



HEADLINES

November 22, 2010

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How biodiversity took adults back to school

Last Thursday I was reminded, yet again, of how bright and creative our students really are. A packed gym of students, parents and faculty started off our International Day of Biodiversity with an entertaining speaker followed by a riveting and powerful video shot by P6 teacher Mark Brown that canvassed a wide range of students from P2 up to M5 about their understandings of biodiversity. One had to be struck, not only by how confident and articulate all of our students were, but also by examples of growth and increased sophistication of understanding as you saw, foreshadowed, the path that takes our primary students from early inquisitive learners to accomplished and thoughtful graduates by M5. I, for one, felt shivers go down my spine as the programme drew to a close.

Following the “production” I was doubly blessed by having my own P3 son (and eventually his full-day younger brother) escort me from one exciting and engaging exhibit to the next. Not only did I get the benefit of being impressed as an adult and educator with the content and presentation of such a wide range of materials on this critically important topic, but I got to experience the excitement and relevance of it all through the eyes of my children.

For the almost 200 parents, family and friends who were able to attend, it was a wonderful morning. Thank you for your continued support of the teaching and learning process at Somersfield. Thanks also to the staff who encouraged, supported and engaged the imaginations of our students in the process. Finally, special recognition and thanks Student Council President Aiyetoro Hinds who did a great job of hosting the day and introducing our guest speaker; and, to our Day of Biodiversity Committee: Mark Brown, Lexi Tatem, Tracy Osborne, and Feven Binega-Northcott for their outstanding organization of the event.

The past two years, we have focused on partnering with schools and students around the world to celebrate the United Nations’

commitment to a major global issue. For us as educators, as much as we enjoy the final product and the occasional spectacle, in the final analysis, it is really all about student learning and engagement.

No-one who visited the school last Thursday could ever doubt that we had met our goal in that regard!

Another kind of diversity...

The last two Saturdays we have had some lively discussions around the issues of Diversity and Inclusivity. A series of Discovery (Focus) Groups involving parents, staff and members of the community have examined a range of issues including admissions, governance, student life, financial aid, and teaching and learning. This is just a reminder to please let Stacey-Lee Williams know if you are interested in taking part in some upcoming discussions in the new year.

Next week a group of staff and students will be traveling to the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) “People of Color Conference” in San Diego. The students and their supervisors will be taking part in a student leadership development programme with other students from throughout North America and around the world.

Early in January we will be sending each family a link for our online student climate survey and later in the year we will be receiving a formal report back from NAIS based upon our survey and focus group results which will help us to develop road map going forward.

When we receive our feedback we will be sharing it with the community at large and look forward to hearing your thoughts on our future directions.



UPCOMING EVENTS

MYP Science Fair Parent Education Night

November 23rd

Somersfield Golf Tournament

November 26th

Holiday Spirit Week 6—11

December 6 to 10th

MYP Curriculum Series

Humanities/Math

December 9th

Community Mural Painting

December 17th

End of Term

December 17th