Newsletter
24.03.2023

GISST at ISU - Tournament in Rheintal
ISU International Day - CAS - AI & LLMs
Games Club - DEIJ student group - Bakesale
University Fair
Boys Basketball final GISST tournament at ISU

On the 17th and 18th of March, ISU participated in its first ever GISST Basketball tournament which was hosted by the school at the BBU.

On the first day of the competition, ISU faced the International School of Leipzig, Franconian International School and Berlin British School and played with great vigour and sadly they lost against each. However, in the final game that day the team managed to defeat the International School of Frankfurt with a great atmosphere and a commendable show of sportsmanship on both sides.

On the second day, ISU went up against Frankfurt once again, and managed yet another victory over them. Unfortunately, even with full force ISU was unable to defeat Franconian, however the school had a great start keeping them within 4 points of reach. Lastly, in the final game which would determine the 3rd and 4th place teams, ISU was defeated by BBS. Though a defeat, ISU was very grateful towards all the staff, coaches and parents for showing up and helping the team in their first ever tournament within the GISST league and a 4th place finish was a great way to tie it off. ISU eagerly awaits another tournament in the next basketball season.

By Reza
Tournament at International School of Rheintal

After a long reign of winning, our very own U14 girls basketball team has lost. When playing against International School of Rheintal, we realised very early on that they were probably going to win. Our weaknesses were their strengths. This team played well and managed to coordinate quite a few useful skills into their gameplay, including passing, dribbling, faking, shooting (especially layups), etc..

Our starting line up was Juste, Emma, Hailey and Ivy. These were some of our strongest players. They made the first few baskets, we thought nothing of it. We were going to keep our streak. That didn’t happen. They had around 8-9 girls and we had 14. Although we’ve lost this game, there will be more to come, including our final tournament! We will win that tournament and claim the place of being the most undefeated team in ISU history.

By Lauren and Arola

We went to Switzerland for a basketball game against Rheintal. We came to the school at 8:30 and we left at 8:40. We had a long ride to get to the school. It took us 2 hours to get there. When we arrived we went straight to the gym. We had a very short warm up. Mr Doran said some tactics and motivation before the game. We started with a jumpball from Oskar. We started the game really well. We were scoring many points and Rheintal was missing every shot. The lead got bigger and bigger. In every period Mr. Doran was letting all of us play the same amount of time. At the end we were so happy because we won 59 to 6 and the girls did really well but they lost by 10. When both of the teams were finished the high school boys had one period to finish. The girls and the boys were sitting on the bench and cheering for the boys. At the end they won 15 to 25. Everybody then went to changing rooms and we went straight to the bus. We then took the bus back to ISU and It was a really nice trip.

By William

Let’s go Wolves!
We would like to invite friends and family of the ISU community to mark this exciting event in your calendar. On the 24th June from 11:00-15:00 we will host a school community event, International Day.
My CAS experience was listening to the podcast “On Purpose” by Jay Shetty and summarising the tips and tools he shares. In the podcast, Shetty hosts experts of different fields, and each episode they have a conversation about that topic and how we can live a healthier and happier lifestyle. In the podcast there are also episodes when Shetty is the one who talks, and he gives tools and ways to improve our life, based on his experiences and mistakes. I like to listen to this podcast regularly and I have learned so much, I hope you will learn as well.

5 ways to stop getting distracted and start getting focused

30.01.2023

Karmel

Summary of the podcast “On Purpose” by Jay Shetty

INTRODUCTION
How many times have you looked at your phone today? How many times in a day do you scroll mindlessly on your favorite social media platform? Devices distract us from focusing on what needs to be done. Pair that up with a working space or an environment that doesn’t entice creativity and productivity, we often end up losing focus of our goals and wasting our time doing something utterly unproductive. They still our drive and our motivations, and we need to be aware of the tools we can use in order to get focused.

In this episode of “On Purpose”, Jay Shetty talks about the different distractions that block our will to stay ahead with our goals while diverting our focus on unproductive things. I summarized all the information including the tools Shetty gives. I felt that there are two tools about the phone which are pretty similar, so I included them as one.
1. DECISION FATIGUE
Decision fatigue is “the idea that after making many decisions, your ability to make more and more decisions over the course of a day becomes worse”. When you ask yourself what should you eat today, where should you go, what should you wear today- You make many irrelevant decisions straight in the beginning of the day. You’re getting tired of those decisions, so you do not have the power to make or deal with the important ones. Mark Zuckerberg and Barack Obama, for example, wear the same clothes to work everyday, so they will not think about and distract themselves.

What can you do?
Identify what are the decisions you make for a daily basis that distracting you from getting things done (food, clothes)
Make sure to make those decisions the night before; prepare the meals, decide what to wear, make a to-do list and focus- Prepare all that in the night before so you will not need to decide those in the morning.
You will be more focused and will not be distracted by these when you will also have other tasks and distractions later throughout the day.

2. STARTING THE DAY WITH THE PHONE AND SCREEN TIME LIMIT
What is the first thing you do in the morning? Probably checking the messages, Instagram, news, TikTok.
You start your day with zero noise and negativity, and in a second you are 100% noise. Instead of focusing on yourself in the morning, with a clear mind to get ready for your day- you only focus on others.
You feel that you need to know everything and you want to have all the information about what other people do, but it only makes you feel stressed and overwhelmed.

What can you do?
Leave your phone on the other side of your room, so when it rings you get up and go away from it.
Make sure your phone is not next to you when you get ready- not when you eat breakfast, change clothes
Do a time limit for your screen time- decide how much time you are going to be on your phone today, and that’s it.

You will be less stressed, you will start your day with a thinking of what you want to achieve today and you will make better decisions later.
3. CREATING YOUR RIGHT AUDIO ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR WORKING PLACE
What do you hear when you work or study? Do you hear traffic? birds? Music?
Your brain tries to make sense of everything you hear and see. You don’t notice that, but when you hear a sound your brain tries to understand what that sound was- was it an animal? Traffic? A notification?
Your brain tries to make sense of irrelevant sounds that are not important to you, and you are wasting energy on things that do not develop you.

What can you do?
Think about what you want to hear while you work that will focus you. It can be music, science, white noise, sounds of a cafe..
Test all of them and check which one makes you become the most productive, so you get the most done with at least an amount of distractions.

4. KEEP BOOKS EVERYWHERE
Put books all over your working place- on your desk or in your room.
Keep them open, so you will be able to read a line or a paragraph every couple of times. Instead of being attracted to your phone and to unimportant distractions, you will be attracted to the book. You can read inspired quotes that will motivate you through your work or your study, which will force you to learn without even trying.

5. CREATE VISUAL ENVIRONMENT
Your visual environment keeps you engaged and stops you from getting distracted. If your phone for example will be open next to you, you will be attracted to it. Change your visual environment so it will help you be more focused on what you want to do and what you want to achieve.
Put pictures of people that inspired you, and think what would they do right now, how would they figure that problem.
It will make you feel more present, and will move you to get more work done.
As technology continues to advance rapidly, it is essential that our school community stays informed about the latest tools available to our students. One such tool is Artificial Intelligence and other Large Language Models (LLMs), such as OpenAI’s ChatGPT, Microsoft’s Bing and Google’s Bard.

**LLMs Vs Search Engines**
AI and LLMs are similar to regular search engines but with key differences. Instead of just providing a list of links and resources based on a user’s query, AI and LLMs can analyse and understand natural language, generating responses and completing tasks to mimic human intelligence.

AI is not limited to text-based interactions. It can also analyse images and audio, opening up new possibilities for learning and communication. For example, AI can be used to analyse and interpret visual data, or to create personalised voice assistants for students with that require learning support. Through various implementations, AI can now be used to produce images, music, videos and art.

Additionally, with the rise of fake news and online scams, AI can play an important role in helping students become better informed and more discerning consumers of information. For example, AI can be used to detect and flag misleading or inaccurate content, helping students to identify trustworthy sources and avoid scams.

**What can be done at home?**
It is important to note that while LLMs can be incredibly helpful, students should also be aware of fair use and the importance of properly citing sources. Just because a machine-generated response may seem “smart” or “accurate” doesn’t necessarily mean using it is original or ethical without proper attribution.

Parents can support their children’s use of LLMs by helping them understand the importance of proper citation and encouraging critical thinking. Because an AI-generated response may seem correct, evaluating the information and ensuring its accuracy and trustworthiness is still crucial.
What we are doing at school
As a school community that embraces technology and its potential benefits for our students, we are developing AI school guidelines and policies. This policy will outline the appropriate use of AI and LLMs in our classrooms and ensure that our students have the skills to use this technology ethically and responsibly.

Our AI school guidelines and policy will include information on fair use, plagiarism, proper citation, and guidelines for students on properly evaluating information and sources. We believe that by providing our students with this knowledge and understanding, we can help them become critical thinkers and responsible digital citizens.

Our school uses integrated AI detection tools like Turnitin to help students learn and understand plagiarism better. With the help of these tools, students can receive detailed reports highlighting areas that require revision and learn how to cite sources correctly. This will help them to build better academic habits and avoid ethical violations in their future academic and professional endeavours.

As a school community, we believe that embracing AI and LLMs can provide our students exciting opportunities to learn and grow. However, we also recognise the importance of ensuring our students use this technology ethically and responsibly. In developing our AI school guidelines and policy, we hope to provide a framework supporting our students in this endeavour.

If you have questions or concerns about this topic, please contact Jeff Bailey at j.bailey@is-ulm.de
Every Monday we have the Board Game ASAP where we want to learn through play. This week we got a special task: we became game testers! But what does that mean? Two friends from Neu-Ulm invented a new card game and asked us to test it for them. It is called ‘Schlauer Peter’ which means ‘smart Peter’.

The goal of the game is to find matching pairs through stealing cards from others. The unique characteristic of this game is that all the cards are illustrated to show diversity and submit open mindedness through play.

The children really enjoyed looking at the pictures but of course the best was stealing the cards from others to win the game. What we also loved was the included radio play which introduces all characters to the players (this is available for free on the website). They all enjoyed it so much that they keep playing it again and again.

In case you are interested in purchasing the game or just want to have further information please visit the following website: https://www.schlauerpeter.de/

Ms. Wellner
When I learn, develop, and grow myself, I can encounter life challenges with greater resilience, determination, and critical thinking.

At our last meeting, the student group for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) talked about how we can improve ourselves by learning and growing. We discussed how it’s important to seek out knowledge about our identities and what we’re taught so that we can expand our perspectives and understand the world better.

By doing this, we can challenge our assumptions and biases, learn about different cultures, and understand our place in the world. It’s essential to recognise that our experiences have limits, so we need to actively seek out diverse perspectives and voices from communities which are marginalised.

When we learn about different cultures, experiences, and histories, we can develop a more compassionate understanding of the world. This can help us celebrate others for their strengths without fear of losing our own identities, avoid stereotypes and prejudices, and promote a freer and more just society.

Teaching and learning with a DEIJ lens in schools are not just about creating a diverse and kind student body, but it’s about creating a better future for everyone. Students who value diversity and inclusion are more likely to become advocates for social justice and equality in their communities and work towards a more just and fair world.

In short, join us on Tuesday ASAP or Friday lunchtime and learn how DEIJ in schools and the wider community is vital for creating a stronger, kinder and happier future for us all.

Taya, Yuri, Lola, Inbar
Two weeks ago, three driven, caring, and action-taking students put together one of ISU’s most successful bake sales. Amina, Christoph, and Lorin (Grade 6 students) were all personally affected by the devastating earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria this past February. Keen to make a difference, they worked with outside suppliers, members of staff, and fellow students. Students from across grades supported the cause generously and some even asked not to be given any change. As a result of their dedication and passion to make a difference, they were able to sell out within no time at all!

These students perfectly embodied the spirit & core principles of our school—well done! Last, but not least, 466 Euros were raised and have been donated to the German Red Cross. Many thanks to all of you who supported their cause by allowing your students to buy from their bake-sale!
University fair

Last Thursday during lunchtime, our students had an exciting opportunity to interact with four excellent European universities: IE University, Bocconi, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, and Constructor University. During a previous PSHE lesson, students were equipped with ‘College Fair Etiquette’ and learned more about what questions to ask university representatives to find out whether they fit with the institution.

These kinds of learning moments not only allow students to learn more about universities, but also teaches them how to introduce themselves, carry a conversation, and ask pertinent questions. Our ISU attendees did a magnificent job and represented our school so well! With Covid restrictions nearly on the way out, we expect an increasing number of universities to travel through, and thus hope to offer many more such opportunities soon.

#ISU.Proud!