



# The Comet

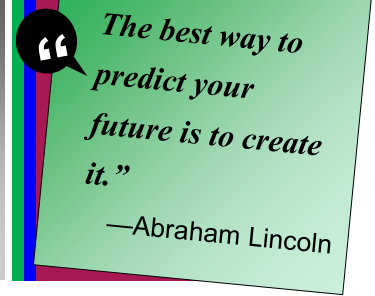
The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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## From the Head of School



### Celebrating our talents beyond the classroom

As we approach the end of another incredible school year at K. International School Tokyo, it's a perfect time to reflect on the amazing talents and accomplishments of our students and staff outside of the classroom. We are continually impressed by the diverse range of skills and hobbies that our school community pursues with passion and dedication.

From learning musical instruments to participating in sports, from artistic creations to culinary delights, each achievement outside of school reflects the dedication and determination of our students and staff. Whether it's landing a skateboard kickflip, completing a challenging hike, or participating in a community service project, every accomplishment is evidence of the well-rounded individuals in our school community.

At KIST, we believe in nurturing not just academic excellence but also fostering a love for learning and exploration in all aspects of life. Our mission to provide a high-quality education in a safe and supportive environment is complemented by the development of competent, academic individuals with high moral character.

This summer vacation is an excellent opportunity for everyone to devote time to their passions, hobbies, and skills. If you have photos or short videos showcasing your child's accomplishments and would like to share them with the school community through KISTV, please let your child's homeroom or advisory teacher know. Your contributions will inspire and motivate others in our school community.

As we celebrate the end of this school year, let's continue to embrace our diverse talents and achievements, making meaningful contributions not just within our school but also to the wider world. Thank you for being part of our vibrant and supportive community at K. International School Tokyo.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable summer vacation filled with exploration, growth, and new experiences.



Warm regards,  
**Kevin Yoshihara Ed.D.**  
 Head of School/Elementary School  
 Principal



### DATES TO REMEMBER



#### June 2024

- 11 (G5) Completion ceremony (@KIST) (\*Evening)
- 12 (W) Last day of school for students (Half day for students)
- 12 (K1-G11) Semester 2 reports issued
- 13 (K1-G3) After care not available on this day
- 13-28 Office open
- 15 KIST community festival (New building opening celebration)
- 17-28 Summer program session 1

#### July 2024

- 1-28 School closed
- 29-Aug 9 Summer program session 2

#### August 2024

- 15 (K1/K2/K3) [P] Parent welcome night
- 19 First day of school for all students
- 19 (K2-G3) After care begins this week
- 19 (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic assessments (\*Afternoon)
- 19-21 (G12) DP start-of-year exams
- 20-22 (G6-G8) GL English diagnostic assessments
- 21 (G1-G5) [P] Parent welcome night
- 23 (G6-G12) [P] Parent welcome night



## Recommended Summer Review Workbooks

As we approach the end of the school year, we look forward to the exciting and well-deserved summer break. However, with summer vacation stretching for about eight weeks, it's important to be aware of summer learning loss. This refers to the regression of academic skills that can occur when students are away from a structured learning environment for an extended period.

To relieve this, many families find it beneficial to have their children spend a little time each day reviewing content from the previous year. Consistent, focused practice can help maintain and even enhance your child's skills, ensuring they return to school in August ready to hit the ground running.

To support our students' continuous learning, we recommend dedicating 30 minutes each day to math and 30 minutes to English. To facilitate this, we've compiled a list of recommended workbooks from the UK publisher, CGP.

Below are some recommended CGP workbooks, most of which can be conveniently purchased through Amazon Japan by entering the ISBN. Otherwise, they can be purchased directly from the CGP website at the link below:

Web <https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/>

By setting aside just one hour each day for academic review, our students can maintain the momentum of their learning and begin the new school year with confidence.

Thank you for your continued support in fostering a love of learning and academic excellence in our students. We wish you a wonderful summer filled with fun, relaxation, and enriching educational experiences.

**Kevin Yoshihara**  
Head of School/Elementary School  
Principal



Grade	English	Math
<b>New K3</b>	KS1 English Year 1 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782947585</a>	
<b>New G1</b>	KS1 English Phonics Buster ISBN: <a href="#">9781789080216</a>	KS1 Maths Year 1 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781789089165</a>
		KS1 Maths Workout Year 1 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460826</a>
<b>New G2</b>	Year 2 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling ISBN: <a href="#">9781782941927</a>	KS1 Maths Year 2 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781789089172</a>
	Year 2 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782947592</a>	KS1 Maths Mental Workout Year 2 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460840</a>
<b>New G3</b>	Year 3 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling ISBN: <a href="#">9781782941316</a>	KS2 Maths Year 3 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781847622112</a>
	Year 3 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782944485</a>	KS2 Maths Mental Workout Year 3 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460741</a>
<b>New G4</b>	Year 4 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling ISBN: <a href="#">9781782941323</a>	KS2 Maths Year 4 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781847622129</a>
	Year 4 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782944492</a>	KS2 Maths Mental Workout Year 4 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460734</a>
<b>New G5</b>	Year 5 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling ISBN: <a href="#">9781782941330</a>	KS2 Maths Year 5 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781847622136</a>
	Year 5 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782944508</a>	KS2 Maths Mental Workout Year 5 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460727</a>
<b>New G6</b>	Year 6 Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling ISBN: <a href="#">9781782941347</a>	KS2 Maths Year 6 Targeted Question Book ISBN: <a href="#">9781847622143</a>
	Year 6 Reading Comprehension ISBN: <a href="#">9781782944515</a>	KS2 Maths Mental Workout Year 6 ISBN: <a href="#">9781841460710</a>

## PYP News

### Continuous summer learning

As summer vacation approaches, many elementary students eagerly anticipate the break from school routines. However, the long holiday presents an opportunity for a different kind of learning journey—one that is self-directed, exploratory, and enriching. Continuous learning over the summer is crucial for elementary students for several reasons.

Firstly, the summer slide, or the loss of academic skills over the break, is a real concern. Research suggests that students can lose up to two months of math and reading skills over the summer months. Continuous learning helps combat this regression by keeping young minds engaged and active.

Moreover, summer learning can foster a love for learning beyond the confines of the classroom. With more free time, students can explore their interests, whether it's through reading books, visiting museums, conducting science experiments, or learning a new hobby. This not only reinforces academic skills but also encourages curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.

Furthermore, continuous learning over the summer helps bridge the gap between school years, ensuring a smoother transition when students return to the classroom in the fall. It prevents the need for teachers to spend valuable time re-teaching material that was forgotten over the break, allowing them to delve deeper into new concepts instead.



In conclusion, the long summer holiday break is an ideal time for elementary students to embark on a journey of continuous learning.

By staying curious, engaged, and active, students can not only prevent the summer slide but also cultivate a lifelong passion for learning.

For 2023's June issue of *The Comet*, I drew attention to the Six Traits of Writing and Japanese Writing rubrics in the PYP Academic Handbook. These resources could be used to make summer writing journals more academic, giving you the chance to work with your child, understand the expectations for each grade, and give advice on how to improve their work (I have copied the article below this post). Additionally, for Math and English workbooks, please refer to Dr. Yoshihara's post in this issue of *The Comet* titled "Recommended Summer Review Workbooks".



If you have any questions on how you can support your child's learning over the summer, please do not hesitate to ask.

**Oliver Sullivan**  
PYP Coordinator



### How to use the six traits of writing to support your child at home

For this issue of *The Comet*, I would like to draw your attention to a new document that has been added to the Community portal of the KIST website: the [KIST PYP Academic Handbook](#).

As we approach the long summer vacation, many of you may be considering how to support your child with their writing. You may have been given advice such as writing short stories, writing letters to friends and relatives, or keeping a diary. This is all fine, but you might be unsure of what you should be looking for in their writing.

As you know, at KIST, we follow the Six (plus one) Traits of Writing which is a widely used framework for assessing and improving writing skills. It provides a comprehensive approach to evaluate and enhance various aspects of writing. Let's explore each trait briefly:

- 1. Ideas:** This trait focuses on the content and the main message of the writing. It assesses the clarity, originality and depth of the ideas presented.
- 2. Organization:** Organization refers to the structure and coherence of the writing. A well-organized piece has a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion, with smooth transitions between ideas.
- 3. Voice:** Voice represents the unique style and personality of the writer. It examines the tone, word choice and the overall impression the writing creates on the reader.
- 4. Word choice:** This trait emphasizes the selection of

precise and appropriate vocabulary. It encourages the use of vivid, descriptive language to engage the reader and convey meaning effectively.

- 5. Sentence fluency:** Sentence fluency assesses the rhythm and flow of the writing. It looks at the variety of sentence structures, the balance between long and short sentences, and the overall readability.
- 6. Conventions:** Conventions refer to grammar, punctuation and spelling. This trait ensures that the writing follows standard rules of language usage and is free from errors that may distract or confuse the reader.

**The "+1" trait is Presentation**, which encompasses the visual elements of the writing. It considers aspects such as formatting, neatness and overall appearance.

By focusing on these traits, writers can identify their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to more effective and polished written communication. The 6+1 Writing Traits framework provides a valuable guide for writers of all levels to enhance their skills and produce high-quality written work.

Obviously, what to look out for can vary a great deal across the grade levels. At KIST, we have developed our own writing rubrics which integrate the objectives of the national curriculum for England with the six traits of writing. To help you support your child, these rubrics have been published on pages 18–65 of the KIST PYP Academic Handbook.

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You will find the homeroom writing rubrics on pages 18–45, and Japanese class writing rubrics on pages 46–65. For homerooms, except for G1, which has two, each grade has three rubrics (one for each writing assessment), and you can see how each "assessment focus" is described across the SAME leveling system. (See the example in the image at the bottom of this page.)

When supporting your child, it is important to understand that these descriptors are for end-of-year expectations, so be careful to select the correct rubric. For this summer, I would suggest using the rubric for the class that your child has just graduated from.

While there may be changes to the rubrics over the course of the school year, these will be minor, and updated versions will be uploaded each summer. These resources should be helpful for you in supporting your child with their writing, however, please try to

ensure the experience is fun and supportive. If they are old enough, it is best to encourage your child, to engage with the rubric themselves and self-assess their own work, then you can discuss their thoughts and set achievable targets.

This rubric has been developed from the Pearson Edmentum rubric and has been aligned with the IBT writing curriculum and the Tools of Writing. This IBT 4-level rubric aligns with the IBTMC system on IBT report cards.

K International School Tokyo Writing Assessment 3 Rubric: (G3)			
1 Starting		2 Approaching	
<b>IDEAS</b>			
AF1 → Does not reflect a main idea or purpose, includes content that is off topic.		AF2 → States or implies a main idea, but is unclear, unfocused, inaccurate, and/or underdeveloped.	
AF3 → Presents a clear, focused, and accurate main idea with adequate development and/or support.		AF4 → Writing is organized with clear control of paragraphs or sections that support inferential thought.	
1 Starting		2 Approaching	
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>			
AF1 → Structures sentences incorrectly so reader has to reread place several times and still has difficulty reading aloud without pausing or substituting phrases.		AF2 → Uses sentences that are technically correct but awkward and/or flow smoothly, sounds mechanical when read aloud.	
AF3 → Has varied sentences that flow smoothly; reads to be pleasant or business like, though may still be mechanical in places; is easy to read aloud.		AF4 → Incorporates some sentences that are rhythmic and flowing, using a variety of correctly structured sentence types; flows well when read aloud.	
1 Starting		2 Approaching	
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>			
DONT SCORE ON THE RUBRIC		AF1 → Limited evidence of organization, effort is required by the reader (an appropriate structure which includes a clear, somewhat chronological sequence).	
AF2 → The writer has difficulty using taught sequential language.		AF3 → Simple and separated paragraphs are sequenced or grouped but may not be consistent in form (an appropriate structure which includes a clear, somewhat chronological sequence).	
AF4 → Evidence of taught sequential language, such as, next, then, after that.		AF5 → Writing is mainly organized with separated paragraphs or sections logically sequenced, although some challenging transitions (e.g., meanwhile, nevertheless) may be awkward.	
AF6 → Evidence of more advanced sequential language, such as, meanwhile.		AF7 → Writing is mostly organized with separated paragraphs or sections logically sequenced, although some challenging transitions (e.g., meanwhile, nevertheless) may be awkward.	
1 Starting		2 Approaching	
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>			
DONT SCORE ON THE RUBRIC		AF1 → In information texts, places, people, events, items, topics etc. are not described in detail.	
AF2 → Word choice is simple and could be repetitive.		AF3 → In information texts, places, people, events, items, topics etc. are described with specific detail, although this may not be consistently maintained throughout.	
AF4 → Word choice is deliberate and mostly accurate.		AF5 → Word choice is deliberate and adds depth to the writing.	
1 Starting		2 Approaching	
<b>VOICE</b>			
DONT SCORE ON THE RUBRIC		AF1 → Writing is partially linked to the task (a news report).	
AF2 → Register is, at times, inappropriate to the task (formal and informative).		AF3 → Register is mostly appropriate to the task (formal and informative) and is mostly maintained.	
AF4 → Writing is mostly linked to the task (a news report) with emerging awareness of audience.		AF5 → Register is consistently appropriate to the task (formal and informative) and maintained.	

## Ideas to Enhance Your Child's Summer Break

Preparing for the summer break can be a challenge for parents. With all the packing and reservations for rooms, flights and those meetings with your favorite aunts and uncles, there seems to be little room for materials to stimulate your child's mind and imagination. I've reached back and pulled an article from the June 2015 issue of *The Comet* where I offered some advice on summer ideas that don't need to be packed and come with no hidden costs. It centers around "review" and it is shelved in your child's memory. Have a look and see how you can use this to reignite your child's prior learning.

As the school year draws to a close, parents and students are beginning to make plans for the summer. Students might be dreaming of exotic vacations, mountain climbing, or simply lounging around the house. Parents, however, often have more academic pursuits in mind. One challenge they face is maintaining the academic achievements their children have worked so hard for during the school year. Many families turn to old textbooks or websites to fill the educational gap, often struggling to find resources that fit their busy schedules.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum is designed to offer engaging and relevant learning experiences through the method of inquiry. While it may seem daunting to continue IB-style lessons independently, the curriculum's foundation is built on sound questioning, followed by research, experimentation, and reflection. Throughout the school year, teachers guide students through various topics

using the six transdisciplinary themes, which offer limitless outcomes and connections. Each theme, being wide in its scope, could be expanded into a full-year course and still not cover all perspectives and topics. The IB encourages students to take their investigations as deep and wide as their imaginations allow. A key component of the curriculum is the concept of "Action"—applying knowledge to solve real-world problems. Unfortunately, this aspect is often only briefly touched upon before time constraints necessitate moving on to the next theme.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. Inquiry is already established and documented in students' reports, portfolios, and memories. Use these resources to foster communication about your child's learning. Review previously covered materials and consider ways to implement action into your child's understanding of the world. Briefly exploring your child's unit topics and asking for interpretations can lead to new and interesting understandings about subject matter. Parents simply need to ask questions, listen to their child's answers, and offer their own perspectives to deepen the conversation. In the end, new ideas and understandings are developed, making everyone more knowledgeable about the subjects. The solution to your summer planning might be as close as your own child's desk.

**Clay M. Bradley**  
Elementary School Vice Principal



## Early Childhood News



Hello, KIST Families! This is the final issue of *The Comet* for 2023–24; time flies so quickly. For this issue, I asked the K1–K3 homeroom teachers to review their year. I hope you enjoy peeking into each classroom, and I wish you all a pleasant, relaxing summer holiday!

**Eri Ozawa**

Early Childhood Coordinator (K1–K3)/K2A Teacher



### K1A



Every moment of the day in K1A was filled with fun and laughter. The parents' contributions and support greatly enriched our learning experience during the "Homes and Animal Homes" unit. Through their involvement, we explored the differences between homes in India and France during our virtual excursions, and we also learned about various homes in Japan and China. Our one and only long excursion this year was a highlight, as the children thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the Tokyo Toy Museum. They had a wonderful time playing with the hands-on wooden toys and interacting with their peers.

### K1B



This year was so much fun! We got to go on one excursion and had the pleasure of being the first to perform on the stage in our brand-new gym! One of the highlights for us was definitely spending time with Ms. Emma's hamster! While learning all about homes, who needs a home and why we need homes, we also explored animal homes. For a hands-on and interactive lesson, we were able to see the hamster home with our own eyes and watch the hamster run around the classroom in a ball! It was very cute and a great experience for everyone.

### K2A



As members of an IB school, K2A experienced a lot of things about being internationally minded this year. From the first day of the year, we counted each school day in the different languages that our children use at home. We ended up using five languages, and now we have made it all the way up to 160! We also cooked food from different countries we learned about in our 2nd unit, Exploration, like *poori* from India, *turon* from the Philippines, *nattomaki* from Japan and many others! We also invited talented people who can speak some additional languages and asked them to read the same book, *From Head to Toe*, in different languages! We tried to learn one phrase, 'I can do it' as we listened to the book! I can do it! 我会! Kaya Ko! Je peux le faire! and many others. What fun it is to learn things we don't know from another countries! Be proud to be who you are, K2A friends, and always be kind to others!

### K2B



To celebrate the completion of our Exploration and Storytelling units in January and March, respectively, K2B engaged in a thrilling BreakOut game, which is an educational scavenger hunt. Students became expert "ninja detectives," collaborating in groups to conquer various challenges and solving various clues, from sequencing story events to decoding clues about different countries. With determination and strategy, they unlocked each key leading to a triumphant final prize. Celebrating their success, every participant received a shiny medal and delightful treats and toys. K2B demonstrated outstanding teamwork and problem-solving skills throughout the adventure—truly commendable!

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### K3A



This year, the K3As have been busy! They were scientists and learned to formulate hypotheses; they experimented and reflected on their predictions while exploring different scientific concepts. They were also engaged in making our Earth a happy place for everyone to live in and made their own recycled paper and upcycled projects, to create "The K3A World". They were engaged in hands-on activities, solving problems with creative solutions! All these accomplishments were made possible by their thinking skills and teamwork! Way to go K3A!



### K3B



The highlight in K3B was our exciting journey into science experiments! Witnessing the enthusiastic engagement of our young learners during hands-on activities was truly delightful. While the scientific method might seem like a complex concept for their age group, actively participating in experiments empowered them and gave them a sense of control over their learning process. This happened not only in TDI but also in Math and Literacy subjects, making learning even more interesting and rewarding. By immersing themselves in hands-on activities, the students not only learned but also enjoyed the process. This approach sparked a genuine interest in them, encouraging them to persist and cultivate a love for learning through practical experiences. Seeing their curiosity and excitement during the experiments was a testament to the effectiveness of experiential learning in early childhood education.

## KPASS Choral Festival



On May 8, elementary choir club students participated in the interschool KPASS Choral Festival. As well as showcasing their singing talents, students received some workshop training and had the opportunity to participate in a large-scale choral work, singing with 150+ other voices. This was the first time KIST has participated in this event and students are already excited about taking part again next year.

**Robert Collins and Niña Reyes**  
Music Teachers



# KIPS News



This year, the cherry blossoms bloomed longer than usual, allowing us to enjoy the P0/P1 and P2 picnics with the children in mid-April.

P0/P1 welcomed two new children in April, and both the children and their teachers are enjoying their lively preschool life. The P1 children have taken on the role of leaders, while the new P0/P1 children are doing their best to get used to the new routines. The P2s also willingly help take care of the little ones at the park and during joint playtime. They are enjoying and learning from their lessons as they prepare for their graduation.

It is said that nurturing "non-cognitive skills" is important for children's future success. The period for developing non-cognitive skills is divided into three stages: infancy, early childhood (ages 1-6), and the period of school education during childhood and adolescence. At KIPS, we are responsible for part of the infancy and early childhood stages. In infancy (0-1 years), stable attachment with caregivers is crucial, and in early childhood (ages 1-6), the spontaneous behavior developed through play is important.

Children can control their emotions when there are adults who warmly accept them as they are. This emotional stability lays the foundation for the development of non-cognitive skills such as emotional control, perseverance, self-belief, and empathy for others. In the early childhood stage, children seek out things that interest and amuse them, accumulating these experiences through play, which will give them the power to acquire spontaneous behavior.

While valuing "play in early childhood," which lays the foundation for enhancing concentration through fun activities, KIPS teaches a sense of consideration for others (cooperation) that grows through the exchange of "thank you" and sharing, a positive attitude (motivation) to "try more" and "challenge and do my



best," and a sense of achievement, confidence, joy and curiosity.

We do not know what interests children will develop or which directions they will pursue in the future, but we hope to help lay the foundation for them as much as possible.



On Thursday, June 13, we will hold the Completion Ceremony, and we hope you will be able to join us for this proud occasion.

Let's enjoy the remaining school days together until the end of June! I hope you all have a wonderful summer vacation.

**Yukiko Jones**  
KIPS Office Coordinator



## From the P0/P1 classroom...

Two new friends joined the P0/P1 class in April. They have settled in well at KIPS and are having a great time with their friends and teachers.

This year's concert featured a performance of "Wheels on the Bus." This was the first time that the P0/P1 class has performed together and the days leading up to the concert were filled with both anxiety and excitement. Concert practice was held during playtime and after the Goodbye Circle. At first, the children just watched their teachers dance, but as they practiced more and more, they began to learn the choreography and enjoy dancing to the song. During the rehearsal and the actual performance, they were able to go up on the big stage without crying. Some children danced happily in front of the large audience, while others were a bit shy, but we are proud of all of them for participating until the end and want to praise them for their efforts.



**Hitomi Hirakawa**  
P0/P1 Teacher

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## From the P2 classroom...

It is amazing how quickly the months go by and how quickly children grow up, and before we know it, it is already June. Students who did not even understand the meaning of "Good morning" when they first entered KIPS are now talking to each other in English, and we are so happy to hear stories of them speaking English at home as well.

In addition to their English skills, students have spent the past year focusing on non-cognitive skills (self-control, perseverance, ability to take action, ability to think, etc.), which are highly valued at KIST, to make their learning in K1 more fruitful. We hope that the students will make the most of what they have learned at KIPS over the past year and have a wonderful time in K1.

Looking back on Terms 6 and 7, we held a "Tummy Exercise" event sponsored by Yakult Co., Ltd. The Yakult representatives taught us how to keep our stomachs healthy and how to produce healthy bowel movements. The students were very interested in the various models of stool, and they had a great time dancing Yakult's original exercise.

At the Spring Concert, the students were able to proudly show the results of three months of practice in front of their parents.

The Parents' Class Observation Day, which was introduced last year and was very popular, was mainly for the parents to see how the children are doing in their daily school lives. We covered the upper part of the entrance to prevent children from noticing, and from the gaps in the cover, parents could see the lesson in progress. We hope that everyone enjoyed watching their children during a regular lesson.



With the conclusion of our numerous events at KIPS this year, only the Completion Ceremony remains. We hope that this final event will be a wonderful memory for both students and parents.

**Sohta Ohashi**  
P2 Teacher



## Sakura Medal Book Report Contest 2023–24



The 15th Sakura Medal Book Report Contest, as organized by the International School Japanese Teachers' Association, was held again this year. Three students from KIST submitted works in the "Lower Elementary" division, and five in the "Upper Elementary" division.

As a result of the judging, in the Upper Elementary division, **Sho** (G5A) and **Masayuki** (G4B) won awards for excellence and **Wakana** (G5B) won an award for effort. Congratulations students!

### Lower Elementary division

### Upper Elementary division



(L>R) Itsuki (G2B), Yui (G2B), Aimi (G3A)



(Back) Sho (G5A), Amane (G5A), Ray (G5A)  
(Front) Masayuki (G4B), Wakana (G5B)



**Sho (G5A)**



**Masayuki (G4B)**



**Wakana (G5B)**



## IGCSE News



Congratulations to our Grade 10 students as they approach the completion of their IGCSE exams! By the time this issue of *The Comet* is published, they will only have the Chemistry and Physics exams left. Since the final IGCSE exams began on May 10, the students have shown good teamwork by supporting one another through small-group revision sessions as they prepared for their exams, ensuring they were thoroughly prepared for each challenge. We eagerly anticipate the results, which will be released on August 22. Congratulations once more to the Grade 10 students on finishing the IGCSE curriculum and we are excited to see what you will accomplish in the Diploma Programme!

Our Grade 9 students are eagerly anticipating their final year in the IGCSE curriculum. With this transition, you may have some questions about how to prepare over the summer. I offer three key recommendations or the "3-Rs":

### Review past content

Revisit the topics covered in Grade 9 to solidify your understanding of foundational concepts, which are crucial as you advance to Grade 10. Use tools like Seneca Learning and other revision sites to strengthen any areas where you feel less confident.

### Reflect on your learning strategies

Evaluate how effectively you organized your studies, including note-taking, adhering to a study schedule, and practicing with past exam questions. Identify areas where you can improve and be ready to discuss these with me at the beginning of the next school year.

### Recharge and Reconnect

It's essential to maintain a balance of academics with other interests during the summer break, such as hobbies and physical activity. If you don't have an exercise plan you consistently follow, I encourage you to develop one that you can carry over to the upcoming school year, as exercise can help manage stress and maintain focus. Additionally, take this summer to engage with current events and make connections with what you learned during the previous school year. Connecting your G9 topics with their real-world applications can enhance your understanding and spark further interest in your studies.

Lastly, we are excited to welcome our incoming Grade 9 students to the IGCSE next year, especially with the upcoming G9 camp!

Enjoy your summer holidays and we look forward to seeing you again in the new school year!

**Keith Erickson**  
IGCSE Coordinator



## Staff 10!



In this month's Staff 10!, we are pleased to present **Emily Cobbs** who joined us in January 2018 initially working as a teaching assistant and ELS instructor in the Elementary School, before subsequently moving into an ICT teaching position.

### 1) Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

My hometown is on the beach, so we sometimes had PE at the beach. I was on the school surf team. "In fact, that was my job. Just beach."

### 2) What is your favorite place in the world?

My favorite place in the world is being in the mountains.

### 3) Who would you like to meet if you had the chance and why?

If I could meet anyone, I would like to meet someone from pre-historic times to ask them what life was like back then.

### 4) Do you have any special skills or talents?

I like to sew and embroider.

### 5) Please share a little-known fact about yourself.

I don't really like videogames.

### 6) What is your most prized possession?

My most prized possession is my health.

### 7) Which IB learner profile attribute do you most closely identify with and why?

The IB learner profile attribute that I most closely identify with is "Inquirer" since there are so many wonderful things in life to learn about and experience.

### 8) If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?

Nothing.

### 9) Is there anything you are trying to learn/improve about yourself at the moment?

I am currently studying for the JLPT N2.

### 10) Do you have any special message for your fans?

Thank you for learning about computers with me! Get outside and have some fun.



Mountain lover, Ms. Cobbs (left), sharing the view from the summit of Mt. Chausudake, an active volcano in Tochigi.

## MUN Club Reports

### 2024 AOBAMUN

#### Our experiences at the 2024 AOBAMUN Conference

On April 27, KIST students had an opportunity to participate in the first-ever AOBA Model United Nations Conference. Representing a wide range of nations and split into two committees, debating over a domineering issue humankind faces—the threat of AI.

Being the first time for many of the participating KIST delegates, it was a fruitful conference, yielding a wide range of viable solutions. With topics ranging from the ethical uses of AI in education to the dependence of AI on cybersecurity, a ferocious debate was ignited, each delegate trying to find cracks in speakers' arguments. Through teamwork, though perhaps grudgingly, we managed to finish writing a draft resolution against the clock, watching as the seconds ticked down from the half-hour we were given. Miraculously, all resolutions managed to pass.

Afterward, a chaotic crisis committee ensued, where each nation fought for themselves to reign supreme in the aftermath of the hypothetical scenario of the United States bombing Russia. An intense session of debate included some notable moments where the delegate of India (**Kazumune**, G7A) attempted to reinstate the caste system across the world, and the delegate of Switzerland (**Xintong**, G8A) tried to take over the nuclear weapons of the United States. For their performance at their event, **Xintong** (G8A) won an Honorable Mention.

Looking back at the event, the AOBAMUN was an excellent opportunity for all participating delegates, offering a chance to understand the different committees of the United Nations. Remembering the passions and fervor with which each delegate argued, we hope this will be a valuable steppingstone forward for next year, in which KIST plans to host its first Model United Nations Conference post-COVID. We look forward to seeing many familiar faces at our conference next year!

**Xintong** (G8A)



*Xintong (G8A) and Rihana (G8A)*



### Japan Metropolitan MUN

#### Japan Metropolitan MUN Conference at Senzoku Gakuen

Sophisticated and complicated ideas proposed in ballistic shouts: this is MUN. This was my first MUN—I was extremely overwhelmed. I was the delegate of Jordan on the committee UNODC for the agenda of minimizing illicit drug trafficking.

I heard that the Senzoku MUN was one of the largest MUNs that was ever coordinated, and it was true, with about 70 delegates in our committee. There were also people from abroad, which I was surprised to hear. I merely did MUN for the sake of participating, and this contrasted to those who came from abroad, who had passionate goals in International Relations. I didn't realize that MUN was host to such grand aims to those who are passionate in politics.

Being around the immense auras of those who love MUN made me a passionate lover for MUN too. The resolutions discussed were very interesting, where each person had different perspectives on each topic. Different blocs would try to gain members and there would be a bombardment of arguments, with linguistic fists of patriarchy for the assigned country thrown against each other. Throughout these conversations, I was never the instigator and was always absorbing the knowledge shared, but could never publicize them.

This takes me to the next point—my greatest enemy: public speaking. I originally joined MUN in hopes of trying to improve my public speaking. I thought I would start slow, with a small number of delegates. However, I was exposed to 70 delegates, who were sharply staring at each other's body language, analyzing each other's 'uhhhs' and pauses, patiently waiting for the moment to strike with a clever retort. This predatory audience created fear, and resultantly, I didn't even raise my card to speak. However, I was always blinded by the urgent raising of plaque cards immediately after the chairs spoke—it scared me how fearless and hungry these monsters were for politics: one blink and there must have been over 50 cards up in the air. Some even stood up on their chairs in a desperate plea for a speaking opportunity against the animalistic delegates. I was scared...But I was also inspired by the sheer passionate hunger and fearlessness of the delegates, which motivated me to continue with MUN in order to stand victorious against my fears.



Overall, the Senzoku MUN provided me with a basis for the structure of a typical MUN, and attacked me with the sheer pressure that comes with participating in MUNs. However, it inspired me to become these animalistic delegates that demand authority for their ideas.

**Jyoti** (G10B)



*Daeseong (G10A) and Jyoti (G10B)*



*Max (G8A) and Han (G8C)*



*Lander (G10B) and Arnav (G10B)*

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## NAGOYA UNIVERSITY MUN



### KIST delegates participate at Nagoya University MUN Conference

Nagoya University MUN was the second MUN I attended, and it was by far the most enjoyable experience of my life. I was the delegate of South Africa under the committee of UNHRC, with the agenda of protecting human rights in detention centers. This was a sensitive topic for South Africa, and demanded creative use of words and clever manipulation of ideas and tactics from the assigned delegate: myself.

The first day was completely different from the previous MUNs: my heart thumping, skipping a beat when I heard 'South Africa'; I nervously whisper "pre-present a-and vot-vo-voting". I expected a burst of laughter, a laughter that exposed my absolute worthlessness, nervousness, and fear. This would be the case for the previous MUNs, where the aura of a predatory audience would make me fear the worst.

But no.

There was no laughter; no sound; pin drop silence.

"Delegate of Serbia..."

And the list goes on. And on. And on.

Later, I was surprised by the welcoming atmosphere presented. I looked back and the students were smiling at me, laughing joyfully, and genuinely enjoying each second of the MUN. My posture shifted: a slumpy humpback posture to a confident one.

I raised my plaque card for the opening speech. My heart thumped less. And in less than two minutes, I was done. "That wasn't so bad!" I thought to myself.

I raised my plaque card for a total of 19 times throughout the MUN. My heart still thumped throughout the two days, but it was not from fear, nervousness, or embarrassment—it was from excitement. I presented my ideas throughout the whole MUN effectively and was one of the main catalysts for the continuation of major topics like non-refoulement and community integrated solutions. I also won Best Position Paper in this MUN.

I was originally skeptical of socials, but I became the most enthusiastic about it. I went to absolutely everyone and simply talked. This never came naturally to me, but the MUN provided me with such a warm atmosphere that I was able to speak without even thinking. The laughter and joy that spread throughout the room infected others and people who were usually shy started to speak. I made many connections with university students, improved my confidence and speaking skills, as well as planting a seed of curiosity for International Relations.

This was by far the most enjoyable experience of my life, and then I decided that 'I love MUN'.

Jyoti (G10B)

## New Face

Since the last issue of *The Comet*, we have welcomed a new staff member, **Shion Yamamoto**, who has joined our office team as an Administrative Assistant in the Secondary School.

On behalf of the school community, we wish Ms. Yamamoto all the best in her new roles.



**Shion Yamamoto**  
Administrative Assistant  
(Secondary)

## School Calendar 2024–25 Update



The dates of school vacation periods and other important dates were announced in the December 2023 issue of *The Comet*. Since then, however, two changes have been made as shown below. We apologize for any inconvenience these changes may cause.

The complete calendar will be distributed soon.

- KISTival:**

(Will not be held in 2024)

- Winter vacation:**

**December 14, 2024 – January 6, 2025**

(Students return from Tuesday, January 7)

## Summer App Recommendations



### Best apps for summer 2024 (and beyond!)

With this summer set to be the hottest summer on record, many of us will be forced to spend more time indoors and out of the sun. This provides good opportunities to focus on positive and productive things, rather than 'doom scrolling' through social media apps or continuous playing of games (which are fine in moderation, of course 😊).



Here are three apps that are highly recommended by educational professionals for widely different reasons.

**Matthew Archer**  
Student Care Coordinator (Secondary)

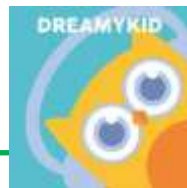
#### GoNoodle Kids Videos

Suitable for: Ages 6–12  
What is the focus of the app?  
GoNoodle Kids encourages young people to use their device actively, rather than passively. The video library (300+ at last count) features videos of various lengths that focus on physical and mental wellbeing. Yoga, dance, and breathing exercises are just a few of the video types available. Many of the videos are instructor led to make it easier for younger students.



#### DreamyKid

Suitable for: Ages 3–17  
What is the focus of the app?  
DreamyKid can be used during the day or for when it is time to go to sleep! There are a wide variety of topics included, and there are both audio and video options. The purpose of the app is to help young people self-manage anxieties they are having and develop regulation techniques they can take into adulthood.



#### 7 Cups Therapy

Suitable for: Teens 13+  
What does the app focus on?  
7 Cups users can use the chat function to talk one-on-one with trained listeners and participate in supportive community groups and forums. This is a specialized app for teenagers. The one-on-one listeners are vetted, and the chat function is anonymous, offering a non-intrusive way to open up to another person. There are some paid functions within the app, so do speak to your child about the importance of not paying for content without adult consent. This app's popularity seems to be spreading quickly in professional circles.



## Guest Speaker in DP Physics

### University of Colorado Boulder, Professor Nils Halverson

In the ever-evolving world of physics, the chance to learn from leading experts is a priceless experience. Recently, our DP Physics students in Grades 11 and 12 had the exceptional privilege of hosting Professor Nils Halverson, who is spending his sabbatical year here in Tokyo.

Professor Halverson is renowned for developing millimeter-wavelength instrumentation to study the origins of the universe through observations of the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB). This work is crucial for gathering evidence of gravitational waves released during an early period of inflation and for constraining the neutrino mass. Additionally, his research helps us understand the growth of cosmic structures and the nature of dark energy.

Currently, Professor Halverson is a co-investigator on two groundbreaking CMB experiments: the South Pole Telescope (SPT) and Polarbear/Simons Array. He is also a co-investigator on a NASA Technology Development Grant aimed at advancing focal plane technology for LiteBIRD and other next-generation CMB space missions.

We owe this incredible opportunity to Mr. Kilty, who had the chance to meet Professor Halverson. A huge shout-out to him for making this possible. Here is a link to Professor Halverson's enlightening presentation: [LINK](#)

Our students were deeply inspired by the insights that Professor Halverson shared with us. This experience not only enriched their understanding of physics but also ignited their passion for exploring the mysteries of the universe.

**Cesar Cely**  
Subject Area Coordinator—Science



## G11 TOK Exhibition 2024

The TOK Exhibition is a project by which students link a knowledge question (e.g. Are some things unknowable?) to three real-life objects using TOK concepts they learnt through class. While the exhibition itself is on paper, the event held on April 17th was an opportunity for G11 students to present one of their objects to G10 students to help with their understanding of what TOK as a subject encompasses. The G11s set up stalls around the 6th floor, with decorations and props to demonstrate their object and their ideas. On the day, the G10s went around each stall to listen to a 2–3-minute-long presentation about different prompts, and gave the presentation a score through Microsoft forms.

My exhibition was about the prompt: "What is the relationship between knowledge and culture?", and I chose Wok Hei as the object to present. One of the most challenging aspects of the exhibition was explaining the object, as Wok Hei is an intangible aroma in Cantonese cuisine, and many other groups also had abstract objects that required thoughtful explanations. For me, my prop, which was a wok I borrowed from a friend, enhanced my explanation of Wok Hei as I could demonstrate how the technique of shaking the wok leads to the formation of the Wok Hei aroma. I also had some students actually try shaking the wok to experience the difficulty of shaking it with the correct technique.

Throughout the event, I continually revised the way I deliver my explanations, whether it be the length, the speed or the wording of my explanations, to ensure that the G10s understood what I meant verbally; this was especially important as no supporting videos were allowed. Thus, this exhibition was great practice for public speaking and presentations, and I definitely exercised my communication skills as well as my time-management skills. Overall, I think this exhibition was a fantastic opportunity for G11 students to remind themselves of their exhibition while practicing their presentation skills, and for G10 students to get a sneak peek at what TOK would be like for them next year.



Fumie (G11A)

**Knowledge  
is power!**



## KPASS Modern Music Festival

On a bright and sunny (finally!) Saturday of April 13th, the KIST Rock Band journeyed an hour away to Yokohama International School to participate in the first ever KPASS Modern Music Festival. In the morning, we took part in workshops (including one led by Mr. Rob). We played three very well-known songs: "Angels" by Robbie Williams, "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd and "Superstition" by Stevie Wonder. I was playing the keyboard/rock organ and vocals, G10A's Flora was on vocals, G10A's Ulala was on the bass and vocals, G10B's Jiani was on the keyboard, G6A's Koh was on the drums, G9A's Saumitra was also doing both guitar and vocals, and G9A's Rian on guitar, delivering what was possibly the highlight of the concert with an awe-inspiring solo on "Sweet Home Alabama".

The KPASS Modern Music Festival was undoubtedly an unforgettable experience for me personally. It was absolutely amazing to be able to share the stage with other talented musicians and represent the school in an artistic way. Performing for students from other schools was definitely a unique experience, but watching them perform their own songs was truly inspirational and motivating for the entire band going forward, providing us with a multitude of new ideas for future arrangements.

We greatly thank Mr. Robert, Mrs. Nina and Mr. Rowlands for all of their support throughout the year!



**Edward (G10B)**



## The Power of Voice



In LSP English, there is a non-fiction unit in G7 that is aimed at enhancing students' critical understanding of our world. Covering important topics such as feminism, climate change, racism, and homophobia, we aim to equip students with writing skills necessary to craft speeches on subjects they feel strongly about. These speeches were delivered in class, where classmates voted for three winners, before they advanced to the final round of 'The Power of Voice' competition.

Last Friday, the nine winning speakers went head-to-head in 'The Power of Voice' competition, enlightening both students and teachers about social issues in our world. The topics ranged from women's rights and



gender discrimination to football, climate change, academic streaming, parental overcontrol, ecocide, and AI domination. Energy filled the room as the audience held motivational placards to support their teammates for this event.

**Olivia Kemble-Clarkson**  
Secondary English Teacher



This event was a wonderful opportunity to not only learn how to present about a topic we were interested in, but also a great opportunity to absorb countless different perspectives on different social issues. When I was doing research on my topic, I was able to go from: "this topic intrigues me very much" to "I am confident enough to present and share my knowledge to an audience". Moreover, this event made me reflect and think: what makes an effective speech? What devices should I include? How should I start/end the speech? How can I attract the audience's attention? Despite not making it to the final competition, I was moved by EVERY speech I heard, and I relished this monumental experience. —Ann (G7A)



I was intrigued by 'The Power of Voice' speeches as they provided the students with voice and liberty—I was really impressed by how the speakers used diverse devices to embed ethos, pathos, logos into their speech and attract the audience. Now that I understand more about climate change related topics, I feel galvanized to become an advocate for this global issue! This experience helped me to realize that this world is beautiful, but also full of many problems that must be fixed. Congratulations winners! —Jun (G7A)



I learned that there are many global issues and how it is important to raise your voice to support marginalized groups. I was impressed by the variety of topics that ranged from "why Ronaldo is the best athlete" to "women's rights". I also learned statistics about why overworking is bad for you and became fascinated by the topic of napalm being an act of 'ecocide'. Many speeches made me feel the urge to improve, help and solve issues; some made me feel engaged and relaxed, some made me feel frustrated and disheartened, but out of all the speeches, I found one especially engaging: "Gender Discrimination", delivered by Angelina. Her use of tone, pitch, eye contact and language techniques perfectly communicated the message about how gender discrimination will affect us. Every anecdote, every sentence was expressing the importance of this matter. This unit helped me to shape my skills on the use of language, techniques, and structure. —Xiaoye (G7A)



From this year's Power of Voice competition, I learnt the significant influence that powerful speeches have on an audience. The speeches made me feel inspired and emotional, particularly the uplifting speech shared by Luca in Mr. Archer's class about overcoming climate change. His story was not only engaging with the use of DAFOREST but also demonstrated the power of courage and commitment put into the speeches in order to present it to a wide range of audiences. This competition has significantly enhanced my understanding on public speaking and effective communication. The first few speeches presented on the first day in class really helped me develop my confidence and ability to convey emotions through words. Finally, to my peers and winners, I would like to congratulate you for sharing your incredible speeches with us. These performances have set a high standard for the upcoming G7s. —Aswath (G7A)

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From the Power of Voice competition, I learned how powerful speeches could actually be about society. I felt moved, as if I wanted to go and scream to the rest of the world how horrendously we are treating our planet and our people. Topics relating to women's rights/gender equality and parental control were the speeches that really made me feel that humanity isn't trying to take the steps with the legs that we already developed centuries ago. As stated in one of the speeches, 'You can't start a fire without a spark', and our younger generation is the one meant to make this spark. These speeches taught me that actions must be taken, and they must be taken now. This unit helped me improve my speech writing skills significantly, which helped me give a proper message to my audience. I want to thank the winners for giving me a wider view of our society's conditions, which led me to try and take action for these ongoing issues. —**Samiksha (G7A)**



## KIST Teacher Co-authors Scientific Paper

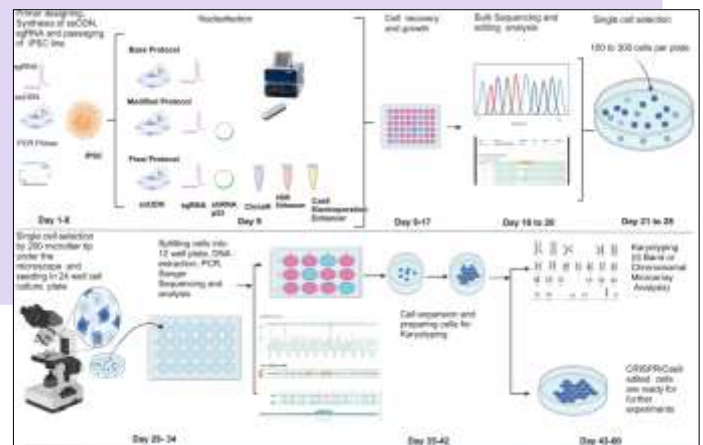
KIST Secondary Biology teacher, **Jamee-Grace Rose**, has recently become a co-author of a paper on CRISPR gene editing in the Scientific Reports journal from 'Nature' for work she did previously at the University of Minnesota. Miss Rose shares details of her experience below.



From 2020 to 2021, I worked as a researcher at the University of Minnesota. I worked alone in the laboratory nearly the entire time due to the coronavirus pandemic. My role was to develop an 'in-house' method that used CRISPR to genetically modify stem cells.

Stem cells were collected from patients with a particular gene that increases the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions (such as Alzheimer's). The aim was to 'correct' the abnormal gene in the patient stem cells to test for gain of function. Then to do the reverse; genetically edit non-diseased stem cells to diseased, to test for loss of function.

Throughout the year through many virtual collaboration meetings, failed, repeated and successful tests, we finally created cell lines that had been genetically modified using CRISPR! This journal article is the fruit of our labor.



Congratulations to Miss Rose on this wonderful achievement! We hope your experience helps inspire budding scientists among the student body to pursue their scientific interests in the future.

The full article may be viewed at the link below.

Web <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-024-60766-4>





## Why is the Earth Amazing?



April 22 is Earth Day, a special occasion that brings us together to appreciate and protect our beautiful planet. This year, our G8A Science class embraced the celebration with enthusiasm and curiosity!

We kicked off our Earth Day festivities by watching two captivating specials that transported us into the wonders of our world.

On **Magellan TV** (<https://www.magellantv.com/video/dynamic-earth>), we journeyed through time with *Dynamic Earth*, witnessing the incredible systems that make the miracle of life possible. Then, on **Curiosity Stream** (<https://curiositystream.com/video/8051>) we explored the vibrant marine life in the documentary *A Day on the Reef*, discovering the intricate web of life that sustains our oceans.



Our class was inspired by these fascinating documentaries and the awe-inspiring realities of our planet. We took some time to reflect on what it means to be part of this magnificent Earth and penned down our thoughts. Here are a few reflections from students that we are excited to share with you.

We recommend you to keep rejoicing in the amazing home planet we call home, and find some interesting and inspiring documentaries to watch during the summer break.

**Cesar Cely**  
Subject Area Coordinator—Science



After watching the two videos, the first one being about the CO<sub>2</sub> system on Earth and the second one being about coral reefs, it is very clear that the Earth we live on is very beautiful indeed. I believe so as the Earth's ecosystem finds ways to cope with the tons of CO<sub>2</sub> produced yearly. This can be from plants taking in the CO<sub>2</sub> and producing oxygen or how the ocean takes the CO<sub>2</sub> gas and absorbs it by simply dissolving in the seawater.

Additionally, the ecosystem or fish, coral reefs and many other species like planktons, reptiles were equally mesmerizing. This story of how fish live in the ocean and how the coral reefs survive made me think about the Earth we live on and how new discoveries are made daily, many being new species that are discovered in the deep oceans. From this I am still amazed yet curious about this Earth and its history, but mainly what will happen in the future.

Sadly, time travel is still not a thing yet so I will only have knowledge based on the past and present. However, with that it is very clear that we live on a very beautiful and dreamy planet.

**Max (G8A)**



I believe that the Earth is one of the most special and beautiful planets from the unique feature of having 'life' on the planet. In class, we have learnt that the 'life' on Earth has supported the control of the carbon dioxide emissions through their activities such as absorbing the carbon dioxide in the air and producing oxygen.

This makes Earth different from its sister planet, Venus, because Venus had fewer feature for the control in the carbon dioxide which resulted to the planet's surface temperature being at 500 degrees with many volcanoes, that now makes it impossible for human being and other life to live. Therefore, the Earth being able to control its greenhouse gas emission and protect itself from environmental destruction, Earth has its beauty in the feature of having 'life'.

Furthermore, this state of the environment run through by the carbon cycle has been destructed through human activities. I believe that in order to prevent the desertification of land, the rising temperature of Earth, and other negative consequences from the environmental issues arising, humans are required to raise awareness on how to act towards this by creating small steps to reduce our carbon footprint. Also, if this action is unsuccessful, perhaps the Earth's beauty will be destroyed and result in a planet with an environment similar to Venus.

**Sarah (G8A)**



The system of Earth—In the first video, it talks about the system of Earth and how life on Earth contributes to the balanced organization of Earth as well as the climate. This made me reflect on how the existence of Earth is a miracle(?) in a way because unlike Venus, Earth had countless factors that influenced the balance it has today (magnetic field line, how living organisms impact the CO<sub>2</sub> level) which altogether seem like a coincidence. After watching the video, I felt a stronger appreciation for the planet we live right now and how we need to take a better care to thank this planet.

Contribution of life—In the second video we've watched, it explains the marine life at the coral reef, focusing on their habitat and food chain. I discovered that, similar to humans, fishes and creatures below the water also have a system for society and how everyone has their role in that system. It was fascinating to see the unique distinctive looks of each creature and their lifestyle. Although we may not interact with these species often, it reminded me on how we are not the only one living on Earth and how the contribution of each creature is what creates this balance on Earth.

**Momo (G8A)**



## Grade 11 DP ESS Fieldtrip

This May, a few Grade 11 students had the opportunity to visit Arakawa Sunamachi Riverside Park for one day as part of the DP Environmental Systems & Societies (ESS) course.

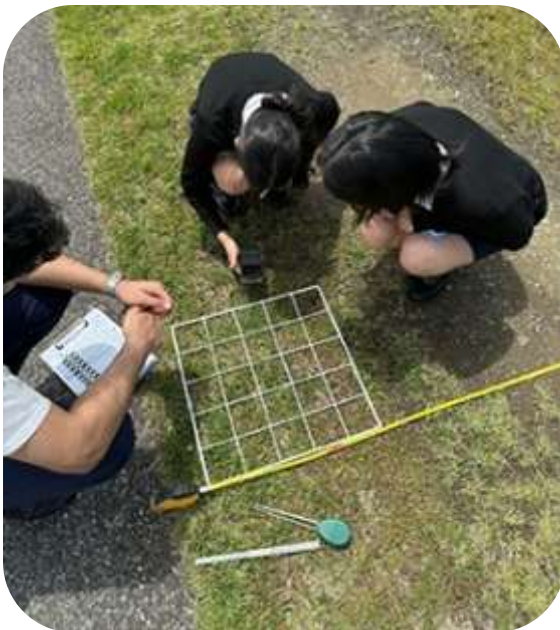
The students spent the day completing fieldwork to investigate the relationship between the distance from a footpath and the diversity of vegetation species. The excursion was part of the Ecosystems & Ecology topic.

The students were able to apply the ecological sampling skills they had learned about at school in the field, including systematic transect sampling. They also

practiced measuring abiotic factors, such as soil moisture, soil pH, air temperature and light intensity.

The students had a wonderful time in the sunshine putting their skills to the test, and they will be writing a lab report to document their findings as part of their assessment in the course.

**Marta Alba**  
DP ESS Teacher



*(L>R) Pranav, Prakariti and Yebin of G11A identifying vegetation species in their quadrat.*



*ESS students enjoying their lunch at the study site.*



*(L>R) Feiru and Isseh of G11B, and Prakariti, Yebin and Pranav of G11A, counting the number of species in their quadrats.*



*ESS students recording qualitative data about the study site.*

## Spotlight on Clubs



### Pokémon Club (Elementary)

Let me tell you all about an afterschool club centered around the wonderful world of Pokémon! For me personally, Pokémon was a videogame that I played almost 30 years ago. Today, the world of Pokémon is more popular than ever, and after seeing how popular it is with KIST students, I decided to start a Pokémon Club. In most cases, the students are much more knowledgeable than me! After all, there are now more than 1000 Pokémon in the Pokémon universe.

The Pokémon Club has several planned activities for each semester but what happens during the semester typically depends on the students and their interests. Creating and making is the focus of our club and activities usually center around drawing, but have also included using perler beads, paper clay, and origami, to create Pokémon characters and Pokémon-related content. We have even made card games so students can compete in a trump-style Pokémon battle.

At the moment, there are ten G1 students, and we are all working on trying to make Pokémon using paper clay. It's a great chance for students to get more experience using art tools and materials too!

You don't have to be a Pokémon Master to join Pokémon Club. Just an interest in learning about the world and the drive to create is all you need!



**John McDonough**  
Club Supervisor



### Board Games Club (Secondary)

There is always a sense of cheerfulness that comes from playing and winning your favorite board game. Our club is for those eager to play games with the added incentive to win. As a group of six, we choose a different board game every Tuesday. We enjoy a variety of games such as Skull King, Chess, Carcassonne, Ticket to Ride, and Settlers of Catan. Lately, our top choices have been Ticket to Ride and Chess. Some in our group consider chess to be "the greatest game of all time."



We often strategize to become the unbeatable champion of the game. The board games usually last a long time. We often end up staying longer than planned, competing intensely in rounds that take longer than anticipated. The competition is fierce!

That is what makes it so enjoyable. Winning the game in the end, whether by blocking others from completing a train route in Ticket to Ride, declaring "Checkmate!" in Chess, finishing a massive castle in Carcassonne, or upgrading a building in Catan, is always satisfying. Of course, the games themselves also contribute to the enjoyment.



In conclusion, our club is for board game enthusiasts who appreciate and enjoy competition and strategic thinking. We take our games seriously, but we always have fun in the end.

**Toshani (G7B)**



## CTH Announcements



### Who are we?

Founded in 2015, the Connect to Hisaichi (CTH) team has historically supported disaster-affected areas through many organized fundraisers. Over the years, we have taken initiatives like selling snacks and drinks at

school events, including the PTC. In 2023, the CTH team managed to raise over ¥160,000 in sales, which were then donated to those affected by the earthquake disaster in Turkey. During our weekly meetings, our discussions entail the different approaches we can take to improve overall awareness of disasters. Our most recent project included educating the younger audience in the elementary school about disaster prevention and post-disaster precautions through presenting in their classrooms. Ultimately, we aim to not only raise donated money for disaster-affected areas, but also provide our school community with relevant information to survive in cases of one.

Run by members who have spent their entire lives in Japan, CTH is aware about the frequent earthquakes the KIST community experiences as part of our day-to-day lives. To respond to this, we ensure that the school community is protected from earthquake impacts through safety inspections. Every semester, selected members from our team visit every classroom in the secondary school building and count the number of safety helmets prepared. Then by comparing it with the number of students allocated in each classroom, we are able to identify certain classrooms that may require more or less of the helmets. This approach is necessary to ensure all students are sufficiently provided with safety equipment during emergencies.



In our most recent project, members from the team travelled to the elementary school building to provide a lecture to the Grade 3 students about ways to prevent disasters on a household level and useful knowledge they can take home with them to tell their



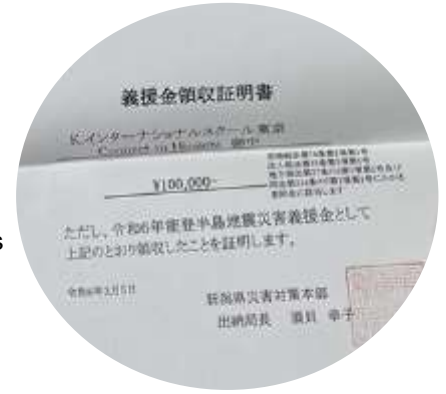
parents. We were very happy to see so many of the elementary students engaged in the talk, and actively participating in brainstorming ideas with our members. Since our service group values educating the general public on disaster-related knowledge, this act of giving a talk was a large step forward for our group that satisfied our aims, and we hope to continue these efforts in the future as well.

Following the recent Noto earthquake disaster at the northeastern tip of Japan that impacted the lives of an estimated 28,000 people, the CTH team decided to take the initiative of donating ¥100,000 to the area, much like our previous efforts in donating to Turkey. This embarked a new chapter for CTH since it was the first time we had ever donated somewhere without a specific fundraiser for it, and all our money came from stored funds we have kept for emergencies like these.

However, amid the Noto region receiving all the attention globally, our team quickly noticed the earthquake had the same impacts in areas such as Niigata, which have often been neglected by media outlets. As a result, the team collectively decided that it would be more suitable to donate our money to Niigata rather than to Noto directly, due to the lack of support they receive despite experiencing significant impacts of the earthquake.

Thank you to all that contributed to our service this past year, and we hope for your continued support in the future.

Isseh (G11B)  
Article edited by Shota (G11A)



# Library News



## Elementary Library



### Book Week 2024

This year, we had a fantastic Book Week in Elementary filled with activities to celebrate reading and the important of literature in our lives.

The week started with a parade of books, where students dressed in their cultural attire, representing their home languages and their favorite book characters. The parade showcased the creativity and enthusiasm of our students, who proudly displayed their costumes and shared stories from around the world.



during these moments were electric, as students shared their favorite books with friends and teachers.



The highlight of the week was the Read Aloud sessions, where parents visited the school to read stories to the students in their home languages. It was heartwarming to see parents and students alike engrossed in captivating tales, fostering a love for books and reading within our community.

In addition to the Read Aloud sessions, the students enjoyed DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time. Each day, a time was set aside for everyone to pause their activities, pick up a book, and immerse themselves in the world of reading. The excitement and anticipation

As we celebrate the success of Book Week, we are reminded that "a good book is a good friend," emphasizing how books can be lifelong companions that enrich our minds and nourish our souls.

Let's continue to celebrate and cherish the magic of reading throughout the year!

**Priyanka B P**  
Elementary Library Supervisor



## Athletics Update

### Spring season 2024

#### Kanto JV girls' soccer



This year, the JV girls' team began with tons of promise. A great work ethic, coupled with a fun team atmosphere

meant we started the season extremely well. Unfortunately, illness and injury took its toll, and though the results were not what we wanted, I am still proud of everything we achieved this year. Great job girls. I hope to see you all out on the pitch next season! —Mr. Buck

**Thank you, Coach Buck, for your energy and effort in coaching the JV girls' football team!**

#### Kanto MS girls' basketball



There were a total of 28 girls who were part of the team this year, many new, but showing promise. The MS girls' A team finished

the Kanto season with a 4–6 record and beat LFIT in ISTAA action for a fairly even season considering a couple of losses were close games. The B team struggled a bit to start with any new members but started getting some wins part way through the season and finished with a 3–6 record. In the Kanto A team tournament, KIST were unlucky missing many routine shots and lost close games to BST and St. Maur, teams they had beaten in the season. We were able to play many home games for the first time in years, so we hope to have continued support from our students, staff, and family next season. I look forward to seeing them develop further as players next Spring! —Mr. Ota

#### Kanto MS boys' volleyball



This was the inaugural year of boys' volleyball at the middle school level for the Kanto Plain league and the KIST team had 12 members. It was a great start winning against ASIJ, CAJ

twice, and BST, but KIST slipped up in the last season game losing to TIS after blowing a 4-point lead in the final set losing 16–14. It may have been that this affected the boys' confidence going into the tournament. The boys easily brushed aside a young YIS team but lost to ASIJ in two sets, both being very close. We then lost the 3rd place game to CAJ in three

sets—a disappointing end to what promised to be a dream season. We will look to improve on our performance next Spring. —Mr. Ota

#### Kanto JV baseball



This year we were able to play three games despite the rainy season that prevented us from practicing as regularly as scheduled.

The result was three losses, but the players grew with each game and showed the skills and attitude necessary to win. —Mr. Nogami

**Thank you, Coach Nogami for organizing and coaching the JV baseball team!**

#### Spring season ISTAA futsal update:



The ISTAA futsal season is coming to a close with the U-18 tournaments happening the first weekend of June and the U-14 tournaments @ DSTY on Saturday, June 8.

The U-18 boys are undefeated thus far with five wins out of five with some very good wins against Aoba, Columbia, and LFIT. They still have three games remaining against strong opposition in DSTY, BST, and Horizon. The U-18 girls are also undefeated with two wins (Columbia and Horizon) and an unlucky tie against LFIT. They will look to keep this rolling against DSTY.

The U-14 boys team are struggling a bit this season, often missing some of their better players during games. They have one win from five games with BST still to play before the tournament. A full KIST team will make the difference. Meanwhile, the U-14 girls are undefeated in three games, one a friendly against LFIT's G9 girls (they don't have an U-14 girls' team). Despite this, the U-14 girls still won handily, 6–2. They also beat DSTY, 5–0 and UIA, 15–0. They finish their season at BST and then the tournament two days later. This could be the year for KIST to win some futsal hardware.

Thank you, coaches!

U-18 boys—Mr. Archer; U-18 girls—Mr. Buck; U-14 boys—Mr. Beaton; U-14 girls—Mr. Ota

Please check **Schoology >> Groups >> Resources** for game information and results.

**Dennis Ota**  
Athletics Coordinator



## Nurse's Notes



### How to prevent summer fatigue

#### What is 'summer fatigue'?

Summer fatigue is a condition in which the body has difficulty adapting to the hot and humid summer environment, such as being sluggish, tired and having a poor appetite. It is caused by dehydration, nutritional deficiencies and disturbances in the autonomic nervous system (sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves) that regulate body functions. Hopefully, you can incorporate summer fatigue prevention measures into your life and spend this summer in comfort.

#### Lifestyle habits that make you more susceptible to summer fatigue

- **Spending long hours indoors with excessive air-conditioning**  
The autonomic nervous system regulates body temperature through perspiration. If there is a large difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures, the autonomic nervous system works excessively to regulate body temperature, causing fatigue.
- **Taking short showers**  
Taking a bath raises the body's internal temperature (deep body temperature), and after bathing, the deep body temperature falls smoothly, making it easier to get a pleasant sleep. If you only take a shower, your deep body temperature might not rise sufficiently and the quality of your sleep may decrease.
- **Tendency to eat an unbalanced diet**  
When the heat reduces your appetite and your diet tends to be dominated by cold drinks and slurpy noodles (only carbohydrates), you are likely to be undernourished.
- **Staying up late and not sleeping enough**  
If you stay up late at night, the parasympathetic nervous system, which leads to a state of relaxation, does not switch over smoothly, resulting in shallow sleep and making it difficult to fully recover from fatigue. If you do not get enough sleep, the sympathetic nervous system is overactive and the autonomic nervous system can easily become unbalanced.
- **Lack of exercise**  
Moderate exercise helps to maintain the balance of the autonomic nervous system, making it easier to get a good night's sleep. Lack of exercise can easily affect the autonomic nervous system and the quality of sleep.

#### Specific preventative measures

- **Avoid overcooling the body with air-conditioning**  
Avoid extreme temperature differences between outside and inside, and it is recommended that an indoor temperature of around 28°C (82°F) with the air-conditioner in use is the optimum temperature. Air flow indoors is comfortable, but be aware that if the wind blows directly against the body, the body may become too cold or dehydrated due to the loss of fluid in the body.
- **Take a bath**  
Soaking in a lukewarm bath before bedtime will gradually lower your deep body temperature after bathing and improve the quality of your sleep.
- **Hydrate frequently**  
After waking up, it is effective to take in water and a small amount of salt to help prevent heat illness. Frequent hydration can prevent dehydration but be careful not to consume large amounts of caffeine, as this can cause dehydration.
- **Maintain a nutritionally balanced diet**  
The key is to take in the proteins, minerals and vitamins needed to recover from fatigue. Curry and other dishes that incorporate spices and other ingredients that stimulate the appetite are recommended.
- **Maintain a regular rhythm of life**  
Consuming breakfast and getting some sunshine resets the body's internal clock, releases hormones to make you sleepy at night, and balances the autonomic nervous system.
- **Ensuring adequate sleep**  
Good, sufficient sleep is important to maintain the balance of the autonomic nervous system. On the day after a poor night's sleep, a short nap of about 15 minutes is also effective in recovering from fatigue.
- **Try moderate light exercise**  
As the heat can easily deplete your energy, light exercise can help you maintain your fitness, adjust the balance of your autonomic nervous system and get a good night's sleep. If you would like to avoid exercising outdoors in the heat or going out, it may be a good idea to try moving your body as much as you can by yourself, such as light stretching in your room.



**Yukiko Yamazaki**  
School Nurse

#### Reference:

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan. What you need to know to prevent heat stroke. Retrived May 23, 2024, from [https://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kenkou\\_iryuu/kenkou/nettyuu/nettyuu\\_taisaku/](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kenkou_iryuu/kenkou/nettyuu/nettyuu_taisaku/)

# KIST Community Association (CA) News



## 2023–24 events throughout the year

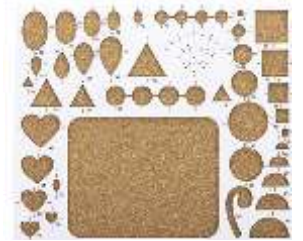
### 2023

- August 25: Secondary parent welcome night
- September 18: Coffee morning for Secondary parents
- October 9: Used book sale
- November 7: (ISC) 2 safe and secure online
- November 23: Second-hand uniform sale
- December 15: Bake sale and popcorn day with ESRC
- December 15: Holiday wreath event

### 2024

- February 9, 16: CAS session
- March 1: *Hinamatsuri* celebration
- April 5: Supported sports drink for cross country participants
- April 8–12: Honesty box book sale
- May 1: *Tango no Sekku* celebration
- May 29: CA Thank you meeting

## CA funds contributions



Book lists supported by the CA:  
[Elementary](#) [Secondary](#)

*Hinamatsuri*



*Tango no Sekku*



[Hinamatsuri video link](#)

[Tango no Sekku video link](#)

*Cross country run*



*Honesty box book sale*



## New CA Officers for 2024–25



**President**

Priyanka Nadkar

Parent of  
G6 Ashlesha,  
G3 Aneesha



**Vice President**

Harumi Yamamoto

Parent of  
G4 Kanna



**Treasurer**

Ikuyo Matsuda

Parent of  
G1 Reina,  
K1 Natsumi



**Secretary**

Antonia Richards

Parent of  
G6 Isabella,  
G3 Caleb



*Thank you meeting*

We express our sincere gratitude to all CA volunteers for their dedicated support throughout 2023–24.

**Welcome all parents! 2024–25**

Sign-up  
for CA!!





# University Guidance News

## Diversity in higher education, delayed decisions, and waitlists



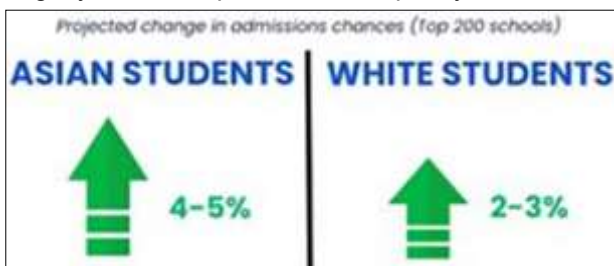
This year has been another eventful one in the realm of higher education. Right after things have "mostly" returned to normal, we now have had yet another major

change to how admissions decisions have been working, especially within the United States. Although this article will be very US-centric, there can often be knock-on effects seen globally.

### Diversity and changes in affirmative action

In a previous article, I briefly mentioned the concept of affirmative action and how that affects university applications. The idea behind affirmative action was to help create a diverse campus community where students can meet people from various walks of life instead of just accepting students with the highest grades and test scores. Their thought process was that depending on your country of origin, ethnicity, family financial situation, and institutional opportunities, the data you could represent on a page as an individual would vary quite a lot.

- **What changes have happened now?**  
Going forward (unless more changes happen), most universities will not be able to consider racial/ethnic status when reviewing applications. So, all our students will be considered by their geographical residence as a primary consideration for diversity. Effectively, everyone will be considered as "living in Japan", and compared to other students in Japan rather than others with similar passports as could have been the case in the past.
- **How will this benefit or disadvantage us?**  
Our students that come from large populations such as China and India that have heavy representation in the US and other university areas may now have a larger benefit because they are living in Japan and will be compared against a smaller pool of individuals. Our students from Japan and other minority countries may find applications to either have no change or become slightly more competitive than in past years.



- **Is there anything we can do with this news?**  
Not necessarily. I don't think it would be worth uprooting your family to a country with an even

smaller population just to receive university application benefits. The purpose of sharing this information is to educate our community on the practices that are taking place within a process that feels difficult to navigate. So, I hope the above helps to answer the question of "does my racial/ethnic background affect university applications?"

### Delayed decisions

Governmental policy changes and delays to financial aid and scholarship awards have pushed back the deadline for students to make their final university decisions from May 1 to June 1. While this is not a large change for many students, it means that many students still have not received information on the final price for their schools (including reductions due to merit/need-based aid). This has made it difficult for our students across the world to commit to their final decisions, usually something that is known prior to graduation.



- **Does this affect our current Grade 12 students?**  
Yes, it has meant that we still have students who are not sure where they will be in just a few months' time, which is a bit stressful (please show them support!). It has also meant there has been a large increase in students being put on waitlists this year. They haven't been accepted to the school, but not yet rejected, pending other students' delayed decisions.
- **Will this affect future applications?**  
This is hopefully a one-time situation that is thought to have a correlation to the presidential elections and rushes to change policies that may attract younger voters. However, there are small shifts in policies every year and we need to always remain flexible.
- **What is the best advice for us to consider with uncertainties like this?**  
Things such as government intervention, visa policies, currency fluctuations, and other non-academic situations are difficult to predict. My biggest recommendation to families is to find a way to be both focused, but with an open mind. If you are targeting a single country for university applications, that is perfectly acceptable, but we need to choose a range of schools (reach, target, and safety) in order to provide suitable options depending on financial changes and other challenges.

### Waitlists and rumors surrounding them

With waitlists being quite large this year, there have been many rumors associated with how waitlists work and what students can do to be removed from the waitlist. I would like to provide some details on the process.



*Continued on next page*

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- **What is the waitlist, its purpose, and how does a student get placed on it?**

Universities (primarily in the US but increasing in popularity across the globe) use the waitlist or waiting list to tell a student "you are a good fit for our school, but there are currently others we find to fit slightly better at this moment". Universities use waitlists to help plan for exact student numbers; for example, if the school has a space for 2000 students, gives offers to 2000 students, but 100 decide not to enroll, the university may decide to ask 100 students from their waitlist if they would like to join so they can maximize the number of their cohort.

- **What's the chance that I get off the waitlist?**

The chance is often not high and will vary year by year and university by university based on many different factors; for example, the last three years of **UCLA** waitlists are below:

Fall entry year	Students offered a waitlist place	Students accepted from waitlist
2021	15,242	214
2022	16,979	3,617
2023	18,329	1,400

Here is the same chart but for **Stanford University**:

Fall entry year	Students offered a waitlist place	Students accepted from waitlist
2021	652	61
2022	553	8
2023	607	76

- **What can I do to get off the waitlist?**

There are a few things you can do, but most of it comes down to luck and university diversity needs. I suggest watching this [YouTube video](#) that includes advice from a former Columbia admissions officer. Her advice is:

1. **Do what the university asks** (such as sending a letter to confirm you're still interested).
2. **Don't be ridiculous** (don't try to send gifts or fly to the university to prove your intent).
3. **Contact the Japan representative at the university** (once only to ask what else you can do).
4. **Accept your offer from your next favorite school** (assume you won't get off the waitlist).
5. **Understand that luck plays the largest part.** Universities are using the waitlist to help them fill gaps in their incoming class; for example, if they feel they do not have enough students applying from Japan and/or they do not have enough History majors (and that is your intended major), you could have a shot! If the university has already accepted a lot of students from Japan and your intended major is very popular, the chance of you getting off the waitlist may be very small.

## Greater Tokyo University Fair

I am very pleased to announce that due to our increased space in our new campus, we will be hosting the first annual Greater Tokyo University Fair. In the past, our Grade 11 and 12 students have travelled to other schools in Tokyo to attend the Kanto Plain Fair. Now with two large fairs being hosted in Tokyo, we will be able to have more time to meet with the universities and potentially have students from younger Grades (9/10) participate (TBD). In the end, this will also allow more universities to be familiar with our school, assisting with our applications and hopefully continuing with our goal of helping as many of our students as possible get into their dream universities. We will have ten other high schools visiting our school and over 100 universities from across the world. More details will come at the beginning of the 2024–25 school year, but I hope this event will be exciting for our upper-high school students and give them another feeling of pride to be KIST students!



**Thomas Waterfall**  
University Counselor  
[thomas.waterfall@kist.ed.jp](mailto:thomas.waterfall@kist.ed.jp)  
Office hours: Monday–Friday,  
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.  
University Guidance Office (4F  
Main Building)



## Class of 2024



(Back row L>R) **Jia, Kosei, Shakti, Aiden, Haruto, Kaito, Malhar, Ethan, Kiichiro, Rintaro, Han, Lance**

(Middle row L>R) **Kushagra, Arnav, Anant, Shreya, Luer, Amane, Waka, Stephanie, Selin, Muskan, Maya, Diya, Shaunak**

(Front row L>R) **Yudai, Remi, Motohiro, Caley, Xinyi, Saki, Neha, Arshiya, Aina, Sadhika, Naoki, Takuma, Shreyas**

**Congratulations  
and  
good luck!**



**K. International School Tokyo  
invites you to attend our...**

**Saturday, June 15, 2024  
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
(Gate opens at 10:40 a.m.)**

# New Building Opening Festival

**Free coupons to use for food and games  
will be distributed to students at the gate!**



- ▶ **Specialty foods**
- ▶ **Stage performances**
- ▶ **Games and activities**
- ▶ **Costumes welcome!**

Not open to the general public. Images shown are examples only.