institutional knowledge and attended governance training in Vienna to develop our own capacity. This year we also launched

a Communications Task Force that included parents, administration, and board representatives. The Task Force presented recommendations for improving community communications, including a new format and weekly editions of the Bear Print, use of the Parent Portal on the AISZ website as the main information gateway for parents, and the development of an AISZ School Application we plan to roll out next year.

Our parents asked AISZ to reduce last minute planning before events and the administration and faculty have made a concerted effort to do so. In addition, this first-ever Annual Report represents an important achievement in AISZ's communication strategy. The publication of this very first Annual Report was also a highlight of our year. While we are proud of our success this year, we look forward to continuing this progress in the year ahead.



Letter from the Director

Despite the challenges of both the COVID-19 situation and the Zagreb earthquake impacting Croatia this March, AISZ had a strong and positive year.

As a part of our continuous cycle of improvement, we commenced our self-study for the Middle States Association of School and College Accreditation. Through this important initiative, we sought input from our community and examined our strengths and the areas for growth in our school. Over the past three years, much work has been focused on addressing the turnover of school leadership and the resulting impact of such frequent transitions. We had also focused on designing, planning, building and moving into our new Bundek Campus. That work has been significant and important,

but this year was spent doing critical examinations of our curriculum, teaching methodology and professional practice. In short, it was about operationalizing our strategic plan. The accreditation process is extremely helpful in identifying the driving influences of the next few years at AISZ.

Our students will develop their academic competencies through the benchmarks of mathematics and literacy. Through this focused improvement in these two areas, we will build critical thinking and problem solving, mental agility and adaptability, enhance written and oral communication

across all subject areas, engage curiosity and imagination, and access and analyze information. These are all critical skills identified by the world of work and necessary to all aspects of life.

UPPER SCHOOL

The upper school has embraced the student impact goals and philosophies rooted in the strategic plan in a myriad of ways. First, we have strengthened our disciplines with a focused effort on what students need to know and be able to do across the subjects. This is often referred to as “Power Standards.” The study of student assessments and subsequent interventions related to these power standards will enable our practitioners to meet the student impact goal that each child will become an expert in his/her own learning, whether or not they pursue the IBDP or the AISZ diploma. The improvement of specific programs like mathematics and the arts has been extraordinary. For math, our teachers are analyzing MAP data across all upper school grades and working from the designs of the DP curriculum in grades 11 and 12 to design specific improvement goals for the

Challenge by Choice program for each child. Additionally, the addition of a performing arts teacher and the PreK-12 vertical alignment of the arts curriculum in the context of the newly adopted National Core Arts Standards has been transformational.

For 2020-21, we will continue to grow the strong foundations we have developed over the past several years with a highly qualified staff that has enabled us to split grade levels for the first time in the history of the school, improve a guaranteed and viable curriculum across all subjects, and design experiences for students that will enable them to experience the future today. Service-learning will become more integrated into the lifeblood of our work which is even more important and relevant in a post-COVID-19 world. Student advisory will be the next stage of our community blocks each week, with a particular emphasis on the one to one mentoring already taking place in the Diploma Programme. And finally, the lessons of the virtual learning experience will become an important part of the why and what of our in-person schooling. Exciting times indeed lie ahead.

LOWER SCHOOL

In the Lower School, we began the year focusing on creating learning opportunities indicative of a concept school for the future. To ensure that the structure of the school day was optimized to support this goal, we implemented a new daily schedule that ensures that all students begin each school day with a homeroom Morning Meeting to develop the relationships necessary for a learning community to be successful. We know that morning time is prime learning time for our young students, so literacy and numeracy classes are scheduled before lunch. The new schedule also staggers lunch times to provide a calmer lunch experience and reduce cafeteria lines, offers more frequent meetings for specialist classes, provides two recess times per day, and has common instruction and collaboration time for teachers. Also new this year is our weekly Lower School Community Meeting that takes place each Friday morning with students from PreKindergarten to Grade 5 so that we can build community and celebrate learning.

As we reviewed our Lower School curriculum and analyzed student

performance data on both internal and external assessments, we looked for opportunities where we could seek new levels of excellence in teaching and learning. For the past two years, we've focused on strengthening our literacy program so that it consistently follows the reader's and writer's workshop model as developed by Teachers College at Columbia University. When we looked at our mathematics program, we recognized that we had work to do to ensure that it meets the needs of our students, aligns with our standards, and supports the goals we have as a school. After a months-long review that involved our faculty and an international mathematics teaching consultant, *Everyday Mathematics* was selected as our new primary math resource, and we will begin using it in the 2020-21 school year. In addition, next year we plan on taking a closer look at our science curriculum and reviewing its effectiveness.

In addition to working on literacy and numeracy, we realized that Lower School needed a curriculum management platform to support a more systematic

approach to developing, maintaining, and archiving our curriculum. After careful review, the Atlas management system was selected. During the course of this year, we've planned, trained, and begun to use the platform, which is work that will continue into the next school year.

Over the course of this year, we've supported students in pursuing personalized learning. One way we did this was to shift the format of fall conferences from traditional parent/teacher conferences to goal setting conferences. Having students set goals for themselves promotes resilience and reflectiveness, and it encourages students to strive for personal achievement towards their own needs. We were pleased to find that even our youngest students were able to identify the goals that they wanted to work toward. Next year we look forward to once again having students set goals in the fall and reflect upon them at the spring student-led conferences. In addition, we introduced new report cards in the Lower School that are standards-based and include a personal section where students reflect upon how they're meeting the learner assets of becoming

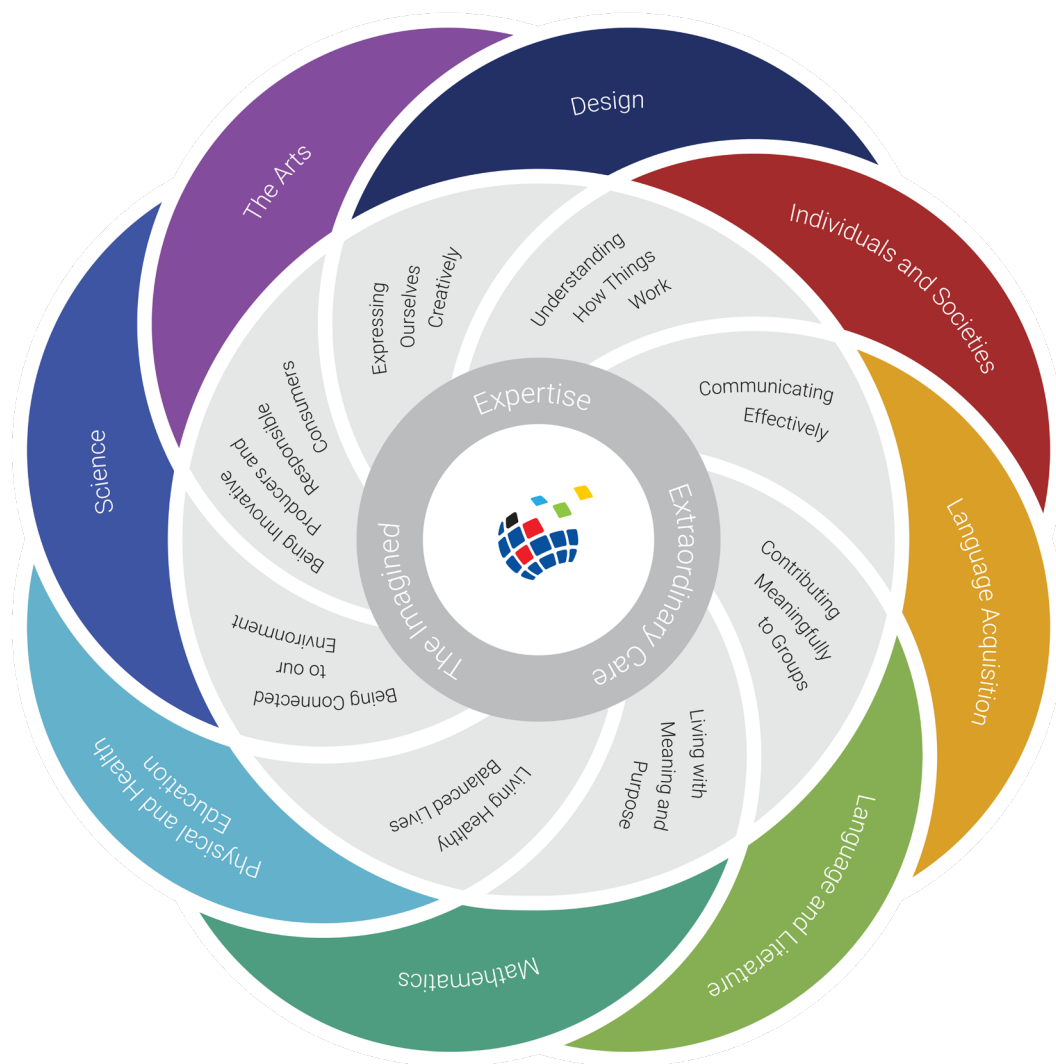
researchers, thinkers, collaborators, self-managers, and communicators. Next year, we're interested in continuing a personalized approach to student learning by diving more deeply into differentiation and universal design for learning that encourages students to access their learning on a level and in a way that's meaningful to them.

Perhaps the biggest game-changer this year has been our experience implementing a Virtual Learning Platform (VLP) as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. While we began the year focusing on how we might develop a concept school for the future, none of us could have imagined that we would end the final weeks of school virtually. The experience has caused us to take a step back and rethink the "what" and "how" of education. When learning returns to the AISZ campus in the fall, we plan to build upon the successes of the VLP and bring in new methodologies that will enhance classroom instruction. And with our talented faculty and staff, we're up for the challenge. During the Accreditation self-study, we also identified the two organizational goals. We will further enhance the structures to support a

distributed leadership model with appropriate support personnel to ensure the school's continual strategic growth. Excellent schools have a strong cohort of teacher leaders and experts. They also have distributed and stable leadership. We will build the structures and skills that ensure AISZ has these structural components in place to enhance the achievements of each individual student and the school as a whole. Another organizational

goal will be completing our work building, documenting, and implementing our complete curriculum from PreKindergarten to Grade 12; thus ensuring the delivery of a guaranteed and viable standards-aligned program. We will enhance ManageBac and introduce Atlas as our Curriculum Management System in the Upper and Lower School. To assist in this process, a Curriculum and Instructional Coach has been hired. This is yet another dimension that

assists schools on their road to excellence. The advent of online learning due to the global pandemic created the situation for our students to really develop the key character attributes of expert learners. Studies have shown that students who have agency over their learning and possess responsibility, resourcefulness, resilience and a sense of reciprocity towards others are well equipped to be lifelong learners.



Financial Review

HISTORICAL: 2018 -2019

The largest project we had during 2018 - 2019 was finishing the construction of our new facility in Središće and relocating and equipping our new school campus. The construction was finished with a delay of only two months and 5% above the budgeted costs. We have been enjoying our new campus since October 2018, but it is the result of about 10 years of planning and work by the Board and school management.

Thanks to an increased number of enrolled students (262 in total during the year vs. 247 planned), we finished the 2018 - 2019 school year with a financially healthy report. With strong financial management and planning, we are continuously receiving clean audit reports. According to audited figures, the total actual revenue exceeded the forecast of €3.8m by 9% partly due to an increased number of students and partly due to donations. Expenditures were 7% lower than planned, mainly due to overestimated building costs.

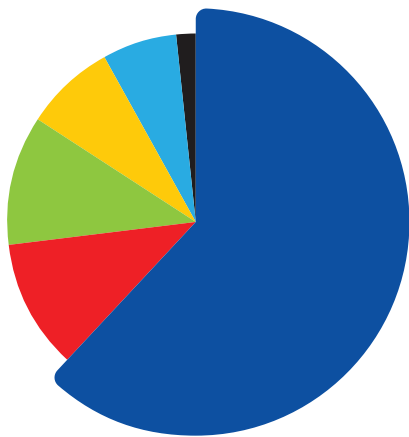
AISZ managed to finish the year with a surplus of €330k which we use to ensure present and future educational needs of AISZ are met in a planned and coordinated manner.

CURRENT: 2019-2020

The financial school year, 2019-2020 was healthy and stable thanks to a maximum of 280 enrolled students during the year with income predominantly from Tuition fees. Major expenditure is primarily on personnel expenses and other educational support. The next academic year holds some uncertainty as a result of the ongoing global health situation, but we are carefully monitoring this situation and believe we are in a strong position to respond as needed.

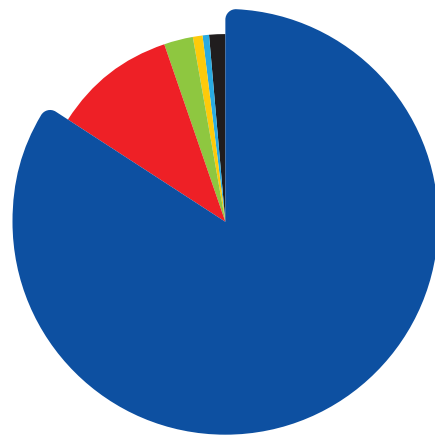
The Finance and Facilities Committee, along with the AISZ Board as a whole, is committed to serving the AISZ Learning Community and providing the best possible educational experience for our students.

A school has a very large percentage of costs which are fixed and AISZ is no exception. These comprise the majority of our budget. 84.1% of our budget are fixed costs allocated to personnel, depreciation and school operations. AISZ is a zero-based budget, non-profit organization.



EXPENSES 2019-20

- Personnel 62.1%
- Depreciation 11.1%
- School Operation 11.1%
- Educational Expenses 7.6%
- Financial expenses 6.5%
- Technology 1.5%



INCOME 2019-20

- Tuition Fee 84.2%
- Capital Fee 10.7%
- Admission Fee 2.5%
- Other Fees 0.6%
- Grant 0.7%
- Miscellaneous Income 1.2%



Virtual Learning (4Rs)

Resilience, Responsibility, Reflectiveness, Reciprocity:
the Key Attributes of Expert Learners

Research has shown that the attributes encompassed by the 4Rs listed above are at the heart of becoming an expert learner. Often the opportunity to learn, practice and hone these skills do not lie in subject-based content coverage, but rather in the experience of learning itself, which is why we engage in *inquiry* and not *rote* learning. Throughout the school these are embedded in our **Learning Assets** and in the IB Diploma Years, they culminate in the **IB Learner Profile**.

At no other time in the history of the world has so much been demanded of our students, parents and teachers than during the 2020 global COVID-19 pandemic. Regionally, CEESA teachers and administrators have been collaborating across networks like never before, and we believe that this will be one of the most positive long-term results of the virtual learning environment. Thank you for coming together as a strong community at this very difficult time.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE LEARNER PROFILE

- Reflective
- Open-Minded
- Risk Takers
- Caring
- Balanced
- Principled
- Knowledgeable
- Inquirers
- Communicators
- Thinkers

AISZ LEARNING ASSETS

- Collaboration
- Self-Management
- Communication
- Thinking
- Research



2019 Summary of IB Results & High School Profile

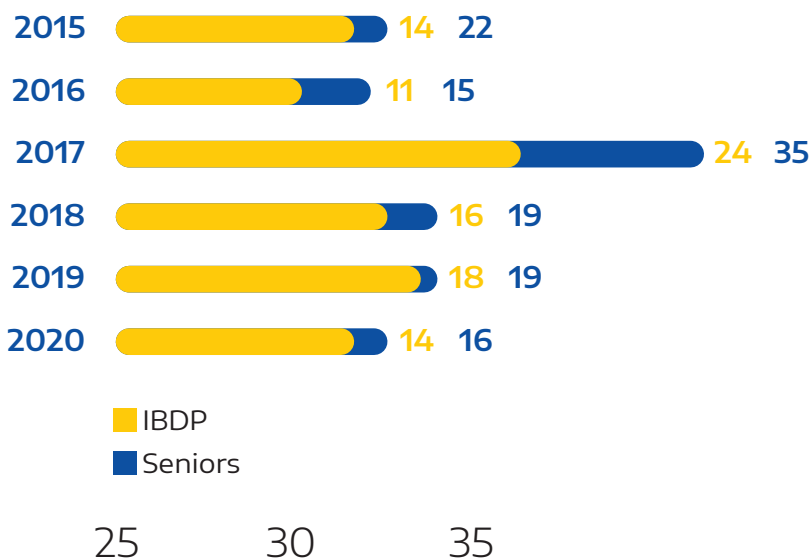
CURRICULUM

AISZ is a non-selective school, for both admissions and IB Diploma enrolment. AISZ offers AERO Standard based learning up to high school, and IB and college preparatory courses to international and internationally minded high school students living in Croatia.

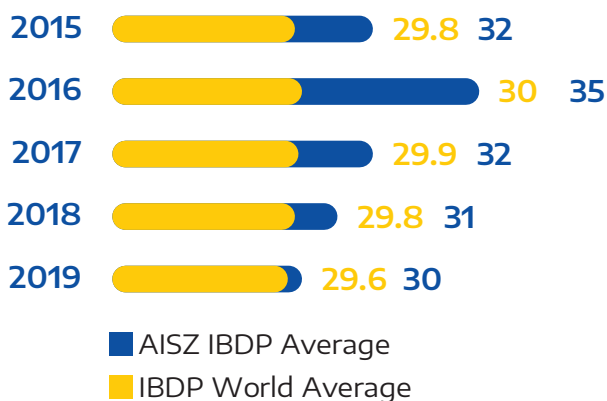
We offer Learning Support and English language support for identified students. In Grades 11 and 12, students may choose to take The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme or IB Certificates, both requiring the successful completion of external IB exams. Students

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.

SUMMARY OF IB DIPLOMA RESULTS 2015-2019



■ IBDP
■ Seniors



■ AISZ IBDP Average
■ IBDP World Average

2019 AISZ Graduate Placement

Congratulations to the Class of 2019!

As of September 2019, our students had been accepted to the following universities:

CANADA

University of Toronto

CHINA

Tsinghua University

CROATIA

University of Zagreb

THE NETHERLANDS

Erasmus University Rotterdam
Maastricht University

FRANCE

IESEC Business School

ITALY

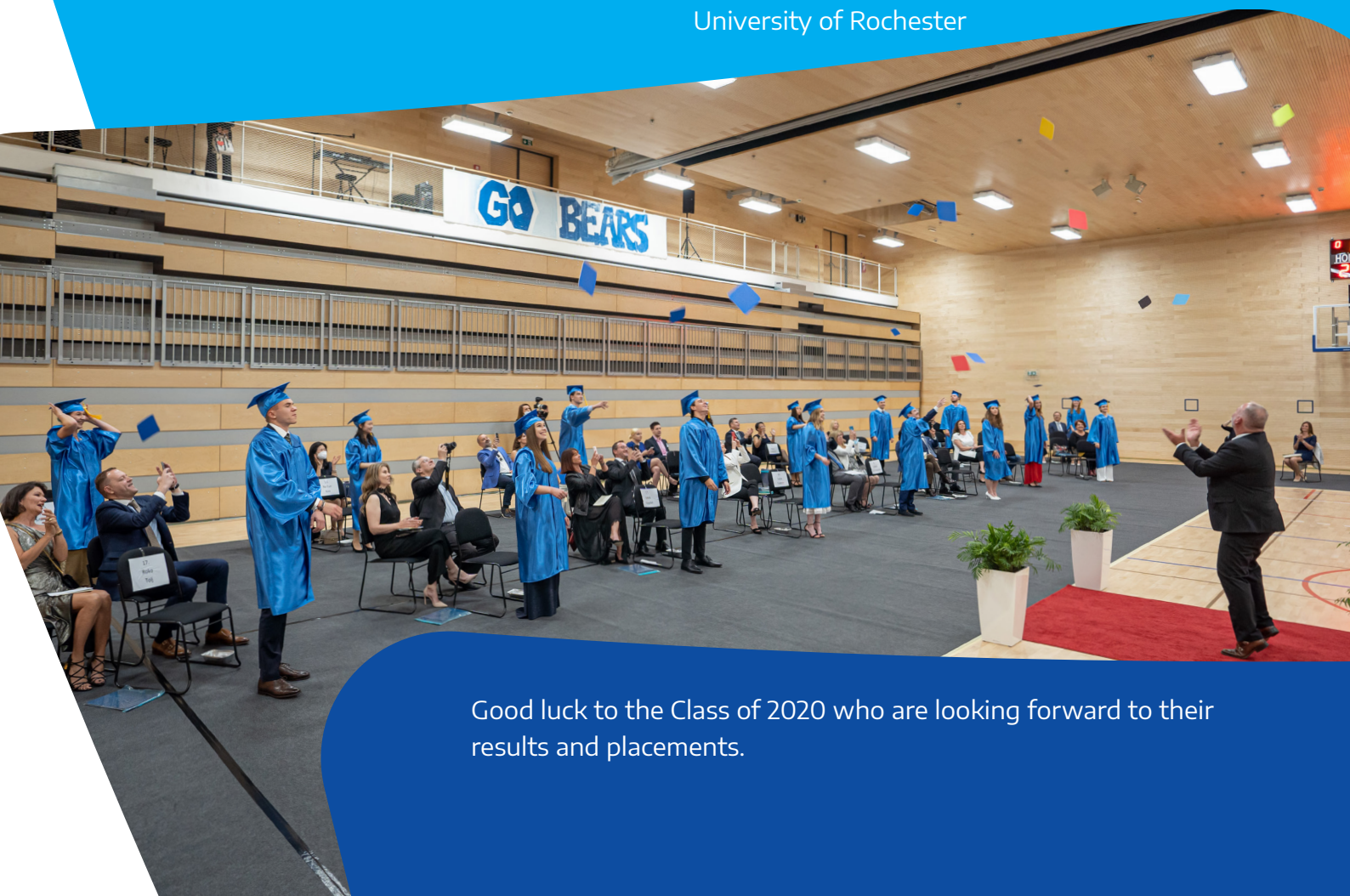
Luiss Guido Carli University

UNITED KINGDOM

Leeds University
Nottingham Trent University
Ravensbourne University London
University Arts London

UNITED STATES

University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
Akron University
DePauw University
Pratt Institute - New York
SUNY Brockport
University of Rochester



Good luck to the Class of 2020 who are looking forward to their results and placements.

Service Learning at AISZ

A Strategic Goal of 2019/2020

This program has been designed to ensure that each student in Upper School is involved in new and meaningful experiences serving our community and to give our students an opportunity to learn from hands-on life experiences. The aims of Service Learning are to provide our students with:

- Authentic learning opportunities and opportunities to participate in **real-world scenarios**.
- Opportunities to participate in a sustained, **self-directed inquiry**.
- Opportunities to either improve or acquire new skills such as: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Agility and Adaptability, Effective Written and Oral Communication, Curiosity and Imagination, Collaboration, Accessing and Analyzing of information.

The five stages are **Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Demonstration**. The investigation stages involve both, considering students' gifts and talents as well as learning about the community, issues, and/or organizations. Preparation focuses primarily on practical steps such as planning and communicating with the community or organization about the service opportunity, logistics, practicing or preparing materials, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and developing timelines. In the action stage, students implement their plan. Reflection is at the core of the learning process, it connects all stages. In the demonstration stage, students talk about their learning and accomplishments.





a yearlong project that not only enriched the Grade 1 students' academic skills, but helped them understand that even though they are small, they can work together to make an impact on their community.

LOWER SCHOOL

Students in the Lower School explore the concepts of service learning as they build an understanding of the responsibility that comes with being a global citizen. This year students in Grade 1 participated in an extended study about the role of animal shelters in Zagreb. This interest came about when they noticed a dog outside in their classroom garden. After an initial lesson on dog safety, students spent the entire day observing the dog, asking questions, writing stories about him, and even naming him. Even after the dog was taken away to the shelter, he was still a frequent topic in the classroom. With their teacher's (Sara Kirby) guidance, the students wrote an email to the dog shelter thanking them for taking care of the dog and asking them to come to school to teach them about the animals at the shelter.

After the volunteer from the shelter visited the classroom, she invited the children to visit the shelter. The class decided that they wanted to teach others about what they learned so they could prevent dogs from getting hurt. The students also decided to sell the books they wrote to raise money that would allow the shelter to purchase food, toys and medicine that the animals needed. What was once a random blip in the school day became

GRADE 6

The theme for Grade 6 was **Elders**.

In order to find out what the elders in our community need, we invited residents and employees from the elderly home St. Ana to our school for an interview. Since then, our students have done the following: performed for the elders at the AISZ annual Christmas Sing-Along, wrote cards for Easter, with stories about family traditions from the different countries represented by our students. The stories were displayed at St. Ana. While in isolation, students conducted research to find out which exercises or activities might be appropriate for the elders since they could not go outside as much as possible. They each recorded themselves performing an exercise, and then merged them into one video, which they will share with St. Ana.



GRADE 7

The theme for Grade 7 was **Environment**.

The students divided themselves into smaller groups according to their interests. They spent a lot of time researching and investigating issues of global and local significance. Most of the groups decided to create a website or presentations in order to raise awareness of different environmental issues. Topics include recycling, plastic reduction, microclimates, new habitats, deforestation, and climate change and its consequences.

GRADE 8

The theme for Grade 8 focused on **Refugees and Migrants**.

In the investigation phase, the students gathered information through different media, such as the internet, newspapers, and videos. In order to get a better understanding of the situation in Croatia, the students invited two representatives from the NGO Are you Syrious and a 16-year-old refugee. The students were very touched by the story of the boy and surprised by how difficult it was once they arrived in Croatia. Some of them decided to make a video and another group of students organized different games in order to raise money, to buy hygiene products for those in need.



GRADE 9

The theme for Grade 7 was **Self Directed Focus**.

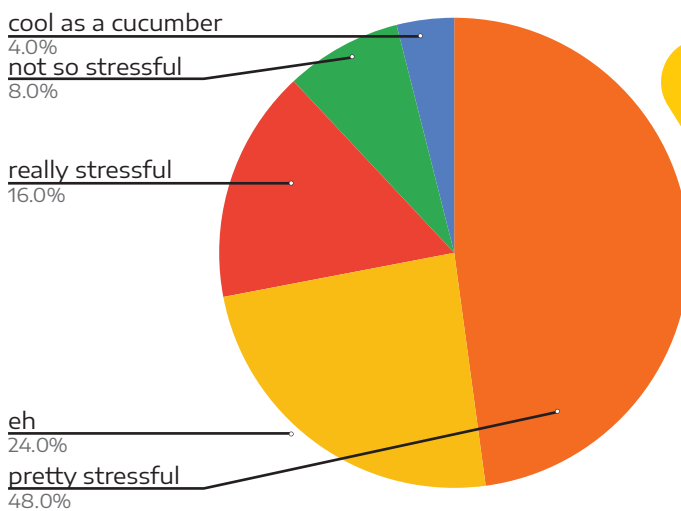
Grade 9 students had the opportunity to choose any topic that interested them as long as it focused on a real community need.

Several students decided to raise awareness about climate change and its consequences by creating a website and inviting an employee from Greenpeace Croatia to a

Zoom meeting. A group decided to volunteer at a dog shelter. One of the students decided to conduct research on sleep deprivation and talk about the consequences, while others organized a game night at the elderly home Lavoslava Schwarzka.

This was an unexpected challenge to which most of the students responded with flexibility and creativity.

Stress levels of 6-7 hours of sleep



The AISZ Parent Teacher Association is Active in Supporting our Curriculum and Community Building. This year as usual our Parent and Teacher Association helped support our school spirit with the following fun activities:

- Family orientation
- Welcome picnic
- Kids Bingo
- Informal Parent Coffees
- Parent talks together with counselors
- Christmas cookies
- General meeting

We also supported a variety of events including the Terry Fox Run, the Boranka Tree Planting Project and the recent virtual Step Challenge undertaken during isolation and lockdown.





The Creative Supplement

A focus on enhanced curriculum

This year as it is our first Annual Report, we want to showcase the results of a complete overhaul of our Arts Program which was a major focus for the year. In subsequent years of Annual Reports we will showcase the improvements we have made in other specific curriculum areas.

ADOPTION OF THE NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

We are also happy to announce that this year, the AISZ Arts Department adopted the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) to further develop our strong Arts curriculum. The AISZ Learning Principles state that our community subscribes to the principle that “common learning cultures need to construct common meaning through a common learning language” (AISZ Learning Ecosystem). Using the same standards across the Arts supports this principle and

maintains consistency for students and our teaching practice, strengthening our curriculum alignment. The NCAS also places emphasis on the development of 21st-century skills such as creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and problem solving, thereby preparing our students for “futures rich with promise”. The standards align with our assessment objectives in the Upper School and will help students smoothly transition into the IBDP Arts subjects.

UPPER SCHOOL MUSIC

The inclusion of Orff instruments in Middle School music classes have enabled increasing dynamic ensemble participation and composition. Ear training has been a much more fun and beneficial experience with each student having their own instrument.

At the end of semester one, each MS class shared their ensemble pieces with the community and it was evident that students gained musicianship skills and confidence from this collaborative experience as well as good preparation for the guitar units that await in the HS program. Individual students were able to be challenged at their own level through playing as some could read individual parts (bass bars), and others could play simple melodies in a larger group.

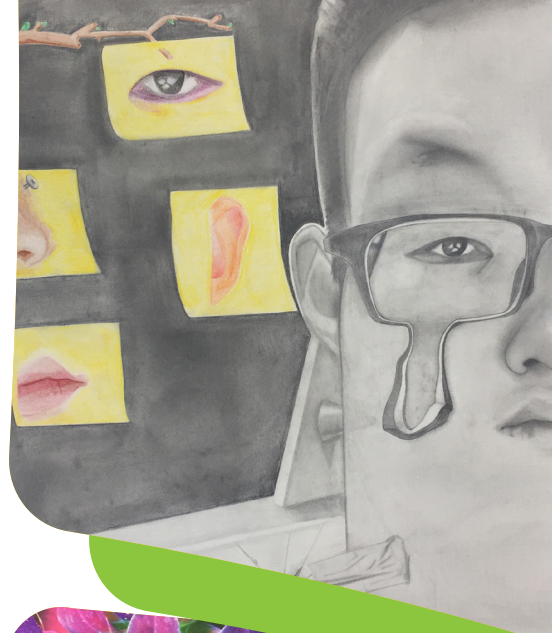
In High School, the music program aims to build on existing skills and prepare musicians to have the option of enrolling in the music IB program. The rhythmic and melodic elements learned through lower and middle school ensemble are now developed into chord progressions, improvisation, creation, arrangement and analysis. In grades 9 and 10, students learn the guitar

and have the opportunity to develop skills in a musical area of their choice through inquiry projects. Each student has access to a guitar and is able to practice in order to maximize the effectiveness in class. We are so very proud of the achievements of our high school students and of these life skills they may enjoy wherever their future may take them.

The IB music program is a rigorous 2-year course that enables students to consider a career in music, or simply to develop their musical skills to a higher level. We are very proud to be the only school in Croatia to offer this program. This year, Lucija-our senior violinist has been accepted into a music university in Vienna and also accepted into the Vienna youth orchestra.

LOWER SCHOOL MUSIC

The purchase of djembes and xylophones at the beginning of the school year transformed our music program in the Lower School into one full of active music learning and making by using a combination of Orff and Kodaly inspired lessons. The music methods of Zoltan Kodály and Carl Orff, are time-tested approaches to teaching music to young



people and contain well-practiced and researched techniques. These approaches to music learning contain fundamental similarities in that they:

- Are systematic and sequential in design.
- Utilize music with authenticity and integrity, such as folk music.
- Are based on enhancing elemental music making, allowing for great differentiation and diversity among students; perfect for the international school setting.
- Encourage active engagement with the student in the community making music contexts.

They are also comprehensive and holistic in preparing children to be artists, creators, and producers and not just consumers of music. The written and taught music program is also close to refinement and documentation due to the adoption of Atlas Curriculum Mapping, a software that allows for an educational

institution's curriculum to be shared, analyzed, and refined by a team of educators through an online platform.

PERFORMING ARTS

Drama is the newcomer to our Arts offering at AISZ in the Upper School. Though still in its infancy, we have the beginnings of a solid program that we can offer students in grades 6 to 10. Drama at school helps students increase their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-expression, communication, collaboration, interpersonal skills and, last but not least, their imagination. We have created and road-tested units which include "Theatre Sports", "Playbuilding and Writing", and end of semester performances where the students can share their drama work with our school community.

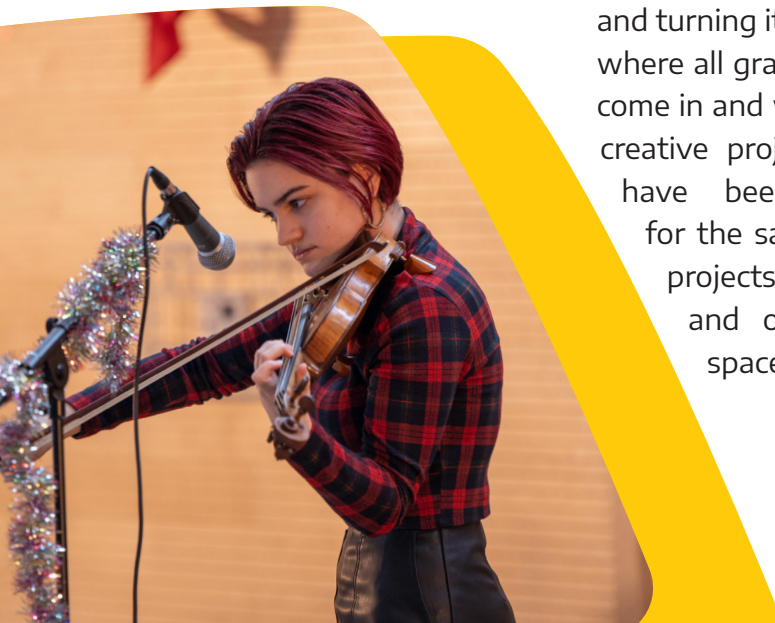
LOWER SCHOOL VISUAL ARTS

This year, we worked on organizing Makerspace and turning it into a room where all grade levels can come in and work on their creative projects. Shelves have been purchased for the sake of keeping projects safely stored and offering more space to fill,

which in turn invited even more classes and individual students to come in. We have a constant influx of recyclable materials donations to work with, from both teachers and students, and it just goes on to say how excited and motivated we are to keep Art as a part of our daily lives. We will work hard to ensure this stays our routine next year and the plan for LS Arts is to make it even more interactive and engaging in a sense of bringing our community together.

UPPER SCHOOL VISUAL ARTS

The purchase of five large moveable walls to display student work around the school has added to our Visual Arts programme. Exhibiting student



work not only brightens our halls, but it also celebrates the achievements of our students. The white walls enable us to create professional - looking galleries, particularly useful for the IBDP Visual Arts students who are required to hold exhibitions of their work at the end of the two-year programme.

We have also purchased a range of higher quality paints and other materials, to replace the old and limited existing supply, allowing our students to keep current and develop skills in a variety of media.



PTA Music Initiative

Parent and PTA Support Helps Moves AISZ Music To a Whole New Level

Last year the AISZ PTA channeled much of its fundraising activities towards enhancing our Music Arts program. This allowed us to invest in a class set of djembes and xylophones which enabled the music program to leap forward by providing a dynamic learning environment for all students from Kindergarten to grade 10.

Musical independence, improvisation, and composition are important skills that Ms. Lana and Ms. Nicky included within the music curriculum. By using the Orff Approach our students learn important

musical concepts, move students towards becoming competent musicians, develop their creativity and expand their experiences within music. The students responded very positively to the activities designed using Orff methodology with every student successfully participating in rhythmic and melodic musical opportunities, learning and demonstrating musical independence and playing in ensembles.

Being directly involved with the creative musical process, commencing at an elementary level fosters the musical learning process.

When developed at a young age, creativity and musical independence are very helpful skills for performing in the Upper School. The Orff Approach naturally fosters active participation, musical creativity, independence, community music sharing and highlights individual student success. Needless to say, the instruments purchased for the music department have been used by all students attending music classes at AISZ this year. We thank the PTA for their contributions to this important program.



Athletics & Extra Curricular Activities

ATHLETICS

This year one of the Board Goals was to enhance our extracurricular activities and events which enrich student lives. We were heavily involved in CEESA and professional development opportunities. AISZ hosted the Activity Directors' & Athletic Directors' meeting in September and the High School Principals' Job-A-like. For students, we hosted CEESA High School Knowledge Bowl in February and attended HS Volleyball in Moscow, MS Speech and Debate in Warsaw, and MS Math Counts in Vienna.

As part of our school goals, we were successful in achieving our objective to increase our participation in other events for our students locally. We entered and competed in the following events: HS Volleyball Tournament, LS, MS, & HS Cross Country Running, MS & HS Swimming, and Lower School Boy's Futsal. We hosted a variety of events including the combined Peace One Day / Središće Day, the Peace Run, HS Volleyball versus the Nursing Gymnasium, a HS Mathematics Competition

challenging a local Zagreb high school, and a HS Boy's Futsal Friendly against the Nursing Gymnasium.

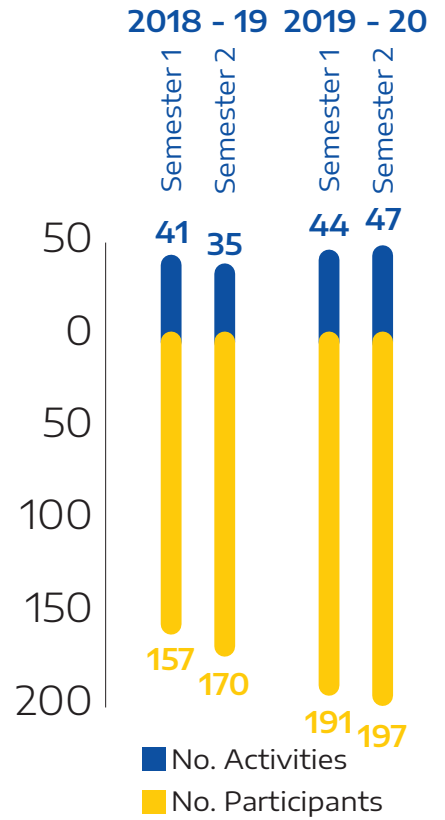
Our students also participated in the Terry Fox Run and had the opportunity to experience bowling, boxing, squash, Padel, ice skating and lacrosse as new pursuits. Cycling and bike safety also became part of our Physical Education Program in the Lower and Middle School.

**EXTRA-CURRICULAR
ACTIVITIES**

As a result of focusing on our school goal of enhancing the extracurricular activity program, in addition to extending our athletic program, we have seen considerable increases in both the total number of activities offered for the year and the total participation

in these activity sessions compared to last year. This year we offered 91 activities over two sessions with a total number of 388 activity participants.*

*Several students enrolled and participated in two or more activities in each session.



Outdoor Education

UPPER SCHOOL UNITY CAMPING TRIP

We believe in giving students the opportunities to find challenge and resilience in new things. Outdoor Education is an essential part of our school life. One that teaches young people about the environment and increases awareness of self and others. Following our Strategic Initiative, **Facilitate each students' growth through personal, self-directed, authentic learning**, we took our Upper School grade levels on a unique outdoor bonding

experience to learn more about themselves and about their friends. The goal is to encourage students to be more self-reliant. It was also to test and support students' creativity and problem-solving skills, to enhance empathy, a sense of ethical behavior and a service-minded attitude which are cornerstones of successful international citizenship. Unity Trips are organized through the organization Outward Bound or a similar, licensed outside provider with an international reputation and experience.

As we have spent so much time online recently, reflecting on our offline experience in nature earlier in the year seems even more valuable. The students, their chaperones and guides were engaged in team-building games, camping, hiking, climbing, rappelling, caving, kayaking, archery and sleeping under the stars. Each of these different adventures help students' personal growth and development by learning through action.

Grade 6 went on a 3-day outdoor adventure at Severin na Kupi in the Gorski Kotar region; Grade 7 went camping at the Cernička Šagovina in the Brodsko-Posavska county; Grade 8 enjoyed hiking and camping in Veliki Žitnik in the Lika county.

High School Students extend the length of their trips from previous Middle School experiences in Grade 9 and Grade 10 ventured into the wild for four days each. Grade 9 explored the forests and rivers around Veliki Žitnik while Grade 10 were involved in an aquatic-based recreation program camping and kayaking on the island of Rab. Grade 11's culminating challenge was a rigorous hiking and climbing adventure on the Velebit mountain range.

Unfortunately, the Grade 4 and 5 Outdoor Education Adventure to Lake Bohinj had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation but you can see from the photos from last year what a wonderful experience it would have been.





Comments from students during their reflection highlighted what their experience had meant to them:

G6 "It was canoeing and the murder mystery theme. Also being in the room with all the (other) girls because we really got to know each other better."

G7 "I really enjoyed the "lighthouse challenge" because it allowed us to connect as a group. I really had some bonding times with people I now call friends."

G8 "Highlight of the trip for me was when we were keeping the fire at 4.AM it was so beautiful to see the light come through the trees with the moon shining:)"

G9 "The highlight of this trip for me was when we climbed on top of the mountain near Oteš and when we finished our evening circles because we reflected on ourselves, and we had a great view and experience."

G10 "The whole trip was fantastic, but sitting around the fire talking, activities, challenges basically when we were all together working as a team."

G11 "I loved the solo times where I had time to be alone in the forest for a few hours and reflect as well as bonding with nature."





Alumni

During the first half of the year, we set about building our network of ex Bears and we are pleased to have around 300 registered alumni.

On November 7th, we held our first official Alumni event in our Black Box Theater. It was wonderful to see past Bears return to our new Bear Cave. We also had a number of past students visit us when they were home from

University. Our intention was to hold more alumni events in Semester 2, but COVID-19 put a stop to that. Hopefully, next year we will have more opportunities to get together.

Leaving teachers

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.



5 years

Brett Thomsen
US Science Teacher



1 year

Elliott Hewson
US General Science & Mathematics



2 years

Colin Mitchell
Manager Communications, Marketing, and Alumni Affairs, DP Economics



2.5 years

Jennifer Mitchell
Lower School Teacher & LS Art and MS Design Teacher



3 years

Todd Hurley
US Design and Technology



1 year

Anamarija Markusic
Educational Assistant



1 year

Lana Skrtic
US History and English Teacher

AISZ social media



<https://www.facebook.com/aiszagreb>



<https://twitter.com/AISZagreb>



<https://www.instagram.com/aiszagreb/>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCX-6pDbM2LjewAjGUuwFLJA>

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