

# US WEEKLY BULLETIN

Issue #24 | March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 | Frank Volpe & Naomi Shanks

## Important Dates

- **March 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Upper School Field Trips (grades 6-11)
- **March 1<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>:** IB Mock Exams (grade 12)
- **March 4<sup>th</sup>:** Dragon Cup Soccer, Hongqiao Campus
- **March 7<sup>th</sup>:** PAFA General Meeting
- **March 7<sup>th</sup>:** Principal's Coffee Morning: An Introduction to the MYP Personal Project
- **March 8<sup>th</sup>:** JV Boys Soccer vs. CISS
- **March 14<sup>th</sup>:** MYP Science Expo
- **March 15<sup>th</sup>:** College Fair
- **March 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>:** Student led conferences
- **March 17<sup>th</sup>:** end of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter
- **April 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>:** Spring Break

Still asking, "How was school today?" Changing the question may result in a more interesting answer. Next time try:

**"What was your favorite part of the field trip?"**



Grade 6 students at the Urban Planning museum.

## Principals' Message

Dear SCIS Families,

This was a busy curricular week on campus. Seniors started their IB mock exams this week. Mocks are designed to prepare students for the real IB exams which will start May 1st and run through May 19<sup>th</sup>. They provide a great chance for students to practice the exam experience and get feedback for their final preparations. Students in grades 6-11 had more hands on experiences as they explored the museums, architecture, and universities of Shanghai. These teacher designed experiences helped bring classroom learning to life.

Tuesday March 7<sup>th</sup> will bring a chance for parents to attend the PAFA general meeting and the Principal's Coffee Morning. We encourage you to take the opportunity to stay connected with the parent community and learn about upcoming events. The topic of this month's Principal Coffee Morning is the MYP Personal Project. Coach Vic, our Personal Project Coordinator, will join us to share with parents the details of the Personal Project and some of the exciting projects students are currently engaged in. The Personal Project is the culminating experience for MYP students where they get to showcase their learning in an area they are passionate about.

Kind Regards,

Frank Volpe, PhD  
Upper School Principal

Naomi Shanks  
Upper School Vice Principal

# Preparing Students for a Rapidly Changing World

By: Dr. Frank Volpe

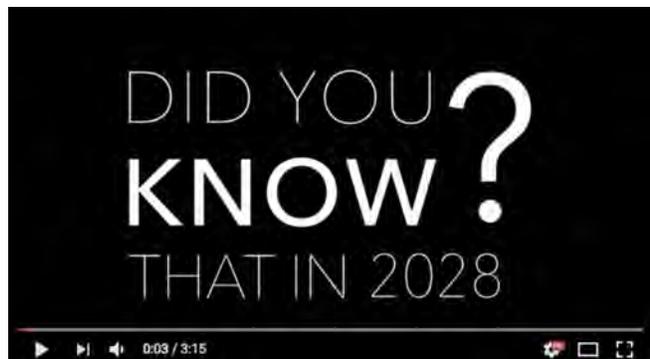
The contemporary pace of technological and economic change has disrupted 20<sup>th</sup> century educational models. Schools are faced with preparing students for unknown challenges and careers that haven't been invented yet. Focusing only on factual learning has been made

obsolete by technology and the pace of scientific innovation. Now more than ever, schools are challenged to teach beyond facts and specific sets of skills. As most adults in the modern work place will tell you, updating our skills is an ongoing process. Alvin Toffler, author and futurist, explains how this challenge has altered what it means to be educated. Toffler wrote, "The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." As educators, we must go beyond the basics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century education, we must also help students develop into efficient independent learners.

"The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." -Alvin Toffler

The International Baccalaureate frameworks that SCIS has adopted have been designed to meet this challenge. The IB frameworks were chosen because they are founded on educational principles that reflect cutting edge research in the science of learning. SCIS uses these frameworks to contextualize learning within the real world. Three core principles of learning at SCIS that are directly related to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are inquiry based instruction, concept driven curriculum design, and an emphasis on building the skills required for independent learning.

By contextualizing learning in real world inquiry, students simulate the natural problem-based projects of the modern workplace. By connecting learning to practical application, students see the purpose of learning from the start of the unit of study. The IB frameworks facilitate making connections across disciplines through shared contexts that are consistent across subject areas. This student centered approach is facilitated and planned by the teacher, but the engagement with curriculum is student driven. At SCIS, student centered inquiry is seen as the best way to provide students the opportunity to hone the skills of life long learning.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?>

Unfortunately, learning to solve today's problems is not sufficient. The demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century require that students be trained to solve problems they haven't encounter or that perhaps haven't even been identified yet. This is accomplished through an emphasis on conceptual learning. Teachers design lessons and units with the goal of helping students learn

concepts that can then be applied in other contexts to solve future problems. For example, students in the 6th grade design class are currently redesigning an area of the school to create a Lego space for Lower School students. Rather than only focus on the immediate location and task, the unit is designed with a broader lens. Students will explore such concepts as development and perspective as it relates to the unit and how these same concepts can be applied to other scenarios and disciplines. This allows them to apply their learning beyond any one context and into future realities.

# LEGO Play Space

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**STATEMENT OF INQUIRY**

Designers understand their clients' perspective so they can develop an area that is sustainable and provides a fair and fun environment.

**INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

Factual: What is sustainability?

Conceptual: How does listening to your audience's perspective drive success? How do ergonomics affect the overall usability of the space?

Debatable: At what point does something become unfair?

**KEY CONCEPT**  
Development

**RELATED CONCEPT**  
Ergonomics  
Sustainability  
Perspective

**GLOBAL CONTEXT**  
Fairness and  
Development

**SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

- Process Journal (A, B)
- Design Brief (A)
- Shark Tank Presentation (B)

In order for students to develop as true independent learners, they must develop the necessary learning skills, habits, and attitudes. Within the IB Framework, these skills, habits, and attitudes are identified as the Approaches to Learning (ATLs). These ATLs are represented in five domains; Communication, Self-Management, Research, Thinking, and Social Skills. These skills are explicitly taught by teachers and reflected on by students. This metacognitive approach, promotes student self monitoring, evaluation, and personal responsibility in learning.

SCIS has adopted the IB Frameworks to support the development of true lifelong learners who can connect their learning to the real world, apply their learning to new situations, and monitor and adjust their own learning along the way. While we may not be able to predict what jobs or specific skills will be needed in the future, we can identify the traits needed to face these unknown challenges. With the development of our IB Primary Years, Middle Years, and Diploma Programs, SCIS is developing students who are ready to thrive while facing these unknown challenges.

# Notes

## **Student-led Parent Conferences (March 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>):**

Advisors have been reaching out to families to schedule times and will continue to do so over the coming week. Advisors will work to schedule families with Lower School students on the same day at convenient times. Students are looking forward to sharing their work with families.

## **Re-enrollment:**

Re-enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year is officially underway! If your family has not received a re-enrollment email from the SCIS Admissions Department, please contact them directly at [admission@scis-his.org](mailto:admission@scis-his.org).

## **Volunteers Wanted:**

As a reminder from the most recent PAFA meeting, Mr. Luebbe is seeking parent volunteers to serve on two different groups. Each group will be made up of parents, students, and faculty. The two groups will work towards:

- Prioritizing Facility Enhancements Over the Next Three Years

To learn more, please contact Mr. Luebbe at [dluebbe@scis-china.org](mailto:dluebbe@scis-china.org) by Monday.

## **2017-18 Calendar Change for the Class of 2018**

Parents of current Grade 11 students, please make a note of planned changes in the calendar for Grade 12 during the 2017-18 school year. Beginning next year, the Grade 12 China Trip will be moved to the last week of May. During the former trip week in September, Grade 12 students will be on campus, benefiting from a carefully structured program focussing on the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge, CAS, and college counseling. This bonus week will greatly relieve the pressures on our senior students in the winter and spring, put them in a much stronger position to achieve their fullest potential in the DP Program, and raise the quality of their college applications. As an added bonus, taking a school sponsored trip together as a class in celebration of completing high school will provide a final opportunity for the class to share a unified experience before going their separate ways, and relieve financial pressures on families who in the past have borne the expense of similar trips. The China Trip program for Grades 6-11 will not be affected.

**SCIS Parent Email:** Official school communications are only sent to @scis-parent.org email accounts that are provided to all SCIS parents. If you have not yet set up your SCIS parent email account, please head to <http://schoolid.scishis.net/> to create your email address, set your recovery email, and connect your children to your account. Once finished, you will receive a confirmation message with your new School ID and begin to receive school communications. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Barry Johnson at [pd-technology@scis-china.org](mailto:pd-technology@scis-china.org).

**ManageBac:** Use ManageBac to check in with your child's classes and observe their progress throughout the year. To log in for the first time, follow the link in the welcome email sent to your parent email address. If you haven't seen it, contact Barry Johnson at [pd-technology@scis-china.org](mailto:pd-technology@scis-china.org) and a new welcome email will be sent to you. ManageBac is a web-based software, widely used by IB schools worldwide, that is specifically designed to facilitate IB planning and assessment.

**Attendance:** Please use ManageBac, email, or call the Upper School Secretary if your student will be absent. Jelly can be reached at [jling@scis-china.org](mailto:jling@scis-china.org)