

LS WEEKLY BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin 4 | September 9, 2016 | Elizabeth Gale

Important Dates

- **September 10:** Welcome Back BBQ
- **September 15:** Mid-Autumn Festival – No School
- **September 30:** United Nations International Day of Peace
- **October 3 – 7:** National Holiday / No School
- **October 18-19:** Parent-Teacher Conferences



Mr. Goff's class had a surprise guest reader this week. Mr. Eschtruth, Director of Schools was excited learn about all of the wonderful reading and writing that our Grade 2 authors will be doing this year.

Dear Families,

The **United Nations International Day of Peace Assembly and Food Fair** will take place on September 30th from 10:00am – 1:00pm. The assembly will begin at 10:00am in the Theater. At this time all students will participate in the "Parade of Nations" during which they will walk behind the flag representing their home country. The Parade of Nations will be followed by presentations involving both Upper School and Lower School students. Following the assembly, students and parents will be directed to the cafeteria where PAFA will host the UNIDOP Food Fair. Parents are highly encouraged to attend this remarkable event and help us celebrate the amazing diversity within our SCIS community.

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAPS (Measurement of Academic Progress Test) will be administered to students

in Grades 2-5 between September 19th through the 29th. During this online assessment, students will be tested in the areas of Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics. The MAPs test is not a traditional test that students can or should study for. Rather it will provide a snapshot of the students' abilities within these curricular areas at this point in time. The best thing you can do to support your child is make sure they are well rested, and eat a good breakfast, as we hope they do for every school day.

Please note the **National Holiday and October Break** will take place on October 3-7. There will be no school during that week.



Wishing all families, a wonderful weekend.

Warm Regards,

Liz Gale
Lower School
Principal



What will my Child be Learning this Year?



Over the course of the past two weeks, I have had a number of parents ask me how the implementation of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) will impact what their child will be learning during the course of the school year. While the PYP will impact *how* the written curriculum is taught, it will not have a significant impact on *what* is being taught. This is due to the fact that SCIS is a standards-based school. “Standards-based” means that there are defined learning objectives for students in each grade level and across all subject areas and disciplines.

The term “*standard*” is an increasingly common word used within education today. However, **what are standards?** According to the Education Social Science Library at the University of Illinois, “Educational standards define knowledge and skills students should possess at critical points in their educational career.”

One of the reasons that many schools today are moving towards a standards-based curriculum is due to the fact that standards help ensure that students learn what is important, rather than what is dictated by a textbook. On occasion, textbooks may be used as a supplementary resource, however at SCIS we believe that student learning is the focus and in order to allow students the opportunity to develop a deep level of understanding, clear and concise learning outcomes must be identified prior to the start of each unit.

Recent educational research has indicated that standards-based systems increase student achievement, largely because everyone is working towards achieving the same goal. Teachers, students and parents have the ability to teach, learn and support one another because of the explicitly defined learning objectives.

Effective standard-based instruction is a dynamic process and one that requires a great deal of planning and collaboration. Although learning experiences differ from classroom to classroom, and teacher-to-teacher, all unit planning is based on the agreed upon standards that have been adopted by SCIS. At SCIS, standards guide teachers to create classrooms that encourage the construction of knowledge as opposed to emphasizing surface memorization of content. PYP teachers instruct through a constructivist pedagogy and use the standards as a way to connect with students and provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences.

The following standards have been adopted by SCIS for the core curricular areas:



- **English Language Arts** - Common Core State Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>
- **Mathematics** - Common Core State Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/Math/>
- **Social Studies** - American Education Reaches Out (AERO): <http://www.projectaero.org>
- **Science** - Ontario: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/scientec.html>

If you have any questions regarding this curricular topic or others, please do not hesitate to contact me at egale@scis-china.org.

