



## ...from Patricia

Dear TPRA Parents,

Welcome Back everyone! And a Happy New Year!

It is great to be back on Freeport ground and see our school community in full swing. I am pleased to announce that the first week of this semester has travelled very smoothly indeed. Thank you to all MZIS TPRA staff for starting the third quarter off with the usual dedication and enthusiasm.

We have quite an active semester planned with many opportunities for the MZIS students to demonstrate their talents inside and outside the classroom. Stay tuned, with much anticipation, in the weeks to come and slowly these opportunities will unfold.

MZIS has suffered a loss this semester with our Superintendent, Mr Blair Lee's departure. Mr Lee has officially resigned as Superintendent of the MZIS school. Consequently, I have stepped up as interim Superintendent. This post will require travelling between the two school sites. Additionally, Mr Mark Brandin will move into the position of Acting Principal and will return to site next week.

This week, I will travel to TPRA on Wednesday and return on Thursday. I am continually contactable by email and mobile should an issue arise in my absence. On Wednesday evening (25th Jan), I look forward to seeing you at the school for our Welcome Back Meeting at 6.30pm.

## From the PYP Coordinator...

### How does the IB evaluate our PYP at MZIS?

Programme evaluation is both a requirement and a service provided by the IB Organization to IB schools. Mount Zaagkam International School (MZIS) was authorized by the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization to offer the Primary Years Programme (PYP) in May 2008, hence becoming part of the IB world school community. The aim of the evaluation process is for the IB to ensure that the standards and practices are being maintained.

As part of the evaluation process, schools are required to carry-out a "self-study" in which the implementation of the programme is reflected upon. This process includes teachers, students and parents. The self-study is submitted to the IB Organization and is verified by a team sent to our school representing the IB office in Singapore.

The MZIS evaluation visit will take place during this semester, with the dates to be confirmed. This visit will verify the school's self assessment as reflected in the self-study. After the evaluation visit, the IB will send a final report to the superintendent, which will reflect on the self-study submitted by the school, including the process and the conclusions that the school reached.

It is important to note that the aim of the visit is not to appraise or assess individual teachers or school administrators. However it seeks to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme implemented in the school. Trish Phyll.

**Papuan batik day every Wednesday**

## From the Handbook

### Student Attendance

If a child is ill and will not be attending school that day, please call the school office so that the teacher can be notified. Illness, especially in the tropics, can be very contagious; consequently we encourage you to keep your children at home if they are ill.

In the case of a medical or emergency situation, the school will work with parents on missed class lessons. Any student attending other schools during periods they are absent will be asked to verify their attendance with records.

Circumstances beyond the family's control (e.g., visa trips) may require a student to be absent for an extended period of time. In such cases the teacher will try to assist the student with make-up work, in advance of the absence, for the student to complete while on leave. However, whenever possible, *the teacher should be provided with at least one week's notice of the planned leave.* Work missed and not made up will affect the student's grade.

*School policy mandates that any student who registers more than 20 unexcused absences will not be promoted to the subsequent grade. This information will be conveyed to receiver schools in the case of school leavers due to families leaving jobsite.*

### 4.3 School Bus Policy

In keeping with PTFI's policies regarding safety, MZIS considers bus safety a top priority. Because of the need for the bus driver to focus on the road at all times there will be a **zero tolerance** for misbehavior on a bus. All students are expected to comply with the bus rules. It is also an expectation that students will treat the bus interior with respect.

**Bus Rules:** *Students should always do the following:*

Remain in their seat, facing the front, at all times.

Stay seated until the bus has come to a complete stop.

Keep all body parts and possessions inside the bus at all times.

All talk on the bus should be at a conversational level.

Bad language is unacceptable.

Be kind and considerate of others and their property

Remain standing off the road until the bus comes to a complete stop, before approaching to board the bus.

Look out for other vehicles before crossing roads.

Follow directions of adults and supervisors on the bus.

Greet and thank the bus crew and adult supervisors.

Students will only be dropped off at their own stop unless a different arrangement has been confirmed with the School Secretary or the Principal.

*Please review the MZIS policies in the 'Student/Parent Handbook' with your son/daughter.*

## **REMINDER: The International School Assessment (ISA), 2011-12**

The International School Assessment or ISA will be administered to all students Grades 3-8 starting from the first week of February. The ISA is a standardized achievement test developed by the Australian Council of Educational Research, specifically for use in International Schools. Last year, the ISA was administered in 140 International Schools, in 57 countries, with over 25,000 students participating.

The ISA measures many of the fundamental skills students should be learning in Reading, Language, and Mathematics and the information received from the ISA can help MZIS determine if our academic programme needs adjustment. However, the main purpose of administering the ISA is to provide the school administration with information that can be used to compare how MZIS students are doing compared to other similar populations, as well as checking year-to-year progress of individual students.

When results are received, normally before the end of the school year, parents will be sent their individual results and MZIS will do an analysis of school wide scores and we may adjust an emphasis in a particular area (Reading, Writing or Maths) based on ISA results, but our curriculum will not change based on results from ISA's.

ISA results **will** be placed in each student file and will become part of their MZIS records, but are not used in our reporting procedures and will not affect marks received on reports. Total testing time is 210 minutes over a two or three day period and each classroom teacher will decide on a testing schedule that best fits their class' schedule.

There is no way to "study" for the ISA and organization that distributes the test suggests that "Parents should encourage their children to do their best on the ISA, as they should for all of their school activities. But it would be harmful to place too much emphasis on the importance of the tests, making students feel anxious about the outcome." We recommend that you maintain a typical schedule at home, as we will do here in school. This is the best way to encourage a positive experience with the ISA.

**If you have questions about the ISA's, please feel free to e-mail or call me on 5434803 or [Patricia\\_McCloughlin@fmi.com](mailto:Patricia_McCloughlin@fmi.com)**