

# iSS NewsLinks

AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS SERVICES PUBLICATION

Volume XXXXI · 2023-24 Edition III · ISS.edu



## SPOTLIGHT SCHOOL MOMENT

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## EDITION SNEAK PEEKS



"With **school break** around the corner, it's prime time to gear up for your international job hunt."

Gain insight for your search with *Tips for Global Recruitment Candidates*, [page 11](#)



"Schools can weave **sustainability** into daily functions throughout educational programs and facilities practices."

Shekou International School shares *An Action Plan for School Sustainability*, [page 4](#)



"It's up to you [...] and those who come after you to **make a positive difference** in another person's life, every day."

Read the memoir excerpt *Commencement and Our Homecoming*, [page 34](#)



## SPOTLIGHT SCHOOL MOMENT

Sports Day at [Cayman International School](#)

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**About ISS:** International Schools Services (ISS) works with more than 1,200 international schools and tens of thousands of educators each year across its suite of services, creating one of the largest global footprints in international education support. Since its inception in 1955, ISS has promoted innovative best practices. Core services include starting and operating student-centered, future-oriented schools; recruiting world-class educators and leaders; providing cutting-edge professional learning opportunities; sourcing essential school supplies; administering school foundations; and encouraging more diverse leadership in international schools. As a nonprofit organization with offices in Princeton, NJ USA and Shenzhen, China and staff located across the globe, ISS invites all to join in making a world of difference. For more information, visit [ISS.edu](#)

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# Making a World of Difference through Collective Action

By **Liz Duffy**, ISS President

**T**his summer, the **International Taskforce on Child Protection** (ITFCP) celebrates its 10th anniversary. The ITFCP was established in 2014 by seven global organizations in response to a high-profile child abuse case that shook the international school community. The Taskforce focused not only on that situation, but more importantly on creating the awareness and standards that would reduce the likelihood of such events happening in the future.

Today, the ITFCP is a coalition of over 90 volunteer members, whose mandate is “to apply the collective resources, expertise and partnerships of its members, to help international school communities address child protection challenges.” Congratulations and thanks to all who have participated in the Taskforce over the past decade, especially **Jane Larsson**, Executive Director of the **Council of International Schools** (CIS), who as chair of the Task Force has shepherded its work. For more anniversary reflections, please see the [article on page 30](#).

The ITFCP is one of many examples of educators, schools and organizations joining together to effect change. Twenty-two years ago, **Mary Anne Haas**, a beloved force in international education since the 1960s who was then the Special Assistant to the ISS President, convened a group of international school women leaders in Princeton, NJ to provide collegiality, mentorship, and sponsorship at what is now known as **The ISS Mary Anne Haas Women’s Symposium**.

Since then, thousands of women leaders have gathered together online, in-person in Princeton, and at many international conferences to network, learn, and support each other’s growth and development. Over the past decade that I’ve been part of the international school community, I have been gratified to see growth in the number both of organizations and collectives supporting women leaders and of women leading international schools.

More recently, many collaborations have been established to ensure that the international school sector is a place that all students, families, staff and educators feel welcomed and valued. Both the **Diversity Collaborative** and the **Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color** (AIELOC) were founded in 2017, the former to ensure that the leadership of international schools better reflects the global majority and the latter to amplify the work of international educators and leaders of color with a focus on advocacy, learning and research.

Two years ago, the **International School Anti-Discrimination Task Force** was convened to help international schools become “truly diverse, inclusive, safe, equitable and welcoming communities for all students, staff and families.”

All of these collaborations have made notable contributions to the international school sector. Reflecting on their impact has made me wonder what accounts for their results?

Or in other words, why is collaboration so effective? From my experience, the power of collective action derives from at least three factors.

- First, having a shared, public goal is a powerful motivator.
- Second, teams of people with a range of skills and expertise are able to do more together than working alone or in silos.
- Thirdly, diverse teams with varied perspectives, in addition to being more productive, also tend to be more creative and innovative and thus able to imagine new and better futures.

The ISS mission is to provide comprehensive services for the dynamic transformation of international education. We recognize that no one person, one school, or one organization can effect transformative change. As attested to by the examples above, and the myriad other examples across the international school sector, such change requires all the hallmarks of collaboration -- shared visions, diverse perspectives, varied skills and expertise, and collective action.

Over the course of our history, we at ISS have been pleased to be part of many impactful, collaborative efforts. We look forward to continuing to work with others across the international school sector to make a world of difference.

You can connect with Liz Duffy [on LinkedIn](#) and follow on X at [@DuffyLiz](#).

International Taskforce on Child Protection



DIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE



International School Anti Discrimination Task Force



- The ISS Mary Anne Haas - WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM

AIELOC Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color

Some key organizations collaboratively making an impact in international education





# An Action Plan for School Sustainability

By **Harish Kanabar**, Head of School at Shekou International School

**S**ustainability in schools is an increasingly important topic as educational institutions seek to model responsible stewardship of resources and foster environmental awareness among students. With the support of a staff voluntary committee, **Shekou International School** developed a three-year action plan highlighting ways to integrate sustainable practices into operations and curriculum. This plan is divided into four broad categories, each with a commitment statement, timeline, strategy, and people with responsibility. The plan format was adapted from International School Beijing's Sustainability Roadmap.

These four domains highlight both the objectives and the impacts we are aiming for.

## Leadership and Curricular

Addresses the commitments to planning, curriculum development, leadership capacity building, governance, budgeting, impactful sharing, recognizing accomplishments, and establishing external partnerships to integrate sustainability into educational and administrative practices.

## Wellbeing

This part commits to assessing remuneration, promoting healthy lifestyles, and improving indoor environmental satisfaction to support the wellbeing of the school community.

## Consumption and Waste

Focuses on reducing meat consumption, promoting healthy food and drink choices, recycling, conserving water, harvesting rainwater, energy conservation, adopting renewable energy, and ensuring ethical procurement and partnerships.

## Campus and Transportation

Includes commitments to responsible campus upgrades, enhancing biophilia, achieving green building standards, reducing carbon emissions and air pollutants, and fostering sustainable transportation practices.

Within this first year of strategically implementing a **Sustainability Action Plan**, Shekou International School has met with successes and learning opportunities.

*Photo, left: Shekou International School*

[Continued on page 6](#)

## Successes

A significant success was formal recognition from the **Guangdong Education Bureau** through its Green School program which highlights the work that is taking place to meet the sustainability initiatives across the province and the country. This acknowledgment opens possible partnership with the local authority to create the potential for knowledge sharing, grants, and encourages our sustainability journey.

Another success has been providing space for the facility staff to cultivate vegetable plots. At The Bay campus, we have rooftop spaces that aren't appropriate for Primary students to use. Last year, we allocated these spaces to our facility staff, who received them enthusiastically and went to work cultivating and growing food. This initiative fosters community and wellbeing among our team members and promotes sustainability and self-reliance. We acknowledge their hard work and support their welfare by providing these spaces.

'**Mian Fey Bay**', which means free things at The Bay, is a dedicated space where staff can drop off items they no longer need. Before buying anything new, staff are encouraged to visit Mian Fey Bay to see if items there can be used instead. This has and continues to promote staff re-use of items that might otherwise end up in a landfill.

Intentionality to embed student inquiry related to sustainability guided by the **United Nations Sustainability Development Goals** goes into all unit planning lead by our curriculum coordinators. As units are reviewed, there is a focus on establishing partnerships with local organizations to expand student engagement and access local resources. These actions will empower students to become agents of positive change and contribute to a more sustainable future.

While the learning experiences have been around what is within our locus of control, we are also advocating for system awareness that can impact our community choices. For example, two student ambassadors are diligently working with **The Alliance for Sustainability in Schools (TASS)**. Their lens has been to explore adopting biodiesel for school buses or even changing them to electric ones. Although a proposal like this may seem straightforward, multiple agencies, conversations, and considerations need to be taken into account. A decision of this magnitude doesn't rest with the school and must be supported by multiple ministries and bureaus.

Sustainability in schools encompasses a wide range of practices aimed at conserving resources, protecting the environment, and educating students about the importance of living sustainably. From energy conservation and waste reduction to sustainable

procurement and environmental education, schools can integrate sustainability into their operations and curriculum in many ways. Embracing sustainability in schools not only benefits the environment but also prepares students to become responsible, informed citizens who can contribute to a sustainable future.

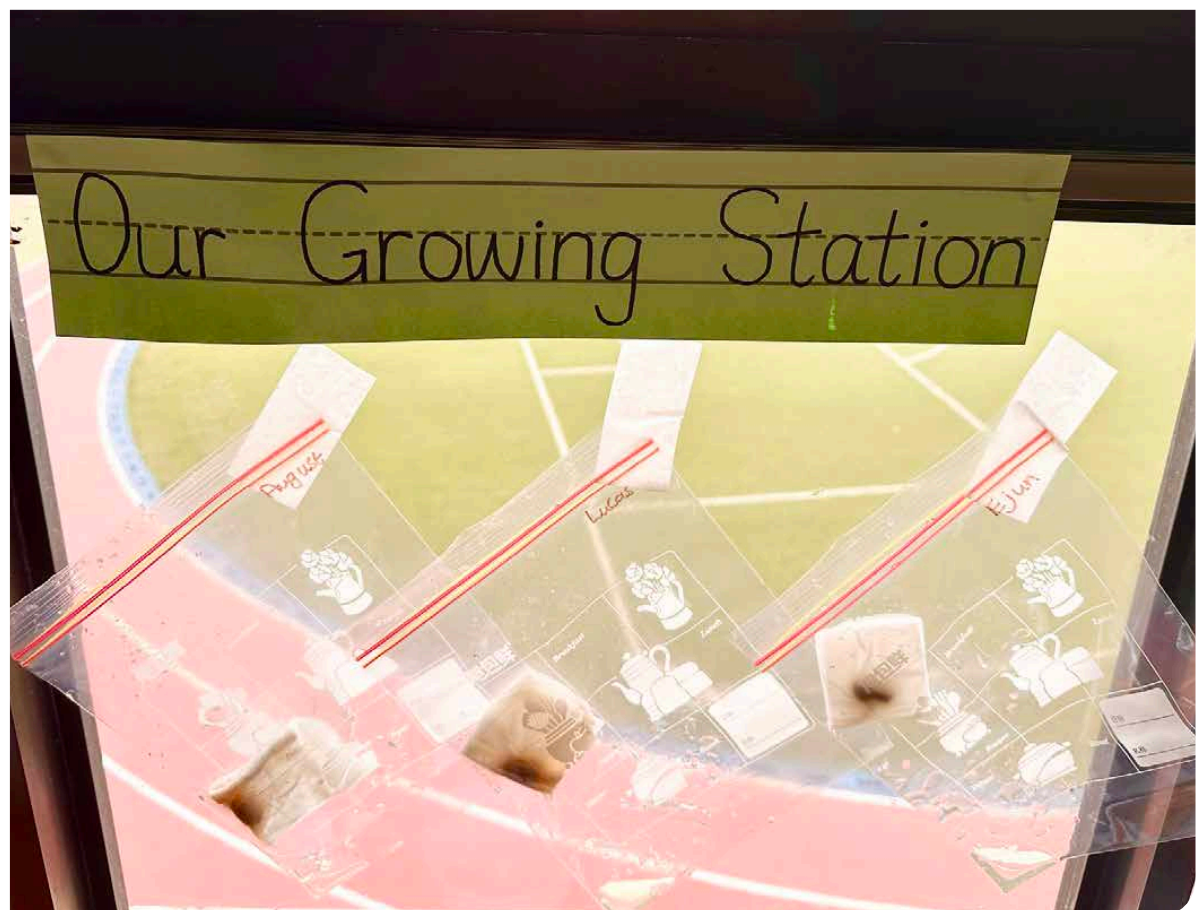
As Shekou International School, our focus on sustainable practices involves a variety of measures designed to save resources, safeguard the environment, and impart to students the significance of adopting a sustainable lifestyle. Through our journey, we are taking action on ways schools can weave sustainability into the daily functions throughout the educational programs and facilities practices like reducing energy usage, minimizing waste, purchasing sustainable products, and incorporating environmental studies into the curriculum.

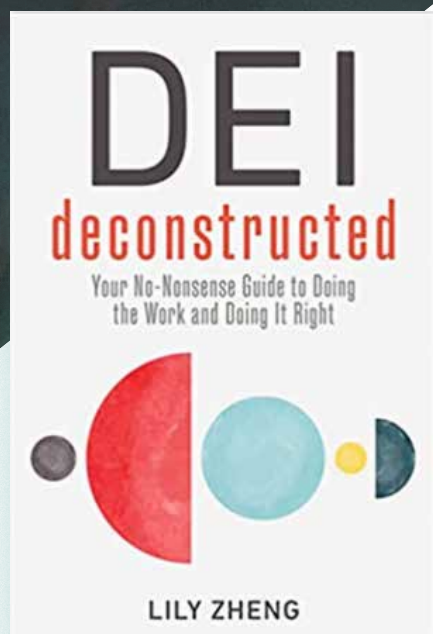
Adopting such sustainable approaches equips students with the knowledge and values necessary to be conscientious, well-informed individuals dedicated to fostering a sustainable world. The full Sustainability Action Plan [can be viewed here](#). ■

Learn about Shekou International School at [sis-shekou.org](http://sis-shekou.org). You can connect with Harish Kanabar on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

Photos featured across pages 6 & 7: Sustainability initiatives at SIS, including the roof farm, Mian Fey Bay, used book sales and book swaps, and classroom plant cultivation.







## BOOK CORNER: Insights from *DEI Deconstructed* with Lily Zheng

By **Joel Jr Llaban**, ISS Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) has become more than just a goal—it's a necessity. As educators, we play a pivotal role in creating inclusive learning environments where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. In our quest to navigate the complexities of DEI, *DEI Deconstructed* by **Lily Zheng** serves as a guide and inspiration.

At the heart of Zheng's work lies a profound emphasis on accountability—an acknowledgment of our responsibility to actively address inequities and ensure that our actions contribute to positive change. They remind us that DEI work is not just for ourselves; it's for the individuals in our communities who may face systemic barriers and lack access to opportunities. Our efforts should aim to improve outcomes for marginalized identities and create a more equitable society that starts within our communities.

DEI initiatives, according to Zheng, must go beyond intentions and focus on outcomes. It's not enough to simply have good intentions; we must measure the real impact of our actions. Success in DEI, as Zheng highlights, is "when the outcomes for others are better." This emphasis on tangible results underscores the importance of driving meaningful change that directly benefits those we lead and serve.

We recently concluded a semester-long book club hosted by **International Schools Services** (ISS) and the **Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color** (AIELOC). We are deeply grateful to **Margaret Park** for facilitating our learning experience. In the final session, Lily Zheng shared a powerful reminder of the inherent power each of us holds to effect change, regardless of our formal positions of authority. We tend to

underestimate our own power, but as Zheng asserts, each of us has the ability to make a difference in advancing equity and inclusion.

When asked how leaders can advance and deepen equity and inclusion, Zheng provides two key strategies: being intentional in recognizing, validating, and rewarding inclusive behaviors, and discouraging behaviors that are harmful to people and undermine inclusion efforts. As well as for leaders to stand alongside those who lead equity and inclusion work in their institutions, providing 'air cover' for impactful work to take off and happen. These strategies underscore the importance of proactive leadership in creating inclusive environments where everyone feels valued and respected.

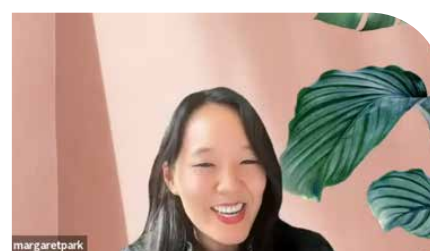
Incorporating Zheng's teachings into our practice, we can create inclusive spaces where every student feels valued and

supported. By embracing accountability, measuring outcomes, and harnessing our inherent power to effect change, we can drive meaningful progress toward a more equitable and just educational landscape.

As we continue our journey in navigating DEI, Zheng's *DEI Deconstructed* and their new workbook *Reconstructing DEI* serve as valuable resources, offering practical insights and strategies to guide our efforts. Let's heed Zheng's call to action and work collaboratively to create inclusive environments where every student and adults can thrive.

We look forward to having you join us in our upcoming book clubs to be shared and announced soon! ■

You can connect with Joel [on LinkedIn](#) and follow on X at [@JoelJrLLABAN](#)



Top: Lily Zheng speaking at the *DEI Deconstructed* book club

Bottom, left to right: AIELOC, co-host of the book club; Margaret Park facilitating discussion; and ISS President Liz Duffy introducing the session



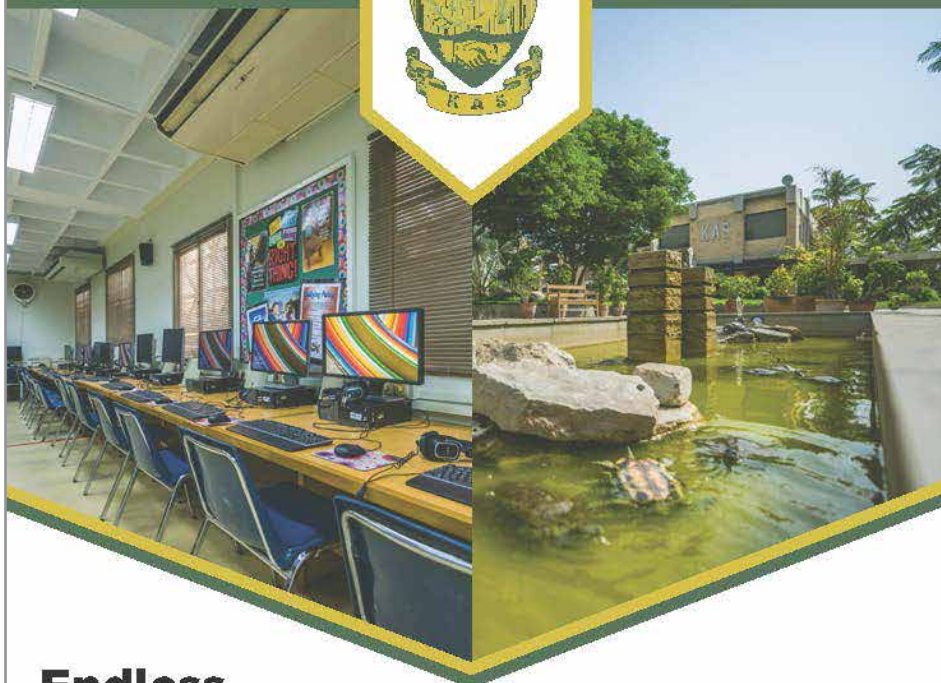
Ann Marie Christian International Safeguarding Consultant, Child1st Consultancy Limited	Organisation to Decolonise International Schools (ODIS)	Omar Rachid Zaim Middle School French Teacher, Lakeside School, Seattle, Washington USA (pronouns: he/him)	Rebekah Macdon International Education Consultant & Speaker, Rebekah Macdon Consulting
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Azra Pathan Director of Learning, International School of Kuala Lumpur	Ceci Gomez-Galvez (she/her /ella)	Safaa Abdelmagid Woman of many identities and passions	Sagda Khalil & Amin Hussain indigenous teaching and learning (ta)
Cheryl-Ann Weekes High School Counselor, Weekes Enterprise, LLC	Cynthia Roberson	Sean Ross Middle School Community Action Integrationist, The American School in London	Sherri Spelic Physical Education Specialist, Speaker and Author, American International School Vienna
Daniel Wickner Founder, Identity-Centered Learning	Danau Tanu, PhD	Stefan Fisher Third Grade Teacher, Taipei American School	Tarrakara O Adun Founder- OduNife African History, Language School, Human Resources Consulting, OduNife Global Consulting
		Tanay Naik Secondary School Deputy Principal: Teaching and Learning, UNIS Hanoi	Teneshia A Taylor Education Consultant, BeyondBliss M.Ed., Ed.D (2023)

## Connect with Diverse Professional Development Consultants

The **Association of International Educators and Leaders of Color (AIELOC)**, **International Schools Services (ISS)** and the **Diversity Collaborative (DC)** seek to provide a space where leaders and learners from schools, organizations, and communities can access and benefit from diverse professional development consultants' experiences and expertise. Find facilitators and consultants that educate and inspire participants to be agents of change:

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MAXIMIZING YOUR SCHOOL BREAK:

# Tips for Global Recruitment Candidates

By **Meagan O’Gallagher**, Global Recruitment, Events & Engagement Manager, and **Cierra Cooper-Phillips**, Relationship Recruitment Manager, Europe, with contributions from the **ISS EDUrecruit® Global Recruitment Team**

**A**re you a teacher dreaming of taking your career global? With school break around the corner, it's prime time to gear up for your international job hunt. Whether you are a seasoned globetrotter in education or are just considering your first international position, here are some essential tips to make the most of school break and set yourself up for success in next year’s hiring season.

## 1. Update Your Profiles

Consider your professional profiles as your digital first impression. Places like LinkedIn, ResearchGate and others are great places to highlight your latest achievements. ISS EDUrecruit® provides an all-in-one space to highlight recent achievements, relevant certifications/professional learning, and experiences that showcase your expertise in international education. Have fun hobbies? Feel free to include them in your ISS EDUrecruit profile as well. Schools often look for candidates who are multifaceted.

## 2. Solidify Your References

Your references can be game changers in your job search. Reach out to former colleagues, bosses, and mentors who can praise your teaching skills, adaptability, and cultural awareness. An excellent recommendation letter can really make you stand out among other applicants. With ISS EDUrecruit, you can easily send reference requests directly to your referees. And don’t worry about them forgetting - the platform will automatically remind them to complete their references for up to 10 days!

## 3. Specify Your Date of Availability

Clarity about your availability is crucial for potential employers planning their hiring timelines. Whether you’re wrapping up a contract, completing a degree, or transitioning

from another role, clearly communicate when you can start a new position. This proactive approach demonstrates your professionalism and commitment to a smooth transition. In EDUrecruit, you can easily update your availability date at the top center of your screen.

## 4. Sync Up with your Teaching Partner

While you are reviewing your ISS EDUrecruit profile, make sure you and your partner/spouse’s profiles are updated and synchronized. Many international schools value hiring teaching couples or pairs due to the stability and support they bring to their programs. Highlighting your partnership and collaborative teaching approach can enhance your appeal to employers seeking teaching pairs and potentially provide stronger negotiation points.

[Continued on page 12](#)



Candidates at a 2023-24 ISS EDUrecruit job fair

## 5. Research Regions of Interest

The world is big and offers so many different opportunities. Use your break to research potential destinations that align with your professional and personal preferences. Consider factors such as language proficiency, cultural immersion opportunities, cost of living, and educational system quality.

Engage with online forums, attend virtual events, and connect with alumni or current teachers in your target regions to gain valuable insights. [Check out the ISS YouTube channel](#) to hear about our candidate's first-hand experiences.

Lastly, do not forget to keep an open mind! You may find a fantastic job in a country you had never thought of – do not keep yourself restricted to only one region. The more open-minded you are, the more opportunities you will have.

## 6. Grow with PD Courses

Don't overlook the importance of professional development during your downtime! As learning is a year-round endeavor, many any educators are often inundated with professional development opportunities. Let [ISS EDUlearn®](#) take the guesswork out choosing the right professional learning experience.

With over 70+ synchronous and asynchronous offerings, Premium ISS EDUrecruit members gain access to courses relevant to international education, intercultural competence and so much more! These courses not only enhance your skills but also demonstrate your commitment to ongoing learning and growth as an educator.

## 7. Rest and Reflect

Finally, use this downtime for introspection and goal setting. Reflect on your past experiences, achievements, and challenges you faced this year. With so much going on in the world, it

is imperative that educators like yourselves intentionally set aside time to rest and reset. If you can, spend time with family and friends. Share with them where you envision yourself in the next few years and what steps you'd like to take to achieve those goals. Identify areas for growth and write out your goals for next year. This is your time!

By proactively addressing these key areas during your school break, you'll position yourself as a well-prepared and motivated candidate in the competitive field of international education. Remember to stay organized, leverage your network, and approach your job search with enthusiasm and determination. With the right preparation and mindset, you'll be ready to embark on an enriching and fulfilling teaching journey abroad.

You can connect with Meagan [on LinkedIn here](#) and Cierra [on LinkedIn here](#). Learn more about [ISS EDUrecruit here](#).



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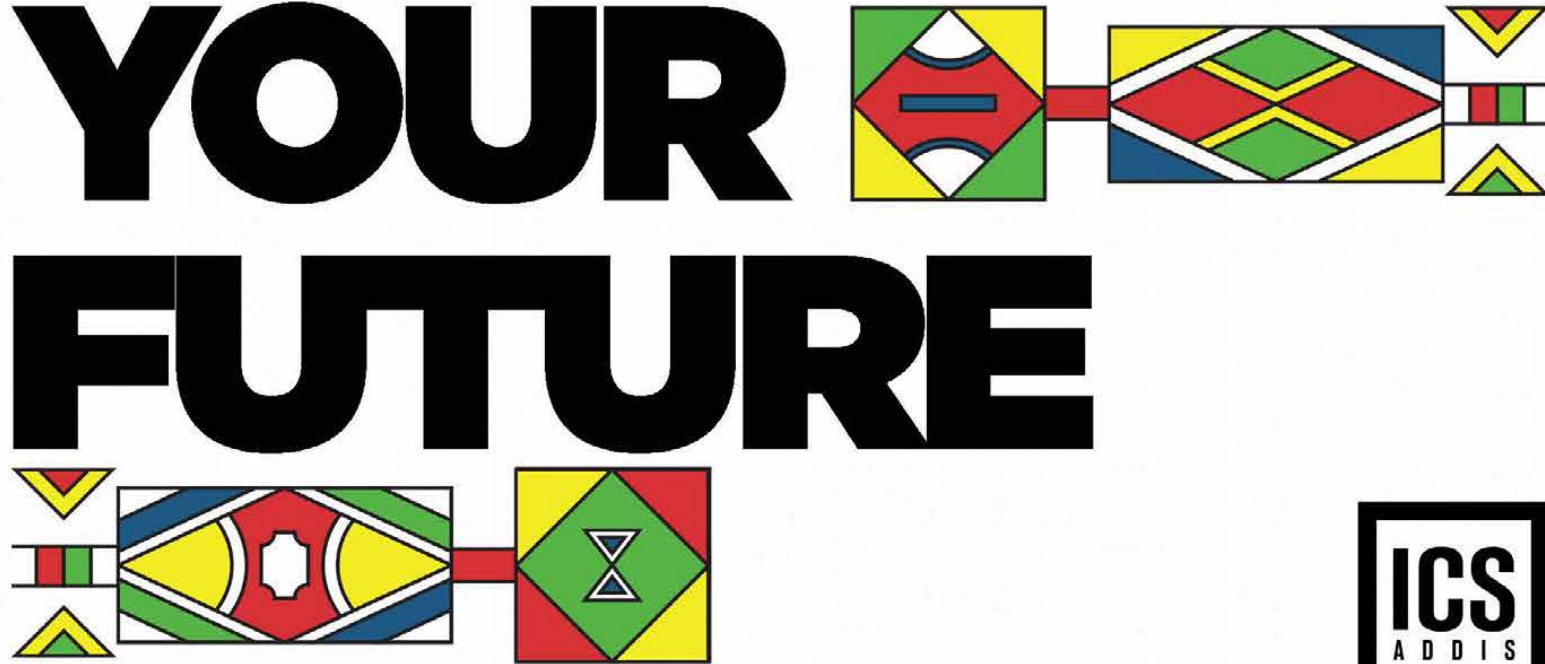
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# Onboarding in International Schools

By **Graeme Anning, Ed.D**, MS/HS English Teacher at I-Shou International School,  
International School Onboarding Researcher, Writer, and Conference Presenter.

**S**pringtime is marked by colorful bursts of flowers, mild temperatures, festivals, and outdoor activities like hiking, biking, and exploring. Likewise, spring is a time when international schools can reach out to their new hires and start sharing about their schools and the communities they will be joining next August. This is part of an onboarding plan that helps guide newcomers to their new international schools in a way that prepares them for teaching with fidelity on the first day of classes.

There are four phases to an international school onboarding program: the pre-arrival, arrival, orientation, and transition phase.

## 1. Pre-arrival Phase

Perhaps the longest phase, and certainly the most underused, is the pre-arrival phase. It begins when a teacher candidate officially accepts a position at an international school for the new school year and continues until they arrive on site in the new host country.

Throughout this phase, new hires can be added to an online group with members of the administration and select faculty who can share information about the new school and host city including photos, links, and miscellany. This offers the newcomer an opportunity to connect with the community and develop a clear sense of the school culture.

Newcomers will also need access to school policies, procedures, and expectations so that they may reduce any of their uncertainty about their new role.



## 2. Arrival Phase

The arrival phase is usually the shortest in the onboarding process. It begins as soon as the newcomer arrives in the host city and goes until the first day of orientation at the school. Two documents need to be prepared before the new teachers' arrival.

**The airport protocol** presupposes that someone from the host school will meet the incoming teacher at the arrival terminal. To neglect meeting your new teacher as they set foot for the first time in the new host country is to miss an important opportunity to provide a planned first impression, which is to leave the first impression of your incoming teacher to chance. Although professional educators are usually intrepid travelers, nothing beats the feeling of having a supportive reception upon arrival. There is a deep communication that they are valued, cherished, and welcomed into their new community. The airport protocol, which is created by administrators and faculty, guides those in charge of welcoming newcomers to ensure that all receive a high-level, planned welcome. In addition to welcoming the newcomers at the arrival terminal in the host city airport, the protocol can include items such as a temporary SIM card, some local currency, refreshments, and transportation ready to take them to their new residence.

**The arrival dossier** is a collection of information for the newcomer to help them navigate their new community effectively. It can be given to the newcomer in digital form, hard copy form, or both. The dossier has contact information for the school, administrators, emergency services, and transportation. Links and QR codes to apps and social media groups used in the community can help get the newcomer set up and connected with the larger online local community. Maps of the neighborhood and host city, points of interest, restaurants, supermarkets, outdoor markets in the area, and local businesses that offer relevant services are beneficial additions to the dossier. The dossier communicates to the newcomer that their success is valued by the community and that there is a conscious effort on the part of the organization to help ensure their well-being.

*Continued on page 15*



Shekou International School

### 3. Orientation Phase

The orientation phase is the most recognized phase of the international school onboarding program and begins on the first day when incoming teachers are expected to report to the school and lasts until the first day of classes.

This phase comprises the orientation schedule, which includes all the policies, procedures, and expectations that are communicated in presentations, handouts, and team meetings. There is a high cognitive load for newcomers during this stage, which can be mitigated by making much of what is to be presented available to newcomers during the pre-arrival phase.

This phase also contains the social itinerary, which are all the events, dinners, meetups, shopping trips, and walking tours that occur after-hours in the community. These events are optional and made available to the newcomer to get acquainted with their work colleagues in a social atmosphere. These events can help build community and collegiality while acquainting the newcomer with the neighborhood and host city.



Ambatovy International School

### 4. Transition Phase

The transition phase begins when classes begin and goes on for a month to up to six months. This phase comprises the volunteer transition team partnerships that aim to help the newcomer acclimate to their role in the school and to the host city and culture. Newcomers can benefit from two transition team partnerships. The first is a section member, or someone in the same department, who can help the newcomer locate resources within the school and the larger community. The second is a partnership with someone in a similar context, for example, a parent with young children that can show the newcomer kid-friendly resources in the community. The partnerships are not meant to be evaluative or advisory. They are simply meant to provide the nuanced and necessary guidance needed for the newcomer to find their way around the school, community, and host city.

The final component in an onboarding program, and the one that enables continuous growth and improvement is the **incoming teacher questionnaire**. The data collected in this form is invaluable to the international school in developing its site-specific program. Questions asking about what content could be made available to newcomers during the pre-arrival phase, the degree to which the various elements in the program helped prepare them for successful teaching on the first day of class, what could be done to improve the transition, and other pertinent questions can help communicate general the needs of newcomers to the international school.

## In Conclusion

Planning an onboarding program with the phases and components described in this article can help international schools lay a strong foundation for the new members of their learning community. The impact of helping newcomers start on the right foot can be long-lasting, even contributing to retention. Most importantly, it can prepare the newcomer for teaching unencumbered by being new to the organization sooner and with confidence and ease. This thoughtful approach nurtures a learning community and sets the stage for lasting connections within both the school and the host city. ■

You can connect with Graeme Anning [on LinkedIn](#).



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# ISS Leadership Search Spotlights

**ISS Leadership Search** has conducted 1000+ searches across 6 continents for international school leadership positions. As our team has enjoyed another full season of searches around the world in 2023-24, enjoy highlights from a few of their recent successful leaders. Congratulations to all beginning these new chapters!

## Kevin Onabiyi

**New position, July 2024:** Director of American International School Conakry (AISC) in Conakry, Guinea

"My hope is to make [AISC] dreams become realities by working hard every day with all stakeholders. I am particularly eager to work with the primary students who told me that they would really want a seat at the leadership table."

[Read Kevin's full spotlight](#)



## Aleksa Moss

**New position, August 2024:** Early Childhood Principal at Cayman International School (CIS) in Camana Bay, Grand Cayman

"I hope to continue the strength and stability of the existing CIS program, while also adding a bit of my own personality and caring touches in the coming years."

[Read Aleksa's full spotlight](#)



## Mónica Gilbert-Sáez

**New position, August 2024:** Head of School at the International School of Helsinki (ISH) in Helsinki, Finland

"[...] Moving to a school in such good shape as ISH and to a country whose education system has rewritten what 'world-class education' looks like is as exciting a challenge as you can get in international education."

[Read Mónica's full spotlight](#)



## Chris Terrill

**New position, July 2024:** Director at International School Port of Spain (ISPS) in Port of Spain Trinidad and Tobago

"I cannot contain my excitement to meet the amazing students who are the heart and soul of this institution. Their enthusiasm for learning and diverse perspectives promise to make every day an enriching experience."

[Read Chris's full spotlight](#)



## Sarah Clover

**New position, July 2024:** Secondary Principal search for Vientiane International School (VIS) in Vientiane, Laos

"When I had the opportunity to visit, I was instantly captivated by the VIS community and their remarkable embodiment of their values. VIS embraces a warm, inclusive, and mindful approach to education, learning, and their vision for the future."

[Read Sarah's full spotlight](#)



## O. Tracey Jackson

**New position, beginning August 2024:** Director of Pupil Services for American School of Dubai (ASD) in Dubai, UAE

"As an educational leader, my philosophy is grounded in a pledge to uphold love, equity, belonging, high expectations, and servant leadership. [...] ASD is a leading educational institution that is student-centered. I am full of joy!"

[Read Tracey's full spotlight](#)



Read the entire collection of spotlights [here on the ISS Blog!](#)

Plus, find your own next international school leadership opportunity with [open ISS Leadership Searches here.](#)

DESIGNING SUSTAINABLE AND  
EQUITABLE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:

# A Blueprint for the Future

By **Dana Specker Watts**, Ph.D., ISS Director of Learning, Research, & Outreach

In the realm of education, professional development (PD) serves as the cornerstone for fostering an environment of continuous learning and improvement. Yet, a closer examination of PD practices in our international schools reveals a significant gap in equitable access for all.

This article delves into the critical aspects of who, what, where, why, and how we can transform PD into a more sustainable and equitable process through the implementation of the ISS EDUlearn Passport.

## WHO: Diversifying PD Access

Who are we inviting into our schools to share knowledge? The lineup of consultants for PD sessions often reflects a narrow slice of the vast educational landscape.

The ISS EDUlearn Passport® breaks this mold by providing access to over 100 consultants, with more than 50% identifying as BIPOC members. This diverse range of voices ensures that PD is not just a transfer of knowledge but a rich, inclusive dialogue that reflects the global community we teach.

## WHAT: Offering Rich Learning Experiences

What kind of PD are we providing? Traditional PD sessions can be hit or miss, with quality varying greatly. EDUlearn Passport offers high-quality PD from practitioners with extensive experience in our international schools. This ensures that PD is not only relevant but also deeply rooted in practical, actionable strategies that educators can apply directly to their classrooms.

## WHERE: Ensuring Universal Access

Where can educators access this PD? Geographic and language barriers often limit the reach of quality PD. The EDUlearn Passport overcomes these challenges by offering online, on-demand, and live PD webinars accessible in 230+ languages. This approach ensures that every educator, regardless of location or first/home language, has the opportunity to engage in meaningful professional learning.

## WHY: Building a Sustainable PD Ecosystem

Why is equitable access to PD crucial? The traditional model of PD, often centered around the expatriate population of teachers, overlooks the rich diversity and potential of all adult learners within our schools. By providing universal access to PD, we foster a culture of learning that benefits everyone, making the knowledge gained a permanent asset within your school community. Moreover, in an era marked by political unrest, climate change, and potential future pandemic outbreaks, the necessity for educators to be adept at switching to online learning environments is paramount. Experiencing online learning firsthand equips teachers with the skills and empathy needed to navigate these transitions smoothly.

[Continued on page 19](#)



## ISS EDUlearn® Passport Highlights

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- Want to Become an International School Educator?
- AI Personalized Report Card Comments Made Easy
- Nurturing & Building Your DEIJ Community
- Intro To Games Based Learning
- Moving Beyond Self-Judgment & Self-Criticism Through Mindfulness



Sample of ISS EDUlearn facilitators

## HOW: Maximizing Impact through Cost-Effective PD

How can we make this vision a reality? The cost of traditional PD — flying in consultants or sending staff to conferences — is prohibitively high for many institutions. The EDUlearn Passport presents a cost-effective solution: for the price of bringing in one consultant or sending one person to a conference, you can provide PD to everyone at your school. This approach not only democratizes access to professional learning but also represents a significant step towards a more sustainable and equitable PD model.

## Conclusion

The EDUlearn Passport embodies the principles of sustainable and equitable professional learning by addressing the critical who, what, where, why, and how of PD. As school leaders, we are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that all educators in our institutions have equal opportunities for growth and development. The time to act is now. By embracing innovative solutions like the EDUlearn Passport, we can transform the landscape of PD and build a future where every educator is empowered to thrive. ■

Learn more [about the ISS EDUlearn Passport here](#). You can connect with Dana [on LinkedIn](#) or follow on X at [@teachwatts](#).

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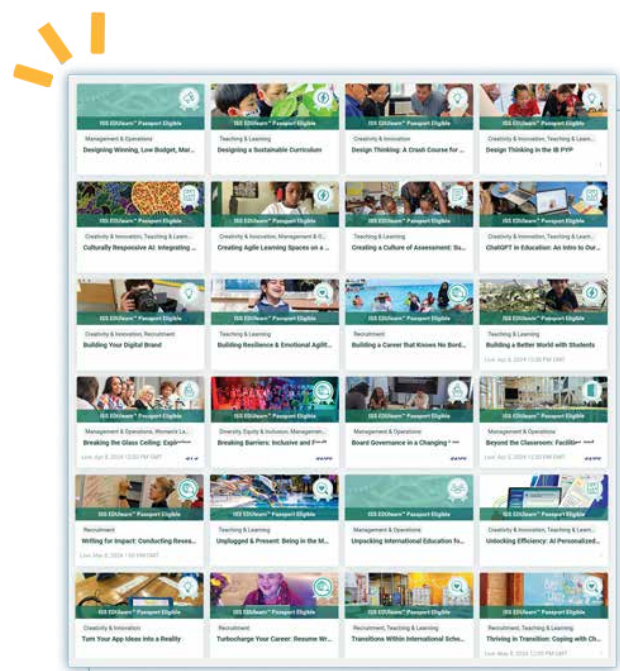


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Authors' Reflections:

"Delving into local folklore is crucial for international school students and staff.

Integrating folklore and culture through storytelling fosters a deep appreciation for **host country traditions**, strengthens **cultural ties**, and showcases **education's power** to bridge cultural divides."

# Enchanting Learning

By Ambatovy International School Teachers: **Katherine Barton Rivas**, **Luis Guillermo Mansilla**, and **Nalisoa Rakototsimba**

**N**estled in the port town of Tamatave, Madagascar and forming part of the Ambatovy mining consortium, **Ambatovy International School (AIS)** stands as the only internationally accredited English medium school in town. AIS caters to the unique needs of approximately 50 students from preschool to 8th grade. This tiny but mighty school is deeply embedded in the heart of our community, playing a pivotal role in the lives of its members.

At AIS, we pride ourselves on fostering an environment where every student is not just seen but genuinely recognized for their individuality and potential, ensuring that each child's unique talents and achievements are celebrated. The school's intimate setting further allows for an in-depth exploration of local issues, providing students with invaluable opportunities to engage with their community in meaningful ways.

One such issue is deforestation. Madagascar, while often celebrated for its breathtaking tropical landscapes and rich biodiversity, has been facing a significant environmental challenge in the form of deforestation for the last couple of decades.

This issue plays close to children's hearts. Our forest program, AIS Woodlands, started two years ago with the youngest ones in our school, Pre-K, and hopes to grow as the children move up in grades. Since then, it has gone beyond traditional education by providing preschool children with a unique lens to witness amidst the verdant surroundings, the consequences of monocultures, the impact of invasive foreign species, and the delicate balance of endemic species as children develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning in woodland environments. The pride children experienced in their work motivated them to invite the K-1 Grade class, which was working on a very special unit.

Indeed, kindergarten to 1st grade students looked at Madagascar as their immediate community, a community with a treasure trove of cultural richness, vibrant music, diverse languages, and captivating oral traditions. This study led them to start a storytelling



You can [watch a recording of the Darafify storytelling performance here](#)

unit on **Darafify**, a legend told to this day to every child in Madagascar. Through this story, students made the connection that we communicate and share topics that matter in our community through the power of storytelling. Stories are told from generation to generation to share our values. Mrs. Rivas, the AIS K-1 teacher, collaborated with Mr. Naly, AIS music teacher, and Mr. Luis, AIS Pre-K and forest school teacher, to bring the legend of Darafify to life in our forest school.

The big day arrived: eager Pre-K students worked on setting the scene, excited K-1 students helped carry the musical instruments to the forest school site, and Mrs. Rivas and Ms. Nathalie donned their costumes. Amidst all this inspiration, 2nd and 3rd graders decided to join in as well. What an experience to witness storytelling in the woods!

Mr. Naly brought the experience to life by adding sounds that brought passion to the story. He incorporated different chants for the students to share throughout the story to engage them as the story unfolded. We heard the whispering sounds of the Forest, children laughing, people dancing and singing, and moments that shared the despair in the legend of Darafify. ([Read the story here!](#))

It was a beautiful sight, as was the flow of Ms. Rivas' expressive storytelling, Mr. Naly's musical accompaniment, and the students' active engagement with the chants. The experience was a testament to how integration of local folklore also provides an avenue for local staff to share their cultural heritage, fostering a more profound sense of community or *Miray*. Mr. Nalisoa Rakototsimba, our local music teacher who incorporated the local music in this experience, stated, "*Miray*, a Malagasy word that means togetherness, is more than just a word; it's a powerful concept that guided our storytelling journey, connecting hearts and minds across our cultures."

- ***Miray***, a Malagasy word
- that means togetherness,
- is more than just a
- word; it's a powerful
- concept that guided
- our storytelling journey,
- connecting hearts and
- minds across our cultures.

[Continued on page 24](#)

The students were moved beyond our expectations; the story had impacted them. They had so many questions and wanted to explore and learn more about stories in Madagascar. This desire led us out of the classroom and into the community to hear the story from the mouth of the local community. We were pleasantly surprised to find out there was more than one version of this story. We traveled to the Museum of Toamasina and heard stories about the origins of the city of Toamasina. Then we went to a very popular restaurant named "Darafify" to hear another version of the legend of Darafify.

We ended our unit with a visit to Ivoloina Park, where students heard stories about extraordinary and sacred animals in Madagascar: "Lemurs!" they chanted. Students learned how different types of lemurs came to have their names and how they are now an endangered species. This brought many questions about deforestation in Madagascar, and students made the connection that even in the story of Darafify, the Malagasy people valued their forest and wanted to discuss the changes they were seeing in their country.

It was a magical journey – a testament to storytelling's transformative power to ignite curiosity, foster empathy, and inspire action. It was a truly enchanting experience that served as a mesmerizing gateway to our exploration of storytelling customs across the globe. ■

About the authors:

**Luis Guillermo Mansillais** is a seasoned preschool teacher with a decade of experience nurturing young minds and a preferred approach for play-based learning and inquiry. Following 2020, he decided to fuse his passion for the outdoors with his passion for working with children. He embraces the principles of Forest School, bringing the classroom to the forest and incorporating nature into his teaching.

**Katherine Barton Rivas** is an enthusiastic educator with over a decade of experience teaching both elementary and special education. She is passionate about fostering literacy, creativity, and student empowerment. Katherine's innovative teaching approach involves crafting engaging projects that integrate her students' diverse backgrounds with local culture.

**Nalisoa Rakototsimba** is a talented musician and music teacher from Madagascar. Since 2019, he has been enthusiastically teaching young learners, inspiring them with his love for music. Mr. Nalisoa's international background enriches his teaching, allowing him to incorporate diverse musical influences into his lessons. His dynamic and engaging teaching style captivates students, fostering a love for music that transcends borders.



AIS students visiting the restaurant "Darafify" to hear another version of the legend





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## LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR INCLUSIVITY:

# The Archaeology of Self™ Approach to Racial Literacy

By **Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz**, Professor of English Education at Columbia University

**T**he **Archaeology of Self™**, a core element of the Racial Literacy Development Model I crafted in 2018, paves the way for both individual and shared healing through introspection. This element entails an intensive journey into one's personal history, systematically unpacking layers to reveal the intricate interplay — particularly concerning race and diversity — that informs our viewpoints. Undertaking such deep reflective work, which demands confronting one's own preconceptions and prejudices, is essential for fostering an education system and a society that is equitable, inclusive, and holistically sound.

Racial literacy challenges the ideology of whiteness and encourages critical examination of race's impact on teaching and learning. It acknowledges the need for conversations on race in educational settings and the importance of developing a shared understanding of racial dynamics. The concept of racial literacy involves questioning assumptions, engaging in critical conversations, and practicing reflexivity. It requires educators to reflect on their racial beliefs and practices, ultimately preparing

them to work effectively in diverse classrooms. Racial literacy development is an ongoing process, requiring sustained self-exploration and probing. Racial literacy provides a lens for understanding the impact of race on daily life, encouraging curriculum and pedagogy changes. By fostering healthy discussions about race, educators can help students examine the effects of race and racism.

- Racial literacy requires educators to reflect on their racial beliefs and practices, ultimately preparing them to work effectively in diverse classrooms

The perpetuation of racism is rooted in education, and it educators' responsibility to break the cycle. In 2004, **Dr. Lani Guinier** wrote an influential article titled "From Racial Liberalism to Racial Literacy: Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest-Divergence Dilemma," where she argued that society

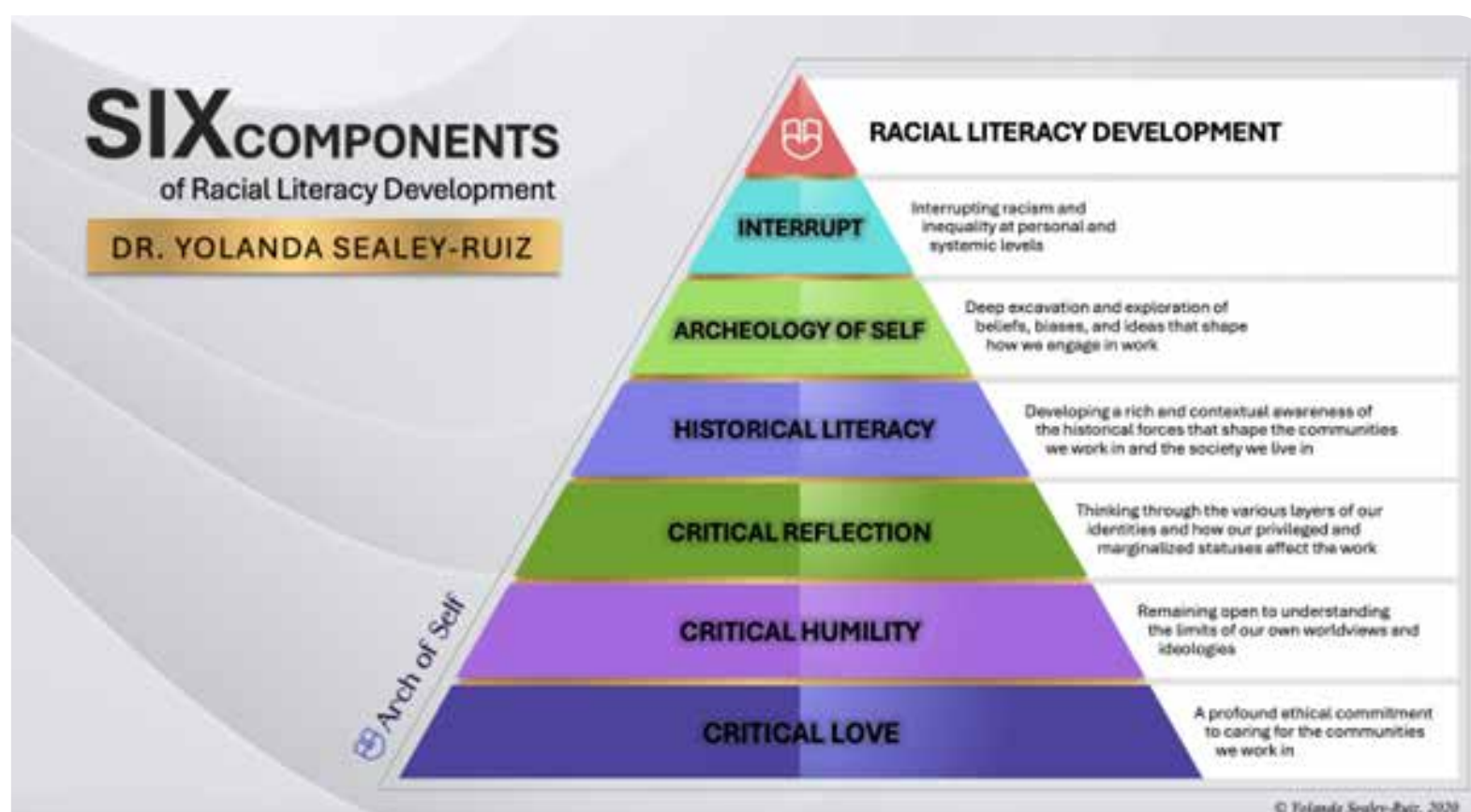
must move beyond symbolic gestures like the Brown v. Board of Education case and strive to become racially literate. Guinier's viewpoint is supported by scholars who advocate for racial literacy, emphasizing the need to move away from mere symbolic gestures toward a deeper understanding of how deeply ingrained race is in society and how it perpetuates racial hierarchies.

In my research involving teachers and students, I suggest that achieving racial literacy starts with an "Archaeology of the Self," which involves exploring and understanding how race and racism manifest in one's own beliefs and actions. Once individuals develop racial literacy, they can incorporate culturally responsive educational methods in their classrooms. Healthy discussions about race in schools can take place, using various texts and digital resources to engage students.

Racial Literacy is crucial in teacher education, aiming to eliminate racist practices in K-12 and higher education. It encourages self-examination and actions promoting social justice and educational equity. Without racial literacy, educators may struggle to address inequities based on race. Teachers who possess racial literacy engage in open conversations about race, leading to more culturally responsive teaching practices.

Incorporating the Archaeology of Self into your personal practice or school environment can be a transformative experience that promotes self-awareness, empathy, and societal growth.

[Continued on page 28](#)



## 1: Initiate Self-Education

Start by immersing yourself in readings and videos that focus on developing racial literacy. Create a racial literacy roundtable series to explore these concepts collaboratively, enhancing both personal understanding and collective insight.

## 2: Establish a Safe and Brave Space

Prepare yourself mentally for the challenges of this introspective work. Cultivate a personal space where you and other educational professionals (and students!) can explore beliefs with grace and patience, dedicating time for reflection without self-judgment.

## 3: Share Your Stories

Reflect on key experiences and beliefs that have shaped your worldview. Consider working with a therapist or a trusted group of friends or colleagues to delve deeper into these stories that can lead to actionable change.

## 4: Dive into Self-Examination

Create “excavation” exercises designed to unearth personal beliefs and racial biases, particularly in contexts like education, family, and community. Use journaling, mindfulness for self-processing, and racial literacy roundtables to process your findings and insights with others.

## 5: Engage in Self-Dialogue

Start critical “self-conversations” with yourself about the insights you’ve gained, what you are learning, and where you need to change your thinking. This can be through written reflections or recorded discussions. Provide yourself with constructive feedback to further guide your personal racial literacy development.

## 6: Apply Awareness in Daily Life

Integrate your awareness into everyday interactions and observe how it influences your responses and behavior. Make this conscious awareness a regular part of your daily practice.

## 7: Seek Support and Accountability

Look for mentors, join or create racial literacy roundtables or critical conversation circles that align with your and your fellow educators’ journeys. Inviting a friend or colleague in these conversations builds your support system, providing accountability and shared progress check-ins.

## 8: Maintain Commitment

Persist on the path of self-exploration, self-examination and commitment to your racial literacy growth as a person and educational professional.

*“The Archaeology of Self,” [continued from page 27](#)*

The central component of racial literacy development is the Archaeology of Self™, which involves self-exploration and understanding of one's relationship with race. It highlights the importance of personalizing race and recognizing its impact on teaching and learning. The goal is to make racial literacy courses with an Archaeology of Self project a requirement for teacher education. The dream for the Archaeology of Self is for it to become widespread in teacher education programs and be considered in other human services fields such as medicine, law, and politics. Archaeology of Self as a Foundation for Racial Literacy invites individuals into the continuous practice of self-examination, paving the way for a more just, compassionate, and inclusive education system and society.

To the left, find an outline of how you can adapt and adopt the Archaeology of Self principles individually or within an educational setting.

These steps offer a possible approach to enacting the Archaeology of Self™ as you build racial literacy as part of your personal life and educational practice, that can lead to meaningful change and a deeper understanding of self and society. ■

*Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Ph.D. is professor of English Education at Teachers College, Columbia University and author of academic and poetry books.*

*You can connect with Yolanda on Instagram at [@yolie\\_sealeyruiz](#) and on X at [@RuizSealey](#)*

### References

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# 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TASKFORCE ON CHILD PROTECTION

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## An interview with **Liz Duffy**

ISS President

## and **Keith Cincotta**

ISS Director of School Services/  
Senior Leadership Executive,  
Managed Schools



**W**hy did ISS participate as a founding member of the Taskforce, and what did you hope it would accomplish?

**Liz:** ISS was motivated to be a founding member of the International Taskforce on Child Protection (ITFCP) because, as all educators know, the health and safety of students is of primary importance to all international schools. This was an opportunity for us to be part of ensuring that international students are safe in international schools.

**Keith:** We jumped at the chance to be one of the founding members of the Taskforce, specifically as ISS is one of the big recruiters of teachers. We thought it was really important to be involved in setting up these programs and raising the awareness around the issue.

**Ten years later, what impact has the Taskforce had?**

**Keith:** The Taskforce has had tremendous impact. If you look at the lack of central response to child protection issues before the Taskforce and how much it's grown and changed over time – the addition of child protection accreditation standards, the standardization of policies and expectation for schools around the world – it's just been tremendous.

**Liz:** The Taskforce has raised the profile of this issue for international schools around the

world. It has changed how recruiting agencies like ISS do recruiting, in the sense of making it easy for schools to do background checks for all of their hires. Many schools have also established child protection taskforces so that all the adults who work with students in a school are aware of good child safety practices.

**How do you think the ITCP will evolve into the future?**

**Liz:** For all the progress that the Taskforce has achieved, there are some issues that remain challenging; I think that it's those issues that the Taskforce will focus on going forward in particular. International educators and families move around, not just around a region, but around the whole world. It's really important that information about educators follows those educators.

In addition, many regions of the world have different attitudes towards and laws about child protection. So that makes the work challenging and something that I know the Task Force is focusing on going forward.

**Keith:** Unfortunately, there is always going to be work to be done on this topic. As we go into the future, the work needs to be more and more about standardization across countries and creating professional credentials and expectations that will be carried from school to school.

[Continued on page 31](#)

## Any other thoughts you wish to share on this anniversary?

**Keith:** On the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, congratulations and thanks to **Jane Larsson** for her leadership [and] the rest of the founding members, especially **Christy Brown**, who has put so much into it over the years. And finally, to all the practitioners out in the schools who are putting these policies into place in their schools and impacting the lives of students.

**Liz:** I want to do a special shout out to **Jane Larsson**, who has really shepherded the task force for a decade and has made a huge difference towards the success of this task force. Thank you and congratulations, Jane. And thank you for everybody who continues to serve on the Taskforce.

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## Reflections from Laura Light

AAIE Executive Director

2007-2021 ISS Director of Global Recruitment



A decade ago, the international International Schools Services, I watched the collective shock that spurred action within our school leaders. In response, the International Task Force for Child Protection emerged, a central moment where ISS and other stakeholders rallied to safeguard the welfare of every student in our schools.

My role as Director of Global Recruitment put me at the forefront of this important work. Alongside others like **Chris Akin**, **Bridget McNamer**, and **Bill Elman**, we recognized the urgency to address deficiencies, particularly in recruitment practices. From this, the

Recruiting Guidelines evolved —a significant stride toward ensuring the integrity of our hiring processes. This initiative, disseminated through the International Task Force for Child Protection, gathered support from all within our community.

Fast forward to today, and the momentum hasn't waned. Recent weeks have seen the unveiling of updated Recruiting Guidelines, underscored by the poignant directive: "Make the Call." The enduring dedication of the International Task Force for Child Protection, with Jane Larsson and Christy Brown leading the group, merits commendation for their unwavering commitment over the past decade.

Looking ahead, the Task Force remains unfaltering in its mission, recognizing the ongoing imperative to close any gaps in child safety. Efforts span various areas — from governance to social and emotional learning, curriculum development, parental engagement, and, crucially, recruitment.

- As a cohesive
- community, we persist
- in our shared goal:
- ensuring the safety and
- security of every child
- within our schools

Though progress has been made, the journey is far from over. As a cohesive community of international school leaders and child safety advocates, we persist in our shared goal: ensuring the safety and security of every child within our schools. I am here to continue the collaboration in this work, driven by our collective dedication to safeguarding each and every child in our schools.

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## Reflections from Pauline O'Brien

ISS Director of Global Recruitment  
Business Strategy and Development

2014-2020 CIS Director of Career & Recruitment Services



Looking back over the past decade, I feel a deep sense of pride and purpose in being part of the International Taskforce on Child Protection from the very start. Our mission has always been to make our schools as safe as possible for every child, and I've seen firsthand the dedication and heart that goes into this work, particularly in the area of recruitment.

It's been my personal mission to ensure that every staff member joining a school is fully committed to supporting and safeguarding our children. We've refined our recruitment practices, introduced thorough background checks, and made our core values of integrity, vigilance, and care central to every decision we make. The progress we've achieved together isn't just in the processes we've fine-tuned, but in the culture of safety and respect we've cultivated across schools.

- Here's to making the
- next ten years even
- more impactful

As I reflect on our journey and look to the future, I'm committed to continuing our work, learning from our experiences, and keeping the well-being of children at the heart of all we do. Here's to making the next ten years even more impactful, keeping our vision clear, and our resolve strong. ■



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- Communication



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# Education Trends in School Supply

By **Keith Cincotta**, ISS Director of School Services/Senior Leadership Executive, Managed Schools

**A**s the academic year winds down, schools are finalizing plans for next year's commitments. But there is still time to source and ship equipment and supplies for next year!

As you develop roll-outs and roadmaps, it is especially important to consider supply needs for new programs and initiatives that may be evolving alongside education trends and developments. Schools are constantly shaping how teaching and learning happen today, and engaging with current ideas often requires specific supplies or resources. Here are a few notable trends and the types of supplies schools to consider:

## Evolving Technology

While integrating technology into classrooms is not a new trend, it does require regular review of hardware, software, and best practices. An annual audit of school wide hardware can help technology directors determine their needs for items such as Chromebooks, laptops, projection, and display equipment as well as software subscription and technology infrastructure.

## STEAM

There is a strong trend towards STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) education in international schools. Along with standard tech requirements, a robust STEAM program provides students with access to items such as art supplies, robotics kits, 3D printers and specialized software.

## Social Emotional Learning

Post-pandemic, many schools have implemented more comprehensive Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs and curricula. We have placed orders for schools for everything from yoga mats to books and materials that promote empathy, diversity, and emotional awareness. Games and activities designed to build teamwork and communication skills are also popular, especially in elementary schools.

It's an exciting time to ensure your educators and students experience new, innovative learning approaches! For support with the strategic supply planning and implementation needed, ISS' School Supply representatives are available to consult and advise about sourcing and shipping – now or at any time of the year. ■

[Learn more here](#) to see how the ISS School Supply team and ISS Supply Marketplace can support your school needs. You can connect with Keith on [LinkedIn](#) and follow on X at [@KCincotta](#).



## Samples Behind the Scenes

We asked the School Supply team to share just a few of the recent orders they have supported. Here's what's headed to schools around the world!

**Virtual Reality headsets and VEX Robotics V5 Classroom Starter Kit**

For International School of Addis Ababa

**Sphero BOLT Coding Robot**

For Jakarta International School

**VEX Robotics V5 Competition Super Kit**

For International School of Panama and International School of Uganda

**Terrapin Logo Bee-Bots**

Multiple school orders

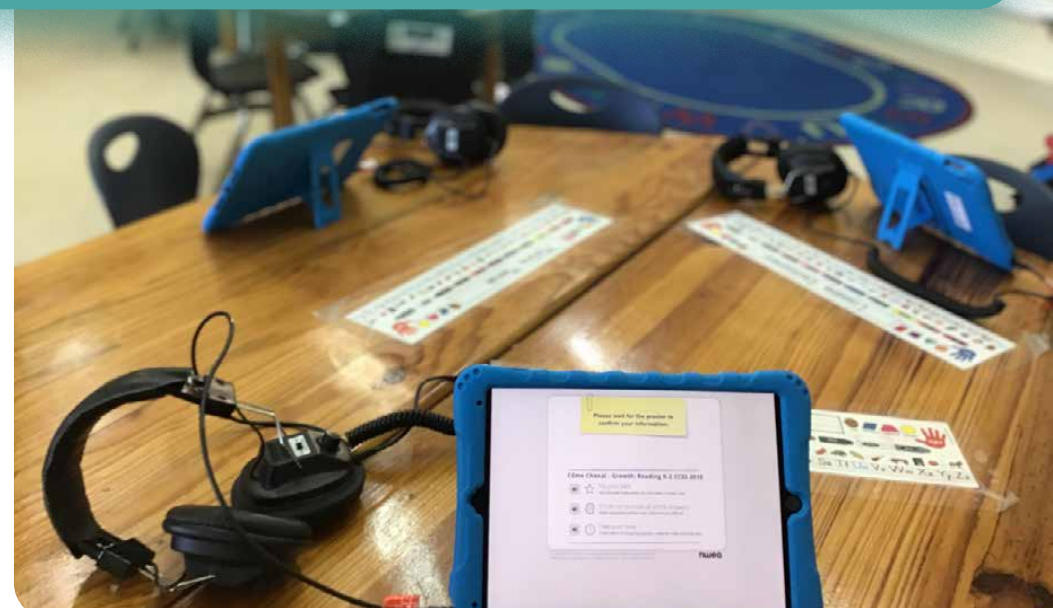
**Sphero Indi Robots**

For American School of Doha

*And for fun!*

**14 ft Trampoline with Balance Bar and Basketball Hoop All in One**

For International School of Kenya



Photos, top to bottom: Shekou International School, International School of Aruba, and Ambatovy International School

# Take Care

A Memoir Excerpt, by Richard W. Mueller

Richard W. Mueller, former senior U.S. Foreign Service Officer, shares an excerpt from his recent memoir release, **From American Diplomat to Diplomatic Educator: Building Global Bridges to Understanding**. In this section titled a "Commencement and Our Homecoming," Richard reflects on the diplomas handed out through his career at Shanghai American School (SAS), Hong Kong International School (HKIS), and Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH) — and the hope for the future these ceremonies represented. You can [find the book here](#).

Commencement for our students in 2016 also marked the commencement of Claire's and my fifth and final retirement from active employment. Every year at SAS we held two commencements for graduates, one for Puxi High School and one for Pudong High School. In my three years and six commencements at SAS I handed out

990 diplomas to graduating seniors. At HKIS I handed out 1384 diplomas and at NMH 2,392 diplomas. All for a grand total of 4,766. I count all those graduates as proud representatives of three schools for which I had been responsible. We were sending well-educated young people around the world— imbued with good moral character, hopefully-destined to

make our world - our "Pale Blue Dot" as Carl Sagan called it - a better planet.

[...] At each one of these six commencements, I shared a few words instead of having a formal outside speaker. My remarks were based on a theme of "Take Care."

An excerpt:

"Whatever careers or other paths you choose, I hope they allow you to reflect on the power of the ideas and values of the SAS mission statement, our core values, our EAGLES [the school mascot]. Such ideals as integrity, lifelong learning, passion, compassion, pursuing your dreams, and cross-cultural understanding will all help guide you in coming years.

It's up to you, the Class of 2016 and those who come after you, to make a positive difference in another person's life, every day; and, in many persons lives, every day. My generation is rapidly handing the baton to you and cheering you on. Do not let anyone convince you that you cannot do it or should not do it. This is not a guilt trip. It's the opening of a door and an offer of a wonderful opportunity. That's my heartfelt plea. Now just a simple request, one I've made of previous graduating classes.

### Just three words: Please take care.

Please take care of others who are less fortunate or who need a kind word or a helping hand. Please take care of our earth and all its creatures and inhabitants. And please, take care of yourself in this fast-paced, anxious, tempting, demanding — and yes, fascinating — world.

Have you ever stopped to think that with modern medicine progressing so rapidly that you have a good chance to live well past one hundred years of age-on into the twenty-second century? If you are eighteen now, you may have eighty-two years or more ahead of you. Hard to imagine, isn't it? You will do many things along the way. Make them good things!

So, work hard, be gentle with yourself every day, and save some energy for the twenty-second century.

That's my simple request.

Please take care of others.

Please take care of our earth.

Please take care of yourself."