Newsletter

15.09.2023

Attendance Information - Back to School Night
Sports Programme Update - CAS
Healthy Body Image - Donau Clean Up - Ulm Tour
Parent Passions - Miscellaneous - PTG
Updates and Information regarding ISU attendance procedures

In support of a disciplined and high-impact learning environment, we have refined our attendance guidelines to ensure clarity and to make it easier to observe for all stakeholders. We kindly request your support in adhering to the following updated protocols, which will be added to the next iteration of the ISU Student Code of Conduct.

Attendance Notification Procedure:
• Days 1-2 (Inclusive): In case of a medical-related absence, please notify the homeroom teacher via email before the start of school on the first day of absence.
• Days 3-5 (Inclusive): Please continue to send daily email updates to the homeroom teacher regarding the status of your child’s health.
• Days 6 and beyond: From the sixth day onwards, an official medical note is required to validate the student’s absence. The school reserves the right to request a medical note earlier if there are doubts about the nature or frequency of absence.

Attendance Recording:
The school will maintain a detailed record of each student’s attendance status, categorised as follows:
• Present: The student was in attendance at school for a minimum of four lessons.
• Late: The student arrived after the designated start time.
• Absent: The student was not excused and failed to attend a minimum of four lessons.
• Excused Absence: This category is reserved for very rare circumstances, in accordance with Bavarian law (see below).
• Medical/Sick: The student was absent due to illness, injury or a medical appointment.

Excused Absences
• Absences other than those due to medical reasons are excused under the very clear framework outlined in the Bayerische Schulordnung (BaySchO).
• Examples of such approved absences include, in particular, marriages, anniversaries and deaths in the close family, changes of residence and administrative procedures that cannot be postponed.
• Requests must be submitted via email to the Principal or Director from the confirmed address in school systems. Communicating such requests in person or over the phone is not sufficient.
• The school does not have the authority to approve holiday extensions.
• Students may be excused from attending school in order to participate in major religious events. This presupposes that the student belongs to a religious community whose religious beliefs require the fulfilment of religious duties on the respective holiday.

Future Developments:
In line with international best practice, ISU is planning to incorporate detailed attendance information in school reports in the future. This initiative is designed to keep parents informed of their child’s school attendance patterns and encourage consistent attendance. We anticipate this to start from Semester 2, 2023-24.

Mr. Luke Osborne  
Director
Thank you for your attendance at Back to School Night.

Please find the links below for the lower, middle and upper school presentations.

- LS Back to School Night
- MSUS Back to School Night
- Sports 2023/24
Sports Programme Update

Dear ISU community,

It has been exciting to see our students joining the different sports that we are able to offer for season 1. In order to plan trips and games ahead, I will need to have a clear number of students for each sport, so if you haven’t signed up yet, please do it by September 22nd.

Here’s the QR code to access the system for signing up:

On a different note, cross country running, badminton and football will be available to our Grade 5 students, and they can sign up from today until September 30th.

Below a reminder of practices and main dates for these three sports:

**Varsity/U14 Badminton**
- Coach: Ms. Kocharyan
- Practices on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 3:30pm until 5pm. *Starts on Sept 12*
- Game Dates:
  - October 5th at Bavarian International School (Friendly Matches)
  - October 21st at Bavarian International School (Friendly Tournament)
  - November 11th at Franconian International School (Friendly Tournament)
  - December 7th - December 9th at International School of Hanover – Varsity Badminton (Final Tournament)
  - December 7th - December 9th at St. George’s Dusseldorf – U14 Badminton (Final Tournament)

**U14/Varsity Cross Country**
- Coaches: Mrs. Mayoral and Mr. Finlay
- Practices on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:30pm until 5pm.
- Game Dates:
  - October 7th at Bavarian International School (Friendly Tournament)
  - November 9th - November 10th at Leipzig International School (Final Tournament)

Last but not least, it was discussed in a GISST Meeting this week that the format for varsity girls football will change for this school year, lowering the requirement, regarding the number of players necessary for a match, moving from 11 on 11 to 7 on 7. Keeping that in mind, the doors of our football practices will open to any Grade 9 to 12 student that would like to be part of a varsity girls football team, starting from next week (September 18th) onwards.

Information about this club is as follows:

**Varsity Girls Football**
- Coach: Mr. Alex and Mr. Notz
- Practices on Monday and Thursdays from 3:30pm until 5pm
Between May 15 and June 30, 2023, I participated in a group experience offered by our art teacher. We were asked if we want to help with painting a backdrop for the lower school play. The experience took place at school close to the art room.

I was extremely scared that this backdrop painting was going to take so long and was not going to look good at all. I was proven wrong by myself and my hard working teammates. We didn’t have much time to paint, but everyone was so enthusiastic and I could tell we all collectively wanted to finish off the work on time, which happily we did.

I learned how to use a big brush in circular motions to create interesting textures, how to use a painting roller, how to match colours better, how to blend on a bigger scale and many more.

My teammates believed in me and asked me many times for my artistic opinion of where they should be and which colours we should use. Whenever I said my opinion, I was always heard and understood and I was never disappointed, as my ideas were made into reality. We were all so careful with each other, trying not to stain our clothes and listening to our advice. I had to ask my teammates to bring me more paint or brushes and they always helped me and of course vice versa.

On many days I had to stay after school and paint, where on the 6th of June I painted for almost 4 hours straight. A couple of times I would mess up the colours that I had to use, but without panic, I would add more paint and balance the mess out.

Every time that someone from our school passed by us, a student or teacher, and they would congratulate us and tell us that the backdrop is coming out good, a smile would appear on my face. I felt recognised for my hard work and was reminded why I’m doing this.

Valentina

I will mark this experience as the best collaborative one so far, as everyone was just so great and so is the outcome of our work.

During an Art class, my art teacher approached the class and asked for volunteers to paint a huge fabric as a background for a class of the lower school. The project was called “Art lower school background painting”. We had the freedom to design it fully by our imagination, the only limitation was that it should be a landscape.

We got one massive fabric which we used acrylic paint to paint on. We started with coming up with a design and later projecting it with a projector onto it. The fabric absorbed a lot of colour, some took hours of work. We met after school and used our free periods to work on it. It felt really great seeing the process and especially how we all worked together seeing the big steps we took each day. Though it took a lot of time and effort I really enjoyed working on this project. It felt really rewarding seeing the end product. I believe that when working collaboratively any project, of any size is possible to be completed.

I appreciate that I got the opportunity to work on such a unique project.

Noel
Fostering Healthy Body Image in Adolescents: Challenges & Strategies

Ms. Lin, ISU’s Lower School Counsellor, looks closer at how to foster a healthy body image in adolescents:

Adolescence is a critical stage in life marked by significant bodily changes and the development of self-identity. During this period, adolescents aspire to gain peer acceptance while also facing the influence of social media, which can have a negative impact on their body image. This article will explore these issues and provide strategies to help adolescents establish a healthy body image.

Self-Identity Formation and Body Anxiety in Adolescents
Adolescence is a time of rapid bodily changes, posing challenges to adolescents’ body image. They may begin to feel anxious about their appearance and physique, desiring acceptance from their peers. Peer opinions and perceptions become highly significant, leading to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety if their appearance doesn’t conform to societal standards.

The Influence of Social Media on Adolescents
Social media plays a pivotal role in today’s society, especially for adolescents. Many social media platforms are inundated with meticulously edited photos and images of seemingly perfect bodies. These unrealistic body standards can distort adolescents’ body image making them feel inadequate to meet societal expectations.

Strategies:

A. Promoting Positive Self-Concept
Teaching adolescents to value their inner worth beyond physical appearance is crucial. Encourage them to build self-confidence, develop skills and interests, and understand that diversity exists in body types, with each person possessing unique beauty. Parents and educators can provide support to help foster a positive self-concept.

B. Engaging Adults and Adolescents in Discussions about the Legitimacy of Body Images in Social Media
Parents and guardians should engage in conversations with adolescents regarding the realism of body images presented on social media. Sharing information about photo editing and filter effects can help them discern between genuine and manipulated images. Furthermore, encouraging cautious use of social media and providing digital media literacy education is essential.

C. Establishing Support Systems
Create a support system where adolescents know they can express their feelings and concerns at any time. This support system may include communication channels with family members, friends, or professional counselors. Providing emotional support allows adolescents to feel understood and accepted, regardless of their physical appearance.

In conclusion, body image is a complex and significant issue for adolescents that requires multifaceted approaches. By promoting positive self-concepts, educating about the impact of social media, and establishing support systems, we can help adolescents develop a healthy and positive body image to navigate the challenges of adolescence and societal pressures.

Ms. Lin
LS Counsellor

References:
A big shout out to all our students, teachers and parents who helped out cleaning the banks of the Danube early on Saturday morning. Some of us even made it to the newspapers. Check out the [Südwest Presse](https://www.suedwestpresse.de) page for more details.

A great example of action to show the love we have for our local environment!

Ms. Garcia

*Service Learning Lead & CAS Coordinator*
On Monday the 11th our class was able to go outside and enjoy the beautiful weather while taking a tour around Ulm. What more can you want? We got to see a lot of interesting sights like the old town (Fischerviertel), Ulm’s leaning tower (the Metzgerturm), the, also, crooked house and of course, no trip to Ulm is complete without the Münster. Our tour guide was very enthusiastic and we learned many new things on the way. Did you know for example that the Münster is exactly 161.6 meters tall? A world record that we, (as a class) believe won’t be broken any time soon! Also, it is Napoleon’s fault that Neu-Ulm exists, which, when we come to think of it, isn’t so bad because, after all, he provided us with more than just a nice view of Ulm.

We all enjoyed the tour very much because it also gave us the long sought after opportunity to do something fun as a class. The ice cream at the end was also a highlight, and it was refreshing to explore the city together. We are all looking forward to similar trips in the future and want to thank kind families for organising this for us. Also, we managed to get a lot of beautiful fotos which will be a source of fond memories for all of us. Thank you to Mr. Rawlinson, Ms. Garcia and Mr. Edley for accompanying us.

-Your Grade 11 (Class of 2025)
Building Community: Stronger Together

We are very excited to invite you to join our Parent Passions event on 6th October from 8:30-10:15. If you have a passion and have some time to spare then we’d love you to come and share your passion with our young curious minds!

You will be given a space in the atrium to set up whatever it is you would like to share and I’d ask you to bring in some visual aids to show and present to the students. The classes will come to visit the event in three 20 minute slots where they will rotate around the atrium learning from you! They will be very eager to find out what it is you are passionate about and why!

Last year this event was extremely successful and was a wonderful opportunity for building community! Thank you to those parents who have already signed up for this year however I am still looking for more keen family members to join us, parents, grandparents, aunts or uncle, if you have a passion we are searching for you!

Please, please, please email me if you are interested in taking part in this event or have a question: c.henry@is-ulm.de

Carolyn Henry
Lower School Vice Principal & PYP Coordinator

“We are a community of lifelong learners

When: 6th October Time: 8:30 - 10:15

What do I need to do?
• Just come along and talk about your passions
• Students will come and ask you questions
• Bring photos and props if you need

Contact: c.henry@is-ulm.de if you are interested in being part of this event!

Let’s spark our children’s curiosity together!

“Research is formalised curiosity. It is poking and prying with purpose.” - Zara Neale Hurston
Staffing Update

A very warm welcome to our new FSJ practicant Eileen Seidel who is doing her Social Year in Lower School (mainly Early Years). Eileen is 19 years old and finished the St. Hildegard Gymnasium. Eileen speaks English, French and Spanish. We are glad to having her on board and wish her a great year at ISU.

IT Support

To be able to provide support for our school systems and ensure a seamless learning experience, please know that ISU tech support is here to assist you. Should you encounter any technical issues or require assistance with our digital platforms, please don’t hesitate to contact our dedicated tech support team at helpdesk@is-ulm.de. We greatly appreciate your collaboration; together we can create an optimal learning environment for our students.

Mr. Bailey
EdTech Lead
PTG - Save the Date - Bavarian Breakfast
14.10.2023 11:00 - 15:00

PTG meeting on Thursday 21st September at 8:30. Anyone interested in helping the PTG with the Bavarian Breakfast can attend.