International School of Kraków News Brief

14 September 2021

Contents

Upcoming events and Reminders

From the Director

Early Years Updates

Early Years and G0 Starts

Elementary Updates

Secondary Updates

Exploring Math/ Board of Trustees/ Did you Know?

ISK Community/Library

COVID-19 Update

Upcoming Events and Reminders

- Flu Vaccinations (September)
- September 13: Early Years & G0 trip to mini-zoo farm
- Week of Sept 13: Secondary Grade-level trips (G6-10)
- September 17: Grade 1 Planetarium Field Trip
- September 21: Board of Trustees Meeting
- October 1: Teacher In-Service Day, No Classes
- October 2: SAT Test Date
- October 6: Elementary & Early Years Goal-Setting Conferences (15:30-18:30)
- October 7: Elementary Goal-Setting Conferences (No school for ES students)
- October 11-13 G11-12 trip to Warsaw Polin Museum, Copernicus Science Centre, and Old Town
- The Fall Session ASA will run from September 13 to December 10

International School of Kraków News Brief

14 September 2021

From the Director

What a great start to the 2021-2022 school year!

It feels wonderful to have everyone back and to be welcoming so many new families. Campus is alive and vibrant. As I write this we have 276 students, 64 of whom are new t0 ISK, with applications still coming in, and more students already set to join us later in the year.

Welcome to the first edition of the ISK News Brief. Taking feedback from last year, we will be streamlining some of our messaging, gathering important information here so as to reduce the number of emails. Please read the pieces of importance to you.

We aren't certain what this year and the pandemic will bring, but we are committed to remaining on campus as much as possible. If the government allows us discretion as they have promised, we have every reason to believe we can do so safely.

From our surveys, we believe that over 90% of the adults in our community are fully vaccinated with over half of our students of age also vaccinated. This should help to reduce risk considerably, especially if we continue to maintain other protocols of hygiene, distancing, quarantine, and masks. As we saw last year, even when we had cases appear, our protocols helped to prevent any community spread.

Finally, I apologize for the sound during the on-line opening. Fortunately, much of the information I shared was taken from our ISK Annual Report 20-21, which I encourage you to read. In it you will be able see how last year went for our school and community, and see how well we did despite the pandemic. We had great academic results and our first ever perfect score on the IB Diploma.

Enjoy a great year.

Dr. Sims

International School of Kraków
News Brief
14 September 2021

Early Years Updates

We have had a super start to the new school year in the Early Years. There are 23 students so far who represent many different nationalities: Japanese, Polish, Ukrainian, German, U.S.A., Argentinian, Belgian, Italian, Colombian and British. A number of new students are scheduled to join us as the year progresses. These students, together with their teachers Ms. Dominika and Ms. Nina, as well as their assistant teachers Ms. Ksenia and Ms. Ania, have been enjoying getting to know each other and finding out many creative ways to communicate with each other. The children have been settling in nicely and are acting more comfortable in their new school surroundings already.

This year the Early Years schedule has been modified to allow both groups to share their Inquiry Project time together. This will give children more choice in learning materials and spaces. They will also be able to interact more with students and teachers from both EY groups. This approach is characteristic of the Reggio Emilia inspired schools around the world, and we are very excited to incorporate it in the Learning Tree House.

We are also excited about our first field trip since the beginning of the pandemic. The EY students, together with their Learning Tree House friends in Grade 0, are visiting the educational farm in nearby Kopytkowo. Honey gathering and a tour of the mini-zoo are some of the planned attractions. The Early Years team is looking forward to this first of hopefully many co-curricular activities that will highlight the 2021-22 school year.

On behalf of the EY team, best wishes for a successful school year to the whole ISK community!

Sue Mleczko

Early Years Coordinator

International School of Kraków News Brief

14 September 2021

Early Years Start

The first days of school were dedicated to getting to know one another and setting up rules that we all follow as we cooperate, interact, and learn together.

We start each day with our Morning Meeting, when the class greets each other, talks about plans for the day, sings songs, and plays group games. This is the time to share news, talk about upcoming events and celebrate special occasions.

This past week there was also time to decide upon acceptable ways we talk to each other and ways to deal with issues that might bother us. The children agreed upon the idea of helping one another, using kinds words when we talk, and always staying safe.

The children had great opportunities to explore the classroom, playgrounds, and Gym - Bubble. Hopefully, next week we will be able to take a walk in the forest.

Grade 0 Start

We have had a wonderful first week of school in Grade 0. We learned our class routines, met our classmates and teachers, discovered our classroom resources and visited most areas of the school, including the forest. There we found even more exciting places for learning, including a small pond where we released some tadpoles last spring. We were thrilled to discover small frogs there, along with a variety of beetles and slugs.

Next week we will jump into our Language Arts program, Reading and Writing Workshop, as well as our Math program, Bridges. Grade 0 students are learning about the flags that represent their nationalities. Our Science activities include exploring what scientists actually do. We are really looking forward to our upcoming field trip with the Early Years to the farm with mini-zoo in Kopytkowo.

IPS G4&5 students are learning about things they have in common with their classmates through a fun team-building construction challenge.

International School of Kraków
News Brief

14 September 2021

International School of Kraków

Elementary Updates

We have had a very successful first two weeks back at school in Elementary. Students are excited to see their old friends again and meet the new friends that have joined us. Teachers have been doing a lot of team-building activities with their classes to set up the year on a positive note.

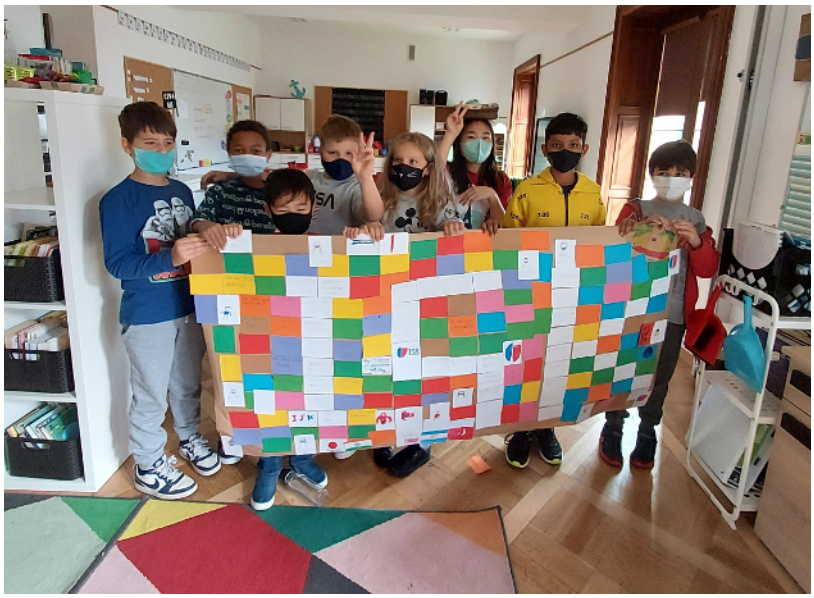
Our focus at the beginning of the year is on the social-emotional well-being of the Elementary students. There are classroom community circles that are happening in all homerooms as a way to build community and discuss topics such as ways to positively communicate with one another. Elementary assemblies will be coming back this month with a focus on the IB Learner Profile. Due to COVID restrictions, we will not be able to meet together inside but while the weather cooperates, we can meet with all students outside.

Speaking of outside, we are going to take advantage of the opportunity to get outside the campus on field trips. Grade 0, 1, and 4 already have trips planned this month and others are in the works. The goal is to try and make things as back to 'normal' as they can be given the current conditions.

We are looking forward to a very successful year here on campus in the Elementary.

Brett Elkei

Elementary School Principal



International School of Kraków News Brief

14 September 2021

Secondary Updates

At the time of writing this, we have completed two weeks of school, two weeks that have seen the campus full of students, including middle and high school. We have over 130 students in our secondary and are expecting some additions during the year. As a principal, it has been a lot of fun walking through classrooms and observing students and teachers engaged in learning. You will see in this newsletter some examples. Students seem happy and motivated to be at school, especially during lunch, recess and breaks!

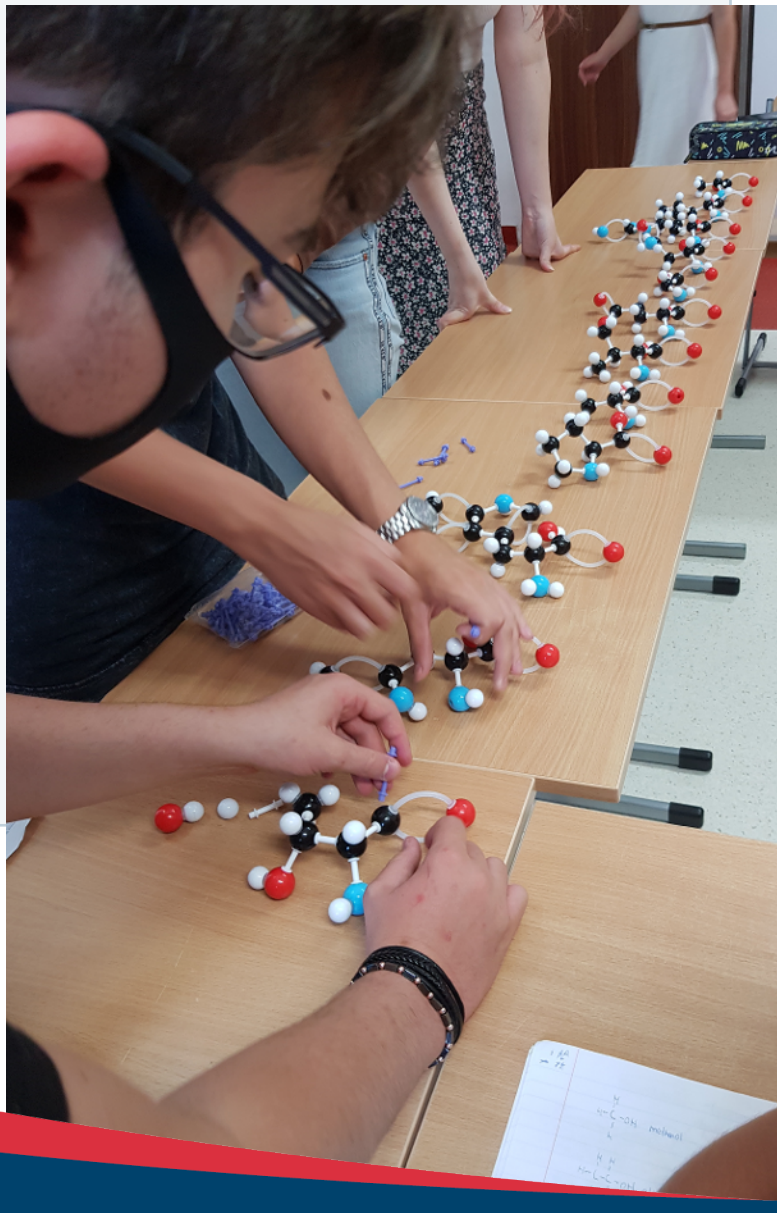
As fun as learning within the school walls has been, we are really looking forward to our planned grade-level trips to Szczawnica during the week of September 13th (trips that may already have taken place as you are reading this message). Undoubtedly, students will enjoy being able to interact with each other outside of the classroom too. Grades 11-12 will also be heading off for their grade level trip in October.

In addition to trips, we hope that many of our students take advantage of our after-school activities this fall. Even if we are unable to attend CEESA events in person this fall, we will be able to participate in sports and activities on a local level and most conveniently, on our campus. CEESA plans on reviewing potential travel at the start of the calendar year in January. But much will depend on the current situation in Europe with regards the pandemic

We will of course keep you informed of any changes or updates and we remain hopeful that this year will be more of a return to normal and that we can continue this year as we started - in classrooms and together at school.

Erik Lutley

Secondary School Principal



International School of Kraków News Brief

14 September 2021

Exploring Math

Grade 9 works within teams to solve a few problems, and as a whole class opens the padlocks! More questions and candies are waiting for them inside the chest. Math class in Grade 9, Review on Grade 8 Syllabus.

In the first week of our school Grade 6 Math Class was learning about collecting and analyzing data. We learned about the Calaveras County Frog-Jumping Contest which has been going on for about 90 years and is based on a story by Mark Twain. We went outside to be jumping frogs ourselves and measured our jumps. We then drew some conclusions as to factors that affected how far people (and frogs!) can jump! It was fun to be learning together again!

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees met for an 8 hour session Saturday, September 4th to hold open discussions and seek common understanding as we begin the 2021 - 2022 school year.

The day was richly packed with topics which included our Mission and Vision, community values and demographics, class sizes, Covid-19 expectations, a SWOT analysis, and ISK's plans for the future.

It was a great start to the 2021-2022 School year, ensuring that the decisions ahead will be made in the best interests of our students, school and community.

Did You Know?

On the NWEA MAP results last Spring, ISK outperformed US and International Norms by over 10 RIT points? In fact we did better than our own results from 2019 pre-pandemic as well. Our students and teachers did an amazing job learning in 2020-2021.

Special congratulations to Grade 9, who had our best results, outperforming 85% of their peers worldwide.

International School of Kraków
News Brief
14 September 2021

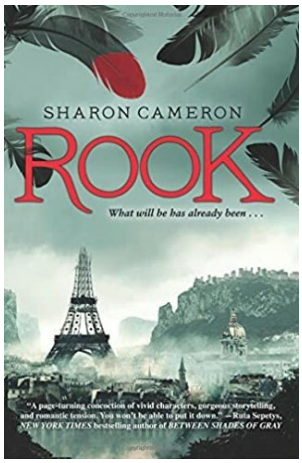
ISK Community

Charity Race:
Parents and Teachers running together

ISK participated for the third time, with three teams, in the Poland Business Run on September 5th, a charity race organized around Poland to help people with disabilities of the musculoskeletal system.

Our purpose was to help a good cause, promote an active lifestyle, and integrate the ISK community. Each team consisted of 5 runners, and each participant had to cover a distance of 4 km (30 minutes jogging).

The 5000 participants did not meet in the Rynek and run together like in the past, instead, they ran in teams of 4 km wherever they wanted, registering their run with a GPS app.



Library

Let me share a few fun facts about the ISK library with you. We have over 18,000 books in English, Polish, German, French, Spanish, Dutch and Russian! There are books for toddlers and for scholars and in this column I'll share a recommendation of one or two books that are new to our library or that are well worth your time.

Racism and diversity are hot topics now and what better way to become more informed about the issues than to read a bestseller? "How to be an Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi is an exploration of the roots of racism in Europe and America and offers new ways of thinking and acting on this difficult subject.

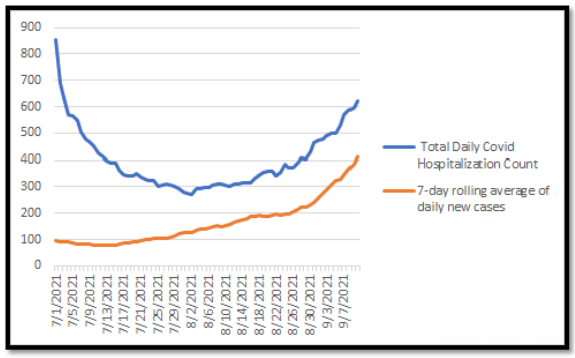
And for a lighter read I recommend "Rook" by Sharon Cameron. If you've ever read "The Scarlet Pimpernel" this will be familiar but with a modern twist. Set in a future where technology has disappeared and plastic is worth more than gold, the Red Rook stealthily rescues prisoners from the Sunken City that was once Paris where a bloody revolution has again taken place. But who is the Red Rook and what is the connection to Sophie who is trapped in an arranged marriage in The Commonwealth? The book is full of great characters and sword-buckling action.

Lori Wallett-ISK librarian

International School of Kraków

News Brief

Daily number of new infections and hospitalization rates in Poland July 1-September 10, 2021

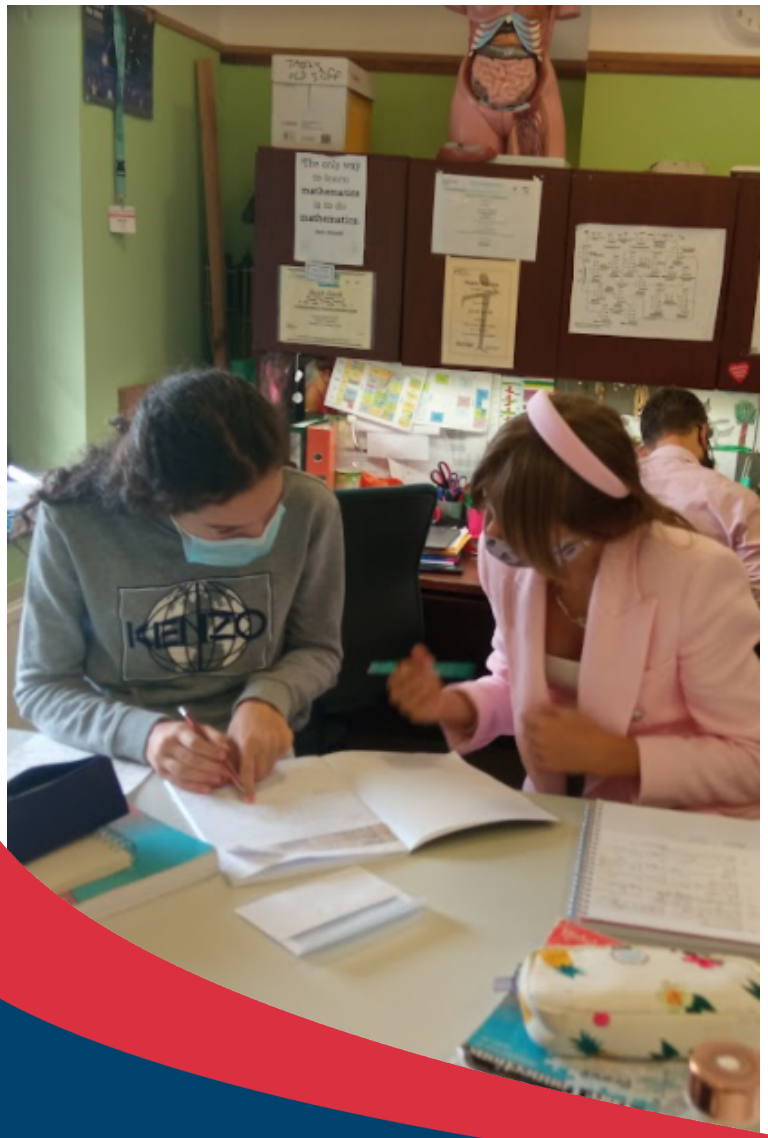


COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 case numbers have been on the rise the past few days with the Delta variant appearing in Poland with greater frequency.

ISK has not had any reported cases to date.

We remain at a Medium Mitigation level.

The Medium mitigation level means:

- Instruction can continue to be carried out normally at school
- Hygiene protocols and distancing remain in place
- Masks will continue to be in use in classes, all indoor areas, and in transportation by grades 1 and up. Masks are not required outdoors.
- Cohort controls remain in place
- After School Activities continue as planned
- Events with parents who are fully vaccinated, recovered, or with a recent negative test may take place
- Cafeteria open with protocols and by cohorts