Name Change and Merger

In 2020, International School of the Peninsula’s (ISTP) name was changed to Silicon Valley International School (INTL), to better reflect our location and our growth into an international school with a global reputation and reach. In 2021, Alto International School legally merged with Silicon Valley International School.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

Silicon Valley International School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, authorized to offer the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and DP (Diploma Programme). IB World Schools share a common philosophy – a commitment to high quality, challenging, international education that the Silicon Valley International School believes is important for our students. For further information about the IB and its programmes, visit www.ibo.org.

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Save the Date for our Annual Alumni Reunion!
Friday, June 10th @ 6 PM at INTL Cohn Campus
rsvp here: svintl.org/alumnisummer
When I returned to school this past summer, I was not surprised to find a dedicated, ready, and energetic faculty, staff, and leadership. Everyone’s strong commitment to providing our students with the best bilingual International Baccalaureate education was evident in every decision, every effort, and every problem-solving exercise, and was carried out through the year.

Their attitude and dedication positively impacted our students. On both campuses, I saw happy and engaged learners. Whether it was discovering new concepts or celebrating each other’s cultures, our students found joy in learning and in being at school.

Each day, I see the value of our education and the benefits we have reaped from coming together as one Silicon Valley International School. I am honored to have been able to engage in work related to our unique high school. For many years, having a high school was a strategic goal - and to see it come to fruition and with the talent and dedication displayed by our faculty and students has been incredibly rewarding. It gives me great pride to witness our older students inquiring into global and local issues and seeking ways to take action and improve our world.

INTL has developed language immersion programs that promote robust and efficient language acquisition and allow students to develop a level of intercultural agility that is second to none. Our immersion model focuses on both literacy skills and cultural components. We also focus specifically on metalinguistic awareness and abilities.

Every day, when I see the students, I am amazed at the way their language skills shine. From a cooking lesson in preschool to the dissection of a frog in 5th grade to a debate on current events in upper school, the mastery of the language used by the students is stunning, confirming that the dual-language environment that we provide supports both our students’ academic and linguistic growth and allows them to acquire the unique skill set that only a strong bilingual education provides.

In closing, I look forward to watching our special school continue to grow and thrive, especially under the guidance and leadership of Incoming Head of School, Barbara Greiner. I have no doubt that there are many wonderful things in store and that our students will use their International Baccalaureate education to go out and make the world a better and more peaceful place.
From Board Chair
Sujata Narayan

On behalf of the Silicon Valley International School (INTL) Board of Directors, I wish to thank our teachers, staff, students, and community for their tremendous efforts and support over the last challenging two years. We are proud of the strides that we have made in this time and are writing to provide you with updates on our exciting progress.

INTL commenced 2021-2022 as a fully integrated Pre-K to 12th Grade school, uniquely combining our language immersion programs (Chinese, French, German) along with our Upper School Language Acquisition program, and enriched by our multicultural and diverse community. We have had the opportunity to expand our exceptional network of alumni locally and internationally, thus strengthening the networking opportunities for our existing families and students as we blend together a shared, dynamic history with our diverse community.

We look forward to engaging with everyone to develop and strengthen friendships and solicit feedback on our new and proposed initiatives. Our initiatives over the year are summarized as follows:

Most notably, the Board completed its Head Search. We are honored to welcome Ms. Barbara Greiner as our next Head of School. Barbara brings over 25 years of experience in our school community, serving a multitude of roles. Barbara is student-centered, mission-focused, and an exceptional strategic thinker and leader. We are confident that she will strengthen INTL and successfully lead us through this exciting next phase of growth. We would like to thank the Search Committee, its Chair, Cindy Foo-Irissou, and everyone who participated in this important endeavor. We look to our renewed leadership for vision, enthusiasm, and commitment to our shared values.

We also renewed our school mission, with the goal of crafting a statement that better reflects our purpose, shared community, and values including understanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Board Secretary, Albert Lee, along with members of our Leadership, Board, and facilitated by our longtime Strategic Consultant, Lynn Wendell, hosted 4 faculty and 4 parent focus groups to examine previous mission statements of ISTP and Alto, when combining them into INTL. The Mission Task Force went to great lengths to consider feedback from all parties, until unanimously agreeing on our new mission, C.O.R.E. values, and 5 guiding principles. These words will guide us as we begin work on our school’s next multi-year strategic plan.

To better integrate our core values in our work, we spent time with renowned DEI strategist, Dr. Derrick Gay. Dr. Gay serves as a resource to schools and other organizations to cultivate cultural competency, promote empathy (one of our C.O.R.E. values), and deepen inclusion with a global lens. More specifically, Dr. Gay has worked with countless international schools and their Boards on the issues of DEI and Global Citizenship. We anticipate continuing this work on a Board and community level, aligned with our mission, values, and principles.

As we look to the future, we are excited with all the opportunities that are coming our way to strengthen our school and therefore bring new and exciting opportunities to our children. We look forward to partnering with all of you, the students, parents, faculty and staff in the upcoming process of creating our new strategic plan.
A deliberate choice of words and a call to action.

Our new mission deliberately places INTL’s students at the center of their education. They are the main characters of their education. They are fully engaged in their learning process, and are empowered to embrace, to think and to demonstrate (three active verbs that carry the spirit of inclusion, reflection, and building of evidence).

Then, our mission defines inquiry as our main approach to education and bilingualism as our vehicle to teaching and learning.

INTL’s students learn through structured inquiry.

They participate in relevant and enriching learning experiences that develop their curiosity and engage them in their learning process. They ask questions, reach for answers, make discoveries, draw connections between ideas and concepts, reflect on their learning, and take action.

INTL’s students learn through two languages.

Students who start early become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Students who start in secondary school become fluent and gain a broader world perspective. Finally, our mission clearly outlines how INTL’s focus on inquiry and bilingualism guides and shapes the learning process and outcome.

1. INTL’s students embrace complexity as active thinkers, seekers, and inquiritors. They see questions as tools for acquiring knowledge, grasping concepts, and solving problems. They do not compartmentalize complex problems. They step back and consider the entire system to find simplicity as it exists. They welcome challenges, and in the process learn from their mistakes.

2. INTL’s students think critically from multiple perspectives. Learning through languages, they have two ways of communicating a concept, each carrying the specificity of the language they are speaking, and the culture behind it. They process the same idea through distinct grammatical structures that shape their thought patterns and the way they approach and solve personal, ethical, mathematical, or scientific problems. They question the truth and accuracy of the information obtained through the lenses of distinct cultures and languages.

3. INTL’s students demonstrate integrity and sensitivity across cultures. Our students share their views and gain diverse valuable perspectives. They become self-aware of the multiplicity of perspectives, beliefs, and values linked to the cultures around and within them. They fluidly enter into intercultural dialogues and form unbiased judgments through which they demonstrate integrity.

The IB framework is the vehicle through which we deliver our mission.

To guide our constituents in their understanding and implementation of our mission, the Mission Task Force also developed our core values and guiding principles: four fundamental beliefs and five principles that guide us through everything we do. They are, with our affiliation to the network of IB World Schools, integral pieces in fulfilling our mission. In fact, the IB is the framework for delivering our mission. It is my strong belief that the unique combination of our mission and the IB framework inspires our teachers, serves our students, and reverberates through the community and beyond.

As a mission-aligned Head of School, I look forward to anchoring my leadership to our mission statement by striving to embody our core values, following our guiding principles, and fully committing to the IB Learner Profile.

OUR C.O.R.E VALUES

Community
We respect, support, and collaborate to achieve results greater than we could ever reach individually.

Openness
We appreciate different cultures and perspectives without bias.

Resilience
We accept challenges, commit to overcoming them and learn from our mistakes.

Empathy
We strive to understand each other and to treat everyone with care and kindness.

OUR 5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. We emphasize inquiry-based learning to foster intellectual curiosity and encourage depth of knowledge and thought.

2. We focus on academic depth and rigor, instilling confidence to tackle the challenges of an increasingly complex world.

3. We celebrate diversity on a daily basis through our bilingual immersion programs and our commitment to the IB learner profile.

4. We are honest, respectful, and inclusive, and we take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

5. We pursue service and impact whenever and wherever we are.

Silicon Valley International School’s New Mission Statement is a Commitment to our Community

Our Mission: Silicon Valley International School’s focus on inquiry and bilingualism empowers young minds to embrace complexity, think critically from multiple perspectives, and demonstrate integrity and sensitivity across cultures.

A mission that guides and anchors our school.

Our recent merger brought together our two schools, each with very similar yet slightly different missions. To fully cement our two communities and to bring together our four languages and cultures, we needed to develop a shared mission, a true and genuine statement about our school and its purpose. The Mission Task Force worked with faculty and parent focus groups to create a powerful and inspiring statement that defines and affirms who we are and what we want to continue to be, to guide and anchor our school.

From Incoming Head of School

Barbara Greiner
Our Shared History

In December 2020, two special schools, dedicated to an inquiry-based bilingual and international education, came together to begin the process of a merger as one Silicon Valley International School (INTL). The individual and shared histories of both Silicon Valley International School and Alto International School paved the way for this powerful partnership and merger.

The merger was many years in the making. In 1993, Alto International School, at the time named Deutsch-Amerikanische Schule San Francisco (DAS), approached INTL, at the time named International School of the Peninsula (ISTP), to discuss how both schools could benefit from multicultural and multilingual synergies. In 1998, DAS reached out again to discuss the possibility of a merger. While both schools’ values and missions aligned, the lack of space prohibited a successful merger at that time.

Over the years, it became increasingly clear that a union would mutually benefit both schools. In 2016, the schools met again to formally discuss a merger, with the original intent of first merging the high school and then merging the remaining divisions over the following years. However, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic compelled a more expedited merger. After much strategic planning and work, the two schools merged together in less than a year, creating the premier bilingual International Baccalaureate (IB) World School on the West Coast, and the only IB continuum school in the Bay Area.

INTL offers Chinese, French, and German language programs for Preschool through 12th grades, as well as an Upper School Language Acquisition program (for students with no prior bilingual education experience), and the full continuum of the International Baccalaureate.

For a deeper look into the individual histories of the two schools, visit our history page.

1979
- Founded: Peninsula French-American School (PFAS)

1988
- Founded: Deutsch-Amerikanische Schule San Francisco (DAS)

1996
- Growth: International School of the Peninsula (ISTP)
  - + Chinese Program
  - + Middle School

2002
- Change: German-American International School (GAIS)

2007
- 2007 IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)

2014
- 2014 IB Middle Years Programme (MYP)

2016
- Rebranding: Alto International School

2018
- 2018 IB Diploma Programme (DP)

2019
- 2019 IB: PYP & MYP

2021
- World School: Alto + INTL Merger
  - Authorized as an IB World School offering PYP, MYP & DP

- + Chinese Program
- + French Program
- + German Program
- + USLA
  Silicon Valley International School (INTL)
Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging: Mission-Driven & Student-Centered

By Jovi Craig, Chief of Communications & Institutional Equity and Tiffany Harwick Johnson, Dean of Faculty and Inclusion

As part of a holistic global education, our goal is to build an environment of respect and belonging where students are encouraged to connect with others, to collaborate, and to create across cultures. With a strong belief in fostering cultural agility and global competencies, we aim to make visible and create an environment of respect for all identities and perspectives, including those of culture, race, place of birth, ethnicity, religion, age, family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, disabilities or impairments, learning style, and world view - and do so in a developmentally-appropriate manner.

Part of respecting all identities and perspectives is also acknowledging and understanding the obstacles and barriers to opportunities for certain identities, and building empathy. This is a necessary component for students to grow into global leaders who are able to take action and have a positive impact on the world.

This year, we wanted to focus on two foundational building blocks—institutional culture and professional development. The focus on institutional culture meant taking a look at where we are in this work, establishing a shared lexicon of DEI terms, streamlining goals and processes, and taking a look at our messaging, especially in terms of communicating DEI topics between the classroom and home.

Earlier in the academic year, we worked with faculty on a common lexicon, acknowledging that people from different backgrounds and cultures do not have the same starting point, exposure to, or understanding of DEI terms within the context of our geographical location (America).

Building upon this exercise and with focus on professional development, we were fortunate to welcome back Dr. Derrick Gay, a well-respected Diversity and Inclusion Strategist who works with other independent/international schools domestically and abroad, to further work with our faculty, staff, and school board. Together, we were challenged to explore the words “diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice” and also think about and discuss “race” - which revealed numerous complexities about our school.

Internally, we have also been streamlining the Student Services team goals and processes. The duty of the Student Services team is to ensure that all students in the school have adequate access to an education; this includes the diverse range of learners in our institution. Creating this environment is a goal that will take time to perfect, but we have taken some strategic and intentional steps in a positive direction to support our teachers in providing and fostering an inclusive and accessible learning environment where they feel a sense of belonging.

The steps that the team has taken this year have included implementing culturally-responsive teaching, educating and providing teacher training regarding a variety of differentiation strategies, engaging in inclusive conversations regarding students with diverse needs and creating an environment where best practices in education are standard.

Additionally, we have created a calendar of belonging.

As we continue this work at school, we look forward to partnering with the community in strengthening an inclusive environment that promotes respect, empathy, and encourages positive action.
Globe  
Spring 2022

Geneva Robinson Named  Assistant Head of School

Silicon Valley International School proudly announces that Geneva Robinson has been named Assistant Head of School beginning this summer.

The Assistant Head has long been an integral role at Silicon Valley International School. The Head of School and Board of Directors have oversight in regards to the hiring of the Assistant Head, and it was important to wait until our new Head was selected prior to filling this significant role from a pool of outstanding candidates.

Geneva has long shown a passion for languages and academics. Her background includes a Bachelor’s Degree in Latin from Wellesley College, and a Masters in Applied Linguistics from the renowned Columbia University Teachers College.

She has dedicated the past 15 years of her career to education, having started at an International Baccalaureate World School, which influenced her in her roles as both teacher and administrator. She has served public, charter, and private international schools from the United States to Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Over the course of her career, she has advocated for student agency and democracy in education, student voice, and creating exceptional experiential learning experiences. She believes strongly in mission-driven education and has brought this mindset into each of her previous leadership roles including serving as a Dean of Students, Alto International School’s IB Diploma Programme Coordinator, and INTL’s Upper School Principal.

Geneva’s focus will be on supporting Barbara through academic-facing work. This includes the horizontal and vertical articulation of programs, defining and enhancing what an inquiry-based bilingual education means, supporting faculty, and performing faculty evaluations.

Geneva shares, “over the course of my time at Alto and INTL, I have witnessed firsthand the strength of our school community and the importance of being a bilingual student in today’s world. I have been consistently inspired by our outstanding bilingual programs. I truly believe in the transformative power of an IB education and I am humbled to have this opportunity to work alongside our passionate and talented teachers in creating innovative and excellent learning experiences from preschool to high school. I look forward to collaborating with the whole school community to empower all our students to become critical and creative thinkers who each play a part in making this world a better place.”

Cross-Cultural Celebrations

INTL draws from many places and peoples, all woven into one community. While each of our language programs provides an immersive experience into the heritage and history of the target culture, our students also enjoy exploring the traditions and celebrations of their peers. As an international community, these windows into diverse cultures are one of the many wonderful benefits of a bilingual education. See our photo spread on the next page!

**Lunar New Year**
The Lunar New Year is celebrated and observed by countries throughout Asia, including China, Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. It is a time for gathering the whole family and savoring delicious New Year foods, including dumplings, fish, spring rolls, and nian gao.

This year, INTL was happy to be able to bring live performers back on campus to entertain our community with outdoor lion dances. In Chinese culture, the lion symbolizes power, wisdom, and superiority. The lion dance is one of the most important traditions at Lunar New Year, bringing good luck, good fortune and all the good things for the upcoming year.

**Schultüte**
A Schultüte (“school cone”) is a large cone-shaped decorated container traditionally made of paper or cardboard and filled with toys, school supplies, and other special treats. On their first day of 1st Grade, German children will receive a Schultüte that their parents made for them. Planning for the event began just before the summer break, with families watching a training video on how to make a Schultüte. Although the tradition is German in origin, the families of 1st Grade students from all of INTL’s language programs engaged in the merriment, coming together with a festive international spirit to start the school year.

**Galette des Rois**
Galette des Rois or King Cake is a delicious pastry that is a part of Epiphany celebrations in Europe and the Americas. Traditionally, each galette contains a hidden fève (a porcelain trinket), and the lucky students who find a fève will be crowned queen or king. This year, our Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students created some crowns in preparation and baked their own King Cakes here on campus.
Glimpse into the Early Years

Early Years students at Silicon Valley International School enjoy a daily emphasis on inquiry and imaginative play in an environment that promotes discovery and creativity. Here is a look into the lives of our youngest learners.
From Symbolic Play to Symbolic Representation

By Jacqueline Cody, Early Years Principal & PYP Coordinator

What is Symbolic Learning

Play in the Early Years can often appear as random or without a goal, when in contrast, play is precisely the means through which young learners develop their understanding of the world around them. Most notably, these understandings are met through the development of symbolic representations. Symbolic representations are a foundational component of Early Years Learning at INTL, where our diverse team of educators have the great distinction of being able to share ideas of best practices from across the globe, and with a deep mix of pedagogical backgrounds and expertises in Montessori, Reggio Emilia, the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) and a wide range of national accreditations. The common thread that binds the approach is underpinned in the development of symbolic representations.

Symbolic Learning & Literacy

Language, in its various symbolic forms, is intrinsic to learning; it is the primary system that supports cognition and the associated development of creative and critical thinking faculties. Research (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Sullivan & Brown, 2015) shows that one of the single greatest predictors of academic success is a child’s enjoyment and love for literacy. Ensuring that young learners see themselves as “readers,” “writers,” “authors,” and “illustrators” is a hefty goal and a prioritized one. For example, children are encouraged to explore mark-making and experiment with the variations and significance of these prints—a precursor to formal writing that may look like simple lines and marks on a variety of writing surfaces. They are however, constructing meaning through their interactions with these written forms—building an innate understanding that the marks are symbols and symbols convey meaning.

Symbolic Learning & Math

In order to understand mathematical concepts in a wide-range of contexts, children must first build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Mathematics is, in and of itself, a language of expression—a lens through which patterns are identified, items are categorized, measurements are estimated, shapes are manipulated and endless problems are posed and solved. Early Years learners develop these mathematical skills and capabilities through play and exploration.

How Early Years Teachers Support Symbolic Exploration and Expression

The bilingual and multicultural classrooms at INTL create a unique linguistic and cultural profile, forming a base through which all learning occurs. The environments created are rich in language, providing flexible spaces: for children to experiment with oral language in role play and shared dramatic exploration, stations for mark-making and writing development, centers to explore physical movement, loose parts to explore imaginatively and in endless iterations, and inviting corners with bilingual print in various forms to engage “readers.” Children are provided with agency in their access to materials, creating a sense of ownership over the spaces and a confidence in the importance of their voices in co-constructing the learning. Through the fine-tuned craft of tactical listening and observations, teachers effectively weave literacy and math practices into the daily experiences of young learners, discovering the symbolic language forms of their unique classrooms and then coupling these with the language strengths and relative interests of their learners. Documenting these profiles and then using them to plan and create lessons and environments that expand and challenge student’s language capabilities.

Teachers prioritize play as the primary modality through which they engage with math and literacy concepts in authentic and meaningful ways. To name a few: viewing play as a literacy-rich and numeracy-rich experience, planning authentic inquiry-based investigations, using stories as an opportunity to explore math concepts and problems in context, creating opportunities to make marks in a variety of ways, provide ongoing opportunities to use symbols, use mathematical language to describe the world and immerse children in a rich oral language environment (PYP: From Principles into Practice).
Hands-On Learning Experiences in K-5

By David Huang, K-5 Principal

We can all remember those moments when we made a discovery - the “a-ha!” moments, and when something just clicked for us. We can often find these moments triggered through hands-on, experiential learning - exciting moments that motivate us to learn even more.

At Silicon Valley International School, experiential, hands-on learning is a core part of our curriculum. On a daily basis, we witness that when students can mentally and physically engage with their experience, they are more focused and motivated to learn. With these experiences, students are able to retain more knowledge, utilizing the information and concepts more effectively, while also internalizing their learning.

When students have the opportunity to interact with real objects, they are more likely to understand complex concepts and ideas. To teach our 1st graders how coding works, the teachers use Bee Bots, an easy to operate robot that teaches sequencing, estimation, and problem-solving - the foundations for coding. Students program steps on the Bee Bot and watch it respond to the commands. Through trial and error, the students begin to understand that coding is a series of instructions for the program to follow.

When 4th grade students prepared to present what they had learned about ancient ruins, they learned to code and build interactive posters. They experimented with the codes they had written and built programs that respond to human touch. Similarly, the students learned the basic concepts through trial and error. This process sparked engaging conversations among students, and new ideas were formed. This project was featured at our Annual Arts Night where the audience could interact with the poster and access the content that the students had produced.

These are the experiences that the students will remember when they walk out of the classroom. They remember the moments where they made a connection, when something suddenly made sense to them, and when they finally understood a complex concept. These moments boost their confidence, thus increasing their motivation to learn.

In addition to interacting with real objects, students are given the opportunity to interact with people in real-time. Students learn how to listen to one another and express themselves verbally. They also learn how to defuse awkward situations and resolve conflicts. As a result, they build strong relationships with their peers, creating an exciting learning environment where both mistakes and progress are celebrated.

An example of this is when our 5th grade students explored the concept of communication and influence. Teachers had students prepare skits using formal and informal speech to simulate real-life experiences. Through trying to say the same thing using different methods, the students discovered irony, sarcasm, and other forms of miscommunication. Through these exchanges, they learn how to collaborate with one another in writing dialogues while imagining the impact they have on the real world.

At INTL, learning is more than gathering information or facts. It is about putting the information together to form concepts, and through experiential learning, the students internalize the concepts and solve real-world problems. So when there is a need, a problem to be solved, they are ready to show you what they have learned. Most importantly, they walk away feeling confident, excited about learning, and they can’t wait for their next learning adventure.
Modern Multilingualism: Teaching and Learning

By Olivier Monteil, Academic Dean, French Program & Director of French Affairs

During our in-service day in February, faculty and staff were given an opportunity to reflect on the benefits and challenges of teaching and learning in a multilingual environment.

In recent years, research about bilingual education has produced a lot of new results, particularly in the field of neuroscience. We know now better than ever how a bilingual brain works and, contrary to long-held beliefs, bilingualism appears to be more than just two parallel monolingualisms.

Ofelia Garcia, a most prominent scholar in that field, uses the following metaphor: speaking two languages is not like having access to two different cars and choosing which one to drive for a particular need. Instead, being bilingual is similar to operating a unique, all-terrain vehicle and constantly navigating and adapting to the “uneven topographies of communication.”

If you are a bilingual person yourself, this might resonate with situations you may have encountered. I personally have noticed that even in a conversation in English, if I need to calculate a number (for example a tip at a restaurant) my brain always switches to French to do the math.

This new understanding of the inner workings of a bilingual brain has important implications on the foundation of which a bilingual program should be built, from the way teachers design their lesson plans to the general design of the school spaces, schedules, or communications.

One important concept stemming from this new perspective is called “translanguaging.” Simply explained, this is a pedagogical approach where all languages spoken by students in a classroom are viewed as an asset rather than a hindrance to the objectives of the lesson. A typical illustration would be when students conduct research, for example, on a science topic, to let them consult resources in any language they want, and then ask them to make a presentation or write a summary of their findings in the specific target language.

This methodology has the advantage of separating the acquisition of the science concepts, which occurs in the language chosen by the student, from the development of language skills, which occurs in the target language.

One of the first steps for teachers to implement such an approach is to know the actual linguistic make-up of their class. What are the different languages spoken by the students? Which student is most comfortable in one or the other?

To answer these questions, an activity called “My Language Biography” can be implemented by teachers with their class. This simply takes the form of an artifact created by each student (poster, booklet, recording, etc.) representing all the languages they speak or have been exposed to, and their personal relationship to them.

During our February in-service day, Every person working at INTL, faculty and staff, created their own Language Biography and shared it with colleagues in small groups. It was a very powerful and personal moment, highlighting the richness of our multilingual and multicultural community. People learned about each other in a different way, even those that had been colleagues for many years.

But more than just being some sort of a team building activity, it was meant to be a starter point of a larger discussion about how we could use this richness of languages and cultures as an asset to better work together. This mirrors the approach teachers could adopt in their class: once they know the linguistic profile of their students, they could adapt their lessons to strategically include all those languages as a lever for learning.

When more than 40% of the population of the world is bilingual, and when embracing diversity and respecting everybody’s identity seems to be such an important value to defend, Translanguaging as a philosophy of education is an innovative approach worth exploring.
Post-Pandemic Bilingual Development in the K-5 Chinese Program: Data-Driven Literacy Instruction

By Ya-Ching Chang, Interim Chinese Program Academic Dean and 3rd Grade Teacher

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) school, we are committed to cultivating a culture of inquiry and emphasizing the importance of reflection in our school community. Good learning and teaching practices rely on thoughtful reflection, goal setting, and action. While we welcomed all students back to school at the beginning of the school year, the K-5 Chinese Program teachers and I met and shared our reflections and observations of the complex challenges brought during the pandemic. Our teachers went above and beyond to develop creative lessons and projects these past years, but we understood that students had gone through many changes that we hadn’t ever experienced before. One of our goals this year is to know where our students are and how to support them to meet their learning needs.

This school year, we began an initiative to do data-driven Chinese literacy instruction that includes assessment, analysis, and action to support student success. Data-driven instruction uses information gathered from learning results to identify current student capability and determine the next steps in instruction. Student performance reveals what our students understand and are able to apply, what their pathway is for literacy growth, and how we can use data to support students’ learning needs and help them achieve success. Teachers use a leveled reading progression framework for each grade level as a guide to explore such questions as:

- What are students’ current reading levels?
- What language, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies do students demonstrate in their reading levels?
- How can the data inform us of students’ learning needs and help us make instructional decisions?
- What are our action plans for whole group and small group instruction?
- How will we re-evaluate students’ literacy growth to ensure all students achieve success?

After collecting data and analyzing students’ learning results in the fall, teachers determined specific reading strategies to integrate into each unit of inquiry for whole group instruction, and identified reading strategies to incorporate into small group instruction. After implementing whole group and small group instruction, we used the updated student data to inform us of the next steps in the literary pathway.

While the literacy plan was implemented horizontally in each grade level, teachers were informed of the vertical articulation of reading comprehension strategies in all grade levels. For instance, after reading a story, Kindergarten students are able to identify the story’s main characters; 2nd graders are able to retell the actions of the main characters; 4th graders are able to identify the characteristics in the personality of the story’s different characters based on the context clues. When analyzing the story settings, 1st grade students are able to ask and answer questions about who, what, where and when; 3rd grade students are able to use story details to explain development of an event; 5th grade students are able to explain the plot of a story which has a changing time and location setting or an increasing number of characters.

Our teachers are passionate educators in helping students cultivate essential literacy skills that will allow them to read and write confidently and independently, and to advance their linguistic and literacy capacities in a bilingual learning environment.
Voice, Choice, and Ownership: Agency in the Primary Years Programme

By Claudia Gruber, German Teacher and Lower School German Curriculum Leader

Student Agency is an important component of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme, and in contemporary education overall. Student Agency means that students are actively involved in their education and in the school community. This can range from students choosing their own projects and influencing what direction a unit takes to collaborating with teachers on essential classroom agreements. Demonstrating agency also means that students reflect on their learning, develop a growth mindset, and set academic goals as well as goals for improving their Approaches to Learning (ATLs). Fostering student agency is particularly important for language learning, as it helps move the learning from a static list of grammar and vocabulary to a living integration of activities.

This graphic from the IB shows that learners with agency have a voice and choice in their education, and take ownership in this journey. The learner is part of the community and gets actively involved in it. The idea is that students know what they are learning and why will intrinsically be more motivated and involved.

At INTL, students find various ways to demonstrate agency. It can be as simple as bringing in objects or books that are related to a current unit. Here are a few examples from different grades in the German program:

During the unit on "How the world works", the 2nd grade students inquired into how simple experiments are conducted. Coincidentally, their daily classroom calendar asked the question: "How can you peel an egg without touching it?" The students spontaneously decided to plan an experiment with the guidance of Frau Kohler to find the answer.

In 4th grade, students initiated an activity to draw graffiti with meaningful messages on their classroom partition wall when they learned about the Berlin wall during the unit on migration.

A few months into the school year, the 5th grade students began leading morning circles and wellness activities. They also hold class meetings in order to solve classroom or recess problems. The teacher is the facilitator and observer while the students lead the meetings. Recently, the students advocated for more room to play during recess. They stated the problem and came up with creative solutions which they presented to the dean of students and her team.

The way that we provide feedback to our students is equally vital to fostering agency. In German culture, we are often direct in our communication and believe that specific feedback has a greater positive impact than general praise. In German, there is not really a cultural translation for the term “good job”. At the same time, we want to avoid being overly critical and will ask the student for their opinion of their work. There is a place for praise as well; we say things more like, "I can see that you tried hard here. You are on your way." or "You learned from this mistake." and "You put a lot of effort into making this beautiful. You colored everything in so precisely." This helps students to develop an understanding that they are learning for themselves and that they are responsible for their learning. Giving the children ways to reflect on their work combined with constructive feedback assists in establishing the growth mindset associated with student agency.

For example, when a kindergarten student asks how a teacher likes their picture, the teacher would ask them to explain their choices:

Was hältst du von deinem Bild? Warum hast du diese Farbe gewählt? (How do you like your picture? Why did you use this color?)

Another example would be a 1st grade student writing a line of capital B’s to practice letter formation and asking the teacher if they did well. The teacher would ask the student to find the most beautiful B in the line themselves and mark it with a smiley face. This helps the children to identify their best work.

The numerous benefits of giving students a voice and an opportunity to be in the driver’s seat of their learning journey doesn’t manifest overnight. It takes patience, a willingness to take some risks, and an open mind on the teacher’s side. Naturally, it also requires a student-centered approach. Fostering agency can begin at an early age with various degrees of teacher support and guidance. These are just a few examples and we continually look for new opportunities for students to become active, independent, and responsible learners.
Art as Another Language: Middle School

At INTL, art is another language, another form of self-expression, expanding students’ myriad perspectives and opportunities to communicate thoughts, emotions, and ideas. Here is a selection of thoughtful and creative works from our Middle School students.

1. Zachary M. - 8th grade - Chinese Program
   A project based on the Expressionist art period. In their paintings, students expressed various feelings like anger, isolation, and loneliness.

2. Chloé W. - 8th grade - French Program
   This project focused on exploring the radial perspective. All elements radiate out from a single central point in a radial composition, creating a balanced design.

3. Alexa B. - 6th grade - German Program
   For this project, students created imaginary animals using multiple artistic elements like texture, values, color, space, and shape.
Model United Nations
By Richard Goulding, Upper School Teacher and Model UN Advisor

What is Model UN?
Model United Nations is a global simulation activity for secondary school and college students that typically takes place at large in-person or online gatherings known as Conferences. In the simulation activity, students play the role of delegates from member states attending United Nations (UN) committees. In preparation for the committee, students complete a rigorous research and writing process in order to learn about their assigned country, its position on the committee topic, and past actions taken by the international community on related issues.

What is the value of Model UN?
Model United Nations teaches young people about important aspects of international relations, diplomacy, and the role and function of the UN. Delegates learn about the position of their assigned country and the international community on any given topic, honing their academic research and writing skills. Throughout the committee sessions, delegates engage in a simulation of participatory democracy. They speak and listen to a wide range of perspectives and must engage with ideas that are novel to them in order to achieve success.

What does this look like at INTL?
The INTL Model United Nations team has been made up of a mixture of middle school students. In December, our team completed an internal Economics and Financial Committee session on the topic of Regulating Cryptocurrency. The afternoon and evening at the Willows Campus were highly successful with excellent speeches, diplomatic wrangling, robust discussion, tight votes, and pizza to boot! Students played the role of delegates from Egypt, Switzerland, Russia, China, the United States, and El Salvador to name but a few. Moreover, our students also attended online conferences run by the reputable organization Best Delegate. In October and January, our students represented a wide range of countries in committee, discussing topics such as Access to Education, Access to Clean Drinking Water, and Eliminating World Hunger.

Have any of our students won awards in external conferences?
A number of INTL students won awards in the Best Delegate conferences, where they were in competition with students from schools around the country. Silja F. and Francisca B. both won the Best Delegate award once each. This is the highest award handed out to just one delegate in each committee, for their engagement and ideas. Three students, Sam M., Zander P., and Riaan S. received the second-highest award of Outstanding Delegate in their respective committees. Clea L. was also awarded an Honorable Mention in her committee.
A Better and More Peaceful World in the High School

By Geneva Robinson, Upper School Principal and Incoming Assistant Head

For Duncan T. (11th), a better and more peaceful world is one where knowledge of languages supports empathy and global interconnectedness. In the International Baccalaureate (IB) Theory of Knowledge course, Duncan’s passion for languages manifested in his exploration of the question, “are there differences in how knowledge itself is conceived of or presented in different languages?”

Duncan used his experience in the IB Chinese B Higher Level course to explore how fictive motion, that is, how a metaphorical object moves through time or space, is at play in both English and Mandarin. Whereas he communicates about time in English as moving backwards and forwards, he has noticed that in Chinese, he speaks and writes about falling through time.

Duncan is very clear that understanding differences in languages paves the way for a better and more peaceful world. He says, “self-expression and communication through language is the ultimate part of human identity. When we learn how other languages function, we can build empathy for language learners and other language speakers. Building an understanding of language builds an appreciation for other people. Bridging these gaps and making connections across cultures and continents with language is what makes the world a better place.”

In her IB History of the Americas Higher Level investigation, Ana Y. (12th) developed and sought to answer the question, “to what extent was the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973 subsequently opposed by those seeking to deny access to abortion?”

She knew her historical investigation was a success when she came to understand the “why” of those she did not agree with. This open-mindedness has taught her that the responsibility of historians transcends the discipline of history. Ana says that understanding the role of emotion in perspectives on historical events has helped her to contextualize memoirs read as part of the IB English Language and Literature Higher Level course as well. For Ana, this critical empathy and the practice of seeking and evaluating a range of points of view has the potential to create a better and more peaceful world.

Finn N. (12th) has dedicated much of his attention for the last several months to the design of a ski carrier in the IB Design Technology Higher Level course. Finn initially found a conflict between the requirements of the marketplace, the processes of commercial production, and the idea of a better and more peaceful world. Finn reflects that he started the project wanting to create a viable design for a ski carrier that could be produced commercially and become profitable. Curious about how to balance the demands of the marketplace with the principle of sustainability, he says, “what is emerging now is the focus on not just how good your product is, but how sustainable it is. This is a response to the need for a better and more peaceful world.” It is humbling and inspiring to hear our high school students discuss how their values, perspectives, and academic investigations intersect towards this ideal of a better and more peaceful world. We can’t wait to see how they each make their mark in the years to come.
Aspects of Achievement: High School Projects

High School students at Silicon Valley International School have a wide range of ways to demonstrate their learning and apply the qualities they’ve developed as IB Learners. Among those methods are three key activities: the Extended Essay, Personal Projects and CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service). Below are some examples of what they’ve been working on.

Diploma Programme Extended Essay (12th grade) The Extended Essay is a required component of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. It is an independent, self-directed piece of research, culminating in a 4,000-word paper. The Extended Essay provides practical preparation for undergraduate research.

By Anna Y.

When we had to choose a subject for our Extended Essay, I knew that it would give me an opportunity to explore my favorite Biology topic in more detail than we had time for in class. I am fascinated by the role hormones play in the body, and was interested in studying the stress hormone cortisol.

I started the process by researching cortisol and the impact it has on the body. I found that high cortisol levels in the saliva has been linked to developing periodontitis, which is a gum disease, and decided to test the impact of cortisol on periodontitis-related bacteria. I did this by using samples of my own tooth plaque and different concentrations of hydrocortisone solutions, a synthetic preparation of cortisol, and growing these on agar plates. My preliminary trials were unsuccessful after there was no bacterial growth on the agar plates. I had to change my method and after many different attempts, I finally was able to find a successful method that gave me data I could analyze. Ultimately, I found that cortisol does not directly affect the growth of periodontitis-related bacteria. Through research, I found that it actually weakens the body’s ability to fight off the periodontitis bacteria, which leads to periodontitis.

Although my data did not show what I had expected, I learned some invaluable lessons through the process of designing and carrying out my own experiment for the first time. It taught me self-management skills, research skills, and perseverance. The process took self-discipline, strong time management, confidence and the ability to troubleshoot when conducting the experiment independently. I am planning on majoring in Biology and am confident that the EE has given me a head start and helped me develop skills that I will need in future academics.

Middle Years Programme Personal Project (10th grade) The Personal Project is a student-centered long-term project that serves as the culmination of their Middle Years Programme learning. It is a practical exploration through a cycle of inquiry, action, and reflection and prepares them for the Diploma Programme and beyond.

By Samantha P.

For my personal project, I have taken this opportunity to explore directing, which is a career that I find extremely interesting and a possible profession that I would like to go into. I started the after-school Drama Club here at INTL, so that I could gain that experience directing, as well as to share my passion for acting and theater with other students. We have about 20 students participating in the play The Big Bad Musical, which is a play that I have taken from one of my previous schools in Spain and slightly edited for our use. It is a play about the ‘Big Bad Wolf’ being put on trial for all of his crimes, including huffing and puffing down houses, attempted murder by ingestion, grandmother impersonation and attempted sheep abduction. I hope my personal project has made a lasting mark, where the drama club continues to grow along with the school, so that other students may explore their interest or love for theater.

Creativity, Activity, Service The CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service) is not a formal assessment, but rather a vehicle in which students can engage in civic and social activities alongside their academic studies. It enables students to explore their personal and interpersonal development by learning through experiences.

By Sophie, Tristan, grify, and Sasha

Sophie, Tristan, grify, and Sasha have been working on a service opportunity based upon one of the United Nations’ sustainable development goals. They selected “conservation climate” as they wanted to do something that benefited the community. As a group, they delegated tasks amongst themselves such as project management, research, website design, finding and creating formulas (such as how often a person drives, or how many flights a year a person takes and the impact on climate), programming, and more.

Based upon their research, the group created a website titled “Offset” (located at: conserve_CALC) which provides a carbon emissions calculator to provide awareness for people’s individual impact on the environment. They also created a Twitter account, and put up posters around their personal neighborhoods to spread awareness. Throughout this project, they learned how to be more organized, improved their collaboration and communication skills, and used their individual strengths and talents to create an inspiring group project.
Dear Silicon Valley International Community,

Our first year as a combined school has had its ups and downs, mainly due to challenges posed by COVID. We continued our school’s traditions with events like the Moon Festival, St. Martin’s Day, Galette de Rois, Skate Night, Lunar New Year, Movie Night, and the Teacher-Staff Appreciation Lunch. We continue to build community with these events and potential new ones, like a late-summer Beach Day for our families and treating our teachers and staff to boba tea to thank them for their work.

We needed to adapt quickly to changes in policy and modify events accordingly to keep students and staff safe. We will continue our efforts to create as normal an environment as possible for everyone. Together with the school, the PTA helps foster parent connections and guide our philosophies to create the best possible learning space for our children.

With your volunteer support and with the values our children are developing through the IB Learner Profile, we have a community of open-minded, caring, and principled people. We always welcome chairs and general volunteers to assist in our events. Please reach out to help or bring your ideas of how we can continue to meet and enjoy our variety of cultures. We have so much to learn about one another, and it will take some time until more normalcy comes back.

New this school year, the PTA hosts an open forum on the first Thursday of each month. We encourage you to join us to learn more about the school. It’s important for those who take part to bring that information to their respective classes. We discuss upcoming events and provide an opportunity for Q&A with the administration for all to hear. We welcome your questions.

As we go through the rest of the year and into 2022-2023, we will continue to bring you as many community events, old and new, as we can. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us at pta@svintl.org.

Sincerely,
INTL PTA
Erich Sonnberger, President
Catherine Dao, Vice President
Linda Wang, Secretary
Olivier Crémel, Treasurer

From Chief Advancement Officer
Patricia Colin

When Alto International School and Silicon Valley International School began working together on a possible merger, I knew that there would be plenty of work ahead to bring our communities together as one.

One of the bright spots in this process of bringing our communities together was meeting Stephen Kispersky, one of the founders of Deutsche-Amerikanische Schule (DAS). I was able to connect with numerous alumni and alumni parents, many of whom are in Germany. I met many of the people who made a difference with all their years in the Alto community, the people that helped build an awesome German immersion IB school.

Also during this time, I was lucky to have had the privilege of working closely with former Alto Director of Development, Karen Rizkalla, who facilitated many discussions all across the community, from Gisela Pyka to Dominic Liechti. I learned so much and saw the love, sweat, and tears that went into transforming DAS into Alto. It really mirrors the same level of dedication and passion behind how Peninsula French-American School/International School of the Peninsula came to be!

My greatest hope is that everyone in our newly merged community thinks of Silicon Valley International School as their home. Both Alto and INTL have met similar challenges, and both communities have cared deeply about the school in a way that influenced positive growth and change. We can be proud to have a community of parents that volunteers tirelessly and that wholeheartedly supports the world-class bilingual, International Baccalaureate education that we provide.

If you are an alumni, regardless of which program you attended, it’s important that you connect with one another. You all have the most important thing in common—that you have the shared values instilled in you from the bilingual education you received.

Alumni frequently return to school and share stories about how bilingualism has served them throughout their lives and gave them so much more than another language. Current INTL parent and alumni, Sophie Gassée Baxter said it so well:

What made the school so special to me was the greater perspective it gave me with which to understand the world, . . . There are words and expressions in one language that simply don’t exist in any others, entire ideas or ways of thinking about something that you wouldn’t otherwise have access to. It is this ability to see things from different angles which made this multicultural, bilingual education such a powerful gift, and the reason we in turn send our children to the school today.

There is great value to the ability to connect with one another, and I hope that I can ask you to help build our Alumni directory. Please fill out our form at svintl.org/alumni-update.

Also, we have some wonderful Alumni events and networking opportunities coming up. This is your chance to meet new people or reconnect with your beloved classmates. Whether you attended DAS, PFAS, GAIS, ISTP, or Alto - you are welcomed with open arms and we are honored to be able to provide you with avenues to connect.
An Exciting Arts Night!

By Patricia Colin, Chief Advancement Officer

This academic year, the stars aligned for our school to be able to hold our Annual Arts Night - we were very lucky!

I was thrilled to see all of the families that showed up and had a great time, and it was great to see the largest alumni turnout that we’ve ever had at Arts Night.

In addition, I feel so grateful that it happened when it did. Any sooner and we would’ve been without volunteers because of the Delta variant wave; any later and it would’ve been during the Omicron wave. Arts Night would have certainly been canceled if it were at any other time.

Because of decisive action and the hard work of our volunteers, we were able to safely experience this special event together as a community. Instead of waiting and forever delaying events, waiting for a perfect moment that would never come, our community came together and made it happen and on behalf of everyone at INTL, we are so appreciative!

Parents volunteered, staff stepped up, and our families came to support their children and be apart of their school lives. I hope you were able to attend, have fun, and share this special experience with your friends and family.

We certainly missed the delectable buffet and drinks that have been staples of previous Arts Nights, but, for the first time since the beginning of COVID, we were able to come together in person as a community again - and that is priceless!
Annual Giving Donors

Donations as of March 1, 2022.

We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing. Please correct any errors you find by emailing Patricia@svintl.org if you find an error.
Ways to Give

Ways to Contribute Today!
There are many ways you can support INTL and help make a difference for all our students today, regardless if you are donating to the Annual Fund, an Endowment Fund, the Annual Gala & Auction, or our Soirée du Vin.

Donor Advised Fund (DAF)
Call your fund manager and recommend supporting Silicon Valley International School, along with the amount of the grant and which fund you are supporting.

By Check or eCheck
Please send check directly or through the “Bill Pay” option at your bank and send to:
Silicon Valley International School
Attn: Advancement Office
151 Laura Lane
Palo Alto, CA 94303
Please have the check marked in the memo field which fund you are supporting.

By Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express
Annual Fund at www.svintl.org/donate
Endowment Funds: www.svintl.org/endowment
Gala & Auction: www.svintl.org/gala
Soirée du Vin: www.soireeduvin.org

Cryptocurrency
INTL now accepts cryptocurrency. To donate, complete a form at: www.svintl.org/support/cryptocurrency

Quantifiable Charitable Distribution (QCD)
An Easy Way for Grandparents or Alumni Parents to Support INTL
A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows individuals who are 70½ years old or older to donate up to $100,000 total to one or more charities directly from a taxable IRA instead of taking their required minimum distributions. As a result, donors may avoid being pushed into higher income tax brackets and prevent phasedout of other tax deductions, though there are some other limitations.

Restrictions:
- You must be at least 70½ years of age when gift is made
- Donations must be made directly from an IRA to INTL
- IRA contributions can not exceed $100,000 per person (or $200,000 for a couple) in a given year

Stocks/Securities
Stock donations can provide excellent tax benefits to the donor. Stock donations are handled as a broker to broker transactions. Please instruct your broker to include your name when your donation is made, and which fund you are supporting.

UBS Financial Services: (650) 289-7000 or (800) 944-6611
Account Number: KP 01760 SS
Account Representative: Kathleen Snodgrass & Michael Scandalsos
DTC Number: 0221
Account Name: Silicon Valley International School

Corporate Matching Gifts
Corporate matching is when companies financially match donations and volunteer hours that their employees make to eligible nonprofit organizations (like INTL). When an employee makes a donation, they’ll need to request the matching gift from their employer HR. Please speak with your HR about the specifics at your company, and how to request the matching funds.

Ways to Make a Difference in the Future!
Making a gift to INTL through Planned Giving is a great way to make a difference for the school in the future. Planned Giving is about preparing a gift for the future from which you also receive a financial benefit. Planned gifts, unlike cash donations, are typically made from assets in your estate, which means your disposable income is unaffected. Gift planning options include bequests, retirement plans, real estate, life insurance, charitable remainder trusts and charitable lead trusts. Gift planning also has marvelous tax benefits, and provides you with a vehicle to do something truly special. These gifts often require help from your professional advisors as well as some advance planning.
INTL Global Babies

Our Silicon Valley International School family extends beyond our current and alumni families and faculty/staff—it includes babies, too! Please let advancement@svintl.org know if you are expecting or have welcomed a new baby into the family, so we can send you a Future Global Thinker bib and share your joyful news with the community.

1. Alumni Marika Groleau & Grant Glazebrook’s son, Luca
2. Alumni Nastassia Groleau & Ruben Olea’s son, Mateo
3. Former Faculty Ken Guan’s daughter, Ruth Guan

Alumni Events & INTL Connect

INTL Alumni Summer Gathering
Save the Date!
Friday, June 10, 2022, 6 PM at INTL Cohn Campus
You’re invited to the Annual Alumni Gathering! All INTL, Alto, ISTP, GAIS, DAS, and PFAS alumni and alumni parents are welcome. There will be food, raffle prizes, and at the center of it, our growing and phenomenal international community. Reunite with old friends and meet new ones. Philippe Dietz, longtime Head of School, will be in attendance as well. We can’t wait to see you there!

INTL Alumni Paris Reunion
Save the Date!
Saturday, June 25, 2022
Join us for this special biennial event to reconnect and make new friendships with the INTL community abroad. All INTL, Alto, ISTP, GAIS, DAS, or PFAS alumni and alumni parents are welcome! For the last time as our head of school, special guest Philippe Dietz will be there to share stories and say goodbye to the INTL Community. Whether you add this reunion in your itinerary to France or you hop on a train from another city or country, we hope to see you there!

INTL Connect Networking Event
Save the Date!
Sunday, August 21, 2022 at 5 PM
Alumni, past parents, current parents, and friends of INTL are invited to the INTL Connect Networking Event. Attendees have an opportunity for face-to-face interactions across careers, industries, skills, and experiences.

Questions? Call (650) 201-8502 or email alumni@svintl.org
Find Us Online! Instagram: @svintlalumni Networking Platform: intlconnect.org
Remembering Anya

This past November, our school community was devastated by the passing of ISTP/INTL alumna, Anya Varfolomeeva, and her boyfriend. They died tragically when a drunk driver struck their car. Our hearts still go out to the Varfolomeev-Drokova family, and especially to Anya’s parents, Anatoly and Natalia.

For those who know the Varfolomeev-Drokova family, and those who knew the bright light that was Anya, this was an incredible shock. A small group of close classmates gathered at school over the Thanksgiving break to remember their good friend Anya. In their own words, former teachers, classmates and friends share memories of Anya, and what they will miss the most:

“Anya was joyful, kind, and generous with everyone. I had the privilege of spending two weeks with her during our middle school field trip to Paris and had many very interesting discussions with her in which she displayed a maturity well beyond her age. Anya was also a true artist. I will always remember her grace and joy on stage when she was dancing in the 8th grade play interlude.”

Former Middle School Principal, and Incoming Head of School, Barbara Greiner

“It is truly a remarkable blessing to grow up beside someone with the ability to bring light to our lives and touch us so deeply. Upon trying to describe Anya to my friends from college, I was overcome by feelings of warmth and love. When I think of Anya, I remember her for her radiance and heart of gold. Even today, Anya continues to make me laugh each time I am reminded of her wild imagination and the tales she used to tell. From a very young age, she taught me volumes about practicing gratitude for the opportunities she seized inside the classroom and on the ballet stage; I know that all those who knew her will continue to be inspired by Anya in appreciating all of the beautiful experiences that life has to offer. Anya, our angel ballerina, continues to live on in the hearts of all those she touched with her kindness, grace, unapologetic individuality, passion, talent and magnetic smile.”

Classmate, Charlotte Acra

“I have such beautiful and fond memories of Anya from lower school to middle school. She was always happy, cheerful, and funny. She brought creativity and great energy to the art room and to life in general. I will always remember her kindness and talent, and her sweet and gentle soul.”

Former ISTP Art Teacher, Aïcha Idelcadi

“Anya was the most supportive friend. She wanted those she cared about to succeed more than anything, and she hoped to be by their side to watch. I wish I could watch her accomplish all of her goals. I’ll always remember how big she dreamt. She was the weirdest person I knew and she wanted to be; Anya always sought to stand out. She inspired me to do the same and gave me the confidence I carry today. Anya, I’ll never forget you. Je t’aime sans limite et sans condition, pour l’éternité.”

Classmate, Chloé Morali

“On a trip I led to Blérancourt, a small village in Picardie France, I had the pleasure to get to know Anya Varfolomeeva. Anya traveled with us and her peers in October 2012. She was in 5th grade and 10 years old. All of our students traveled by themselves, often for their first time, and really learned to be autonomous and proud of their independence. Anya was no exception. She appreciated every moment of the trip, listening and marveling at French culture and the monuments. She was a sweet and friendly girl.”

Chief Advancement Officer & Blérancourt Chaperone, Patricia Colin
PTA End of Year Gathering & Philippe’s Retirement Party

Please join us for an End of Year Gathering, and a chance to say a final goodbye to Philippe!

**Date:** Saturday, June 4th  
**Time:** 3PM-6PM (one hour time slots)  
**RSVP Required:** www.svintl.org/endofyear

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**Colleges and Universities List**

Where are they now? High School Class of 2021

- American University
- Arizona State University
- Chapman University
- De Anza College*
- Eckerd College
- ESCP Business School
- Foothill College
- Institut Paul Bocuse
- Johns Hopkins University
- Kenyon College
- Knox College*
- L’école Ferrandi Paris
- Loyola University Chicago
- Lycée Buffon
- Macalester College
- Mount Holyoke College
- Northwestern University (2)*
- NYU (2)
- Polytechnie Montreal
- Purdue University
- Sainte-Geneviève in Versailles
- Santa Clara University (2)
- Sciences Po Paris x UC Berkeley Dual Degree Program
- The University of Chicago
- Tufts University
- UC Berkeley (2)
- UC Irvine
- UC Santa Cruz
- UCLA (2)
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Michigan
- University of Oregon
- University of Washington
- Whitman College
- WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management*

* INTL High School Graduates
Our Mission

Silicon Valley International School’s focus on inquiry and bilingualism empowers young minds to embrace complexity, think critically from multiple perspectives, and demonstrate integrity and sensitivity across cultures.