



Mapping Our Way



From the Director

Dear AISB Community,

Last year the faculty at AISB started a process of editing, refining, and aligning the written curriculum. This is work that all international schools do periodically, especially when a number of new teachers come on board. The school decided on a common format for unit writing and started editing their units of study. (A typical unit of study covers 3 to 6 weeks on one topic, and includes activities, student projects, and assessments.)

In August Dr. Ellis Melton spent a week with the faculty before classes began and helped us not only to continue to write units, but also to link the units together with something called a Curriculum Map. These maps are sometimes general outlines of the total PK-12 program, such as in Science or Art. Other maps are more detailed and focus on a year of study, such as Grade 8 Social Studies, indicating which unit is taught and in what order. In August we focused on Social Studies and Science.

The teachers have been working on these since August and good progress has been made. The Leadership Team recommended that Ellis be invited back this past week to help us move the process along during a period when teachers had more time to focus on the task at hand, thus, the early release days.

He reviewed with us the elements of a good map and a good unit, with special emphasis on developing performance assessment and essential questions. We worked especially hard on mapping Language Arts, Math, and French, all three involving a number of teachers. We also made good progress on the subjects with only one teacher, such as Art, Health and Library. He suggested that we create some additional documents, such as a map of how technology supports the curriculum in each grade

and also, how students research in each grade. We have good first drafts of both of these maps and can use them to find gaps and unintentional overlaps from grade to grade.

Ellis likes to say "If we don't care what students learn, then we can leave it all to chance. If we DO care, then let's write it down, think about it, plan, and refine it for the good of the students." We do care.

Sincerely,

David G. Henry, Director



Valentine's Day Fundraiser at AISB

Saturday the 14th the Student Council is organizing a Valentine's dinner for adults at AISB.

The evening begins at 7 p.m. and there will be a choice between two appetizers, two main meals, and two different kinds of dessert; alcohol will also be on sale. Tickets cost 10,000 FCFA/person and are on sale in the AISB main office (ask Oumou).

The Student Council guarantees that all profits that are realized from the evening will go towards the public school in Siby, a school that greatly needs support. Tickets will be on sale until the 8th.

Come secure your tickets now and join us for a romantic dinner organized by the Student Council.

We hope to see you there!

Board News

The AISB Board of Trustees met for a regular meeting on January 20, 2009. Some of the highlights are as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten Enrollment Limited

The board limited the enrollment for the combined PK3/4 class to a possible maximum of 24 students for this year. PK currently operates as a combined class with one teacher, one teaching assistant and two aides. The class will function as is (a combined 3/4 class) for the remainder of this school year.

Next Year's School Calendar Approved

The board approved AISB's academic calendar for the 2009-10 school year. The first day of classes is August 25th. The 2009-10 calendar is available on the school's website (www.aisbmali.org).

Mission, Beliefs and EPGOs

The results of AISB's Mission and Philosophy's ad-hoc committee work this past fall had it's 'first reading' in front of the full board at this meeting. The ad-hoc committee, made up of parents, faculty, students and board members, through a school survey and research revised AISB's Mission and Philosophy. They developed through consensus a revised Mission, Beliefs and Expected Personal Growth Outcomes (EPGOs) statement that they believe best represents all of AISB's stakeholders. The board hopes to past this document as policy at its next regular meeting.

Finance Committee Reports Changes

With the school construction project moving full speed ahead, the Finance committee recently reported a disappointing change to our previously negotiated bank loan package. With continued support of our local lead bank, BOA, the minority lender, BICIM, has had to pull out of the project likely due to the current world economic crisis. AISB is now seeking, both locally and internationally, a different minority bank to join BOA in their continued support of the project.

Upcoming Events

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| February | Literacy Month |
| Feb. 2 | Half Day for Students, Teacher Curr. Wrkshps, Early Dismissal |
| Feb. 11-16 | Brussels HS Math Competition |
| Feb. 13-14 | 4/5th Grade Field Trip to Siby |
| Feb. 14 | ...Valentine's Dinner |
| Feb. 16 | Presidents' Day – No School |
| March 10 | Mawloud Holiday (tentative) – No School |
| Mar. 12-15 | Gr. 7-8 Study Trip to Teriyabougou |
| March 16 | Prophet's Baptism (tentative) – No School |
| Mar. 17-20 | Francophone Week |
| Mar. 20-22 | MS Soccer Tournament in Burkina Faso |
| Mar. 23-26 | Science Fair Week |
| Mar. 27 | End of 3rd Quarter |
| Mar. 28 | PTO's International Festival |

2009 High School Graduation June 10th, 2009



AISB will be forming a **Graduation Committee** to help organize and begin establishing a graduation tradition for our AISB seniors.

This year our graduating class will be the largest ever, with four seniors expected to graduate. We graduated two seniors in 2007.

We would like to get the help of a couple of parents to help us with this tradition. We are looking for a parent each from the 9th, 10th and 11th grade classes that can help us this year and again next year in establishing AISB's traditions related to senior graduation. Also, this year only, we are looking for one 12th grade parent that can help us with initial ideas.

Two teachers will also serve on this small committee, our speech coach and the college counselor/12th grade homeroom teacher.

Please contact David Henry if you are interested in this exciting tradition-making opportunity.

Elementary Literacy Month in February, by Rachel Strozeski

This year we are celebrating our literacy during the month of February. Each classroom has the option of choosing which activities that they would like to do, but there are weekly themes and a few activities that all students will do.

Week #1 – Celebrate Authors and Illustrators Week Feb. 2-6

- ◆ Read-a-thon begins – Read and record what you read to help the pirogue travel the entire length of the Niger River. Check out where the pirogue has traveled each week! This will continue all month or until we reach the end of the Niger.
- ◆ Book promotions and writing to authors and illustrators may occur in your child's classroom.
- ◆ Guest Readers in the classrooms. Check with your child's teacher about coming in to read!

Week #2 – Great Readers and Writers Week – Feb. 9-13

- ◆ 3rd Annual AISB Spelling Bee – Friday, February 13 from 7:40-8:45 in MPR – 2 competitions K-2 and 3-5. Please join us!
- ◆ Poetry, reading and persuasive letter writing may occur in your child's classroom.
- ◆ Guest Readers in the classrooms. Check with your child's teacher about coming in to read!

Week #3 – Celebrate Bing Literate Week – Feb 16-20

- ◆ Book Swap – Bring in your gently used books and swap for "new" ones on Wednesday and Thursday.
- ◆ Pajama Day/D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) Day on Friday, February 20. Wear your slippers and pajamas and bring your teddy bear to do some comfy reading today. Parents – sign up to read in the Continuous Reading Chair. We will have someone always quietly reading in the Continuous Reading Chair from 7:15 – 2:15.
- ◆ Guest Readers in the classrooms. Check with your child's teacher about coming in to read!

Week #4 – Reading Challenge Week- Feb 23-27

- ◆ "Poetry Slam" at the Monday Morning Assembly at 7:30. Join us!
- ◆ Students set personal and attainable reading goals for the week or for a longer time frame.
- ◆ Favorite Book Character Parade – Friday, February 27 at 7:45. Dress as one of your favorite characters. Carry the book as you wear the costume. We will end the parade in the MPR where we hope to see video booktalks/book commercials that many students will videotape throughout the month. Join us!

It will be a busy, yet fun month. Please join us by being a guest reader and by attending our special events like the Spelling Bee, the Continuous Reading Chair, the Poetry Slam, and the favorite Book Character Parade.

Happy reading, writing, listening and speaking this month!

