MAKING CHOICES THAT SHAPE OUR IDENTITIES AND THINKING
Dear Hong Kong Academy Community,

Sometimes when I think about all the options before me, I feel like a kid in a candy store. Other times I feel bewildered and wonder, *How am I going to choose? How do I narrow things down and pick just one?* Life is, indeed, often full of tough choices.

In this issue of *hkaVoices*, faculty, staff and students share their thoughts on making choices about identity, social action, work and life after HKA. Their words remind us that an HKA education ultimately prepares us to make informed, authentic choices as lifelong learners.

Thank you for choosing to read this issue of *hkaVoices*. We welcome your feedback.

Warmly,

Laura Mitchell
Director of Institutional Advancement

*ARTWORK: by Milton, Kindergarten.*
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As the 2015-2016 school year drew to a close, I asked a number of the Grade 12 Secondary School teachers to describe the Class of 2016. In response, they provided many adjectives, including: passionate, curious, self-aware, conscious of others, expressive, eclectic, supportive, tolerant, boisterous, quirky, sincere, happy, diverse, purposeful, and talented.

They also called the Class of 2016 authentically HKA and mission-aligned. I think it’s fair to say that most students aren’t all that familiar with their schools’ mission statements, and I rarely hear Heads at other schools describe their students as mission-aligned. But I have to agree with our faculty that this year’s graduates are indeed full expressions of our mission, as are all our other students. Being HKA students is a core part of their identities. Our graduates and leaving students will carry the HKA label with them, and we are all proud of that.

The idea of personal and collective identity — along with the imperative of preparing another graduation speech — started me thinking about how we as individuals build our identities and share ourselves with others. How do we define ourselves on our own, whether at HKA or in other areas of our lives? How do we define ourselves in groups? And what does this all have to do with being a part of the HKA community?

I’ll try to answer that question by starting with myself.

WHAT DOES SOMEONE LIKE ME DO TO BUILD MY IDENTITY?

BUY A JUKEBOX, OF COURSE.

I’m not joking. I recently acquired a nearly six foot high jukebox that is going to require a small crane to lift it into my home. But getting the jukebox up, over and then into my house is really the easy part of the matter. Now that I have a jukebox (which I’ve dreamt of for years), what am I going to put in it?
The idea of selecting a finite number of songs to put into my jukebox got me thinking about a recent podcast I heard by Joanna Blakeley. Blakeley writes and speaks a lot about the fashion industry which, she notes, allows for very little private intellectual property. Designers are always culling from the past in order to create something new. As Joanna describes it, “The genius is in curating things from the past and reviving them in the present.”

As I think about my jukebox — and my identity both as an individual and as the Head of HKA — I think Joanna’s observation is solid and offers some useful advice. For my jukebox, I’m selecting songs from the past that collectively express aspects of my identity today. My selection of songs contains a mixture of classics that would probably appear on many popular playlists as well as some more obscure choices that hold significance to me even if they are not hits by conventional standards.

Our recent graduates, moving on to new experiences, are doing much the same thing as they continue their personal learning journeys beyond HKA. Rather than selecting from a pile of old records, however, they are taking all of their experiences, deciding which ones to discard, which ones to keep, and which ones to nurture as they develop their identities moving forward. These sorts of decisions are some of the most significant we all make, but they often come packaged in the deceptively mundane tasks of life. Being intentional about these choices is a discipline, and we all need guidance in how to make those choices.

In HKA-speak, we might say that we need a lens for thinking about that process of defining our identities. Given my newly acquired jukebox, my lens is music, and I’m thinking about what it would mean if my choices were pressed into a vinyl record. As I thought about my personalised playlist, the titles that came to mind were all about friendship, perspective and curiosity. For friendship, I’d pick We’re Going To Be Friends by The White Stripes, Lean On Me by Bill Withers and The Beatles’ In My Life. The friends we choose say a lot about us, and the school we choose reflects our identities as well. One of the highlights of last year’s climate survey for me was reading the many comments from parents about their deep sense of community at HKA. As a group, we value learning, but equally as much, we value learning together, both inside the classroom as well as through other learning and social activities. As the Head of School, I count myself fortunate to lead a school that places so much value on relationships.

When working together in a group, it’s important to keep a sense of perspective about one’s own identity, the identities of others, and the identity of the group. When I think about keeping a perspective on identity, I think about songs like Time by Pink Floyd, Blowin’ in the Wind by Bob Dylan and Imagine by John Lennon. These songs all speak to me about understanding where I fit into the big picture. At the end of the day, it’s not just our own perspectives that matter, but the perspectives of others as well. The IB profile refers to this as open-mindedness. In our mission statement, we talk about a rigorous international education. In my view, a rigorous mindset is one that not only sees others’ points of view but also wants to see those points of view, even when they are challenging or difficult.

The third section of my identity playlist is all about curiosity, songs like David Bowie’s Life on Mars? and Marvin Gaye’s What’s Going On? These songs ask great questions, and that’s something we encourage daily at HKA. HKA students know that asking good questions brings knowledge to life and ignites curiosity. Asking good questions sets us humans apart from the computers and handheld devices that we have become so reliant on. Google and Siri, for example, might be able to answer your questions, but you still have to know what to ask to get the information you want. The most effective way to develop wisdom: ask great questions.

Over the course of the days, months and years of our lives, we all must ask and answer many questions. As I think about my jukebox, and my identity, the question that matters most is, I think, What truly matters? What truly matters to me? For us as a community at HKA, what are the core values we embrace that define us as a school?

I think those core values are embedded in our mission statement:

Hong Kong Academy is a dynamic learning community that provides a rigorous international education characterized by mutual benefit and support. As an educational leader, HKA empowers learners to pursue pathways to individual excellence by fostering creativity, communication and problem-solving skills. HKA learners develop an evolving understanding of our changing world, leading them to engage in responsible action motivated by their interests, strengths and ongoing reflection. HKA is committed to maintaining a diverse, collaborative and captivating learning environment in which students become adaptable, confident and tolerant, equipping them for the future.

The Secondary School faculty described this year’s graduating class as authentically HKA and mission-aligned. I can’t think of higher praise for them or for any of us.
Think back, remember a time when you stood in front of a work of art and you were transfixed. Remember when you listened to a piece of music that transformed who you are. Remember when you were transported by a performance. Remember when your imagination was captured and you were filled with wonder. The experience of art that moves us sometimes has a magical quality that makes it feel as if it has just materialised from thin air. The museums and theatres and concert halls intensify our experience of that moment as if time stood still for just you, the audience, the witness. It is a beautiful experience.

What you do not see are the hours and even years of labour that went into that moment. It’s this distance from the process which elevates the experience, however it’s the very thing that mystifies us and challenges our own perception and our ability to see ourselves as artists.

I remember being in university, I was an art student, and going to a retrospective of Cezanne, part of the canon. Amongst the body of works, one piece captured my attention. It seemed more awkward than the rest and as I investigated closer, in my opinion, it wasn’t meeting the standard of the other works, it wasn’t resolved. I felt a wave of relief and connection wash over me. In that moment the mystique lifted and I felt myself part of a lineage of people working through the process of making. It was a transformational shift in my own development as an artist and understanding of what sustained effort looks like.

An integral part to developing a work of art are the awkward pieces that came before, the mistakes and the a-ha moments; the process. In my own school upbringing we celebrated the end product with exhibitions and awards, but how we got there was left a mystery to be sorted through on one’s own. What we were thinking or why wasn’t investigated. But in the development of who we are, it is the hours behind those moments of celebration that inform the pathway forward.

In the arts programme at HKA we emphasise the journey of the process. The journey of how students get to their final product is integral to how we understand the work they produce. It’s also how they understand their own development.

In the arts courses at HKA all students use a process journal, or as we affectionately call it, the PJ. The PJ is a place to explore ideas, unfold them like an onion skin, make mistakes, refine thinking and adjust. Students record their experiments, their challenges and successes and their decision making. They investigate the why and the how.

Recognising the process is at the centre of what we do.

It’s why when we hang student work in the hallways we also display pages from their PJ alongside. It’s why, when the middle school drama and music students showcase their work at the end of the trimester for their peers, they also talk about their decision-making and their intent. It’s why our discussions in class centre around challenges and problem-solving, and students talk with each other about their thinking midway through a project. Our focus is on the journey, and the process journal helps us along the way.

The next time you are at odds with how to talk to an artist about their work, maybe your student artist, ask them about how they got to that moment. Ask them about the process and you may learn a lot more than what reveals itself to you on the surface.
“Process journals allow you to show your learnings and development through projects.” – Eastwood Liu

"The PJ helped me keep track of my development and maturing as an artist and what my thought process was. It matures you as an artist, it makes you understand how you became the artist that you are. It makes me think more. I've realised how important it is and how personal it is. It's not just a whole bunch of writing. It's personal — it helps you through future artworks." — Laila Burgin, Grade 10

"The PJ helps me put my ideas into words. It's good for being able to explain my ideas to people that don't understand. It helps ground me. If I didn't put all my ideas down it would be too overwhelming — it helps my ideas stay organised and brings everything together. To challenge something we're confident in makes us vulnerable. The art process journal helps you assess yourself at a more personal level and makes you more comfortable in seeing your downfalls as well as your successes." — Chloe Dare, Grade 10

"Over the past year I have found my process journal to be more and more useful. Not only does it help my teacher understand the point and skills we used in projects, but also allows us as students to improve from self-reflection. You can evaluate which methods worked and which didn’t, and think about how to improve further. You can also explain what you have learnt and what techniques work best for you which you can use in the future. Personally, process journals are an essential part of creating art, and without them I would find it much harder to evaluate myself and improve." — Haley Camplin, Grade 10
Every year our Grade 5 students undertake the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme Exhibition. The exhibition is a culmination and a celebration of all the learning that has taken place in the entire Primary Years Programme for Grade 5 students and for all the people who have helped with the exhibition itself. It is also an opportunity for the students to showcase their understanding of the PYP.

A successful exhibition requires successful collaboration skills and this year, the Grade 5 teaching team used the Adaptive Schools Norms of Collaboration to structure this. For the past year, the faculty and staff at HKA have been focussing on using these norms in meetings, planning and professional development, and it is working well. But how did it go down with our 5th Graders? We spoke to them towards the end of the process to see how they were feeling about the Norms of Collaboration and how they felt this supported their work and the IB Learner Profile that they are so familiar with.

The Seven Norms of Collaboration are Pausing, Paraphrasing, Posing Questions, Putting Ideas on the Table, Providing Data, Paying Attention to Self and Others and Presuming Positive Intentions. How did our Grade 5 Exhibition Groups interpret these?

After talking with many of the Grade 5s as they prepared for exhibition, I learned that one was the most useful Norms for their process was presuming positive intent or, as the Animal Testing Group put it, simply “Being Positive”. As one member of that team put it, “When we first started working together we had a few arguments but our Mentor used the Norms language to help us work through it and now we try to use the language with each other.” Another group member said, “When we don’t agree, we can make sure that we talk things through and not fall out by remembering that we are all in the same group and we all want our exhibition to be really good.”

The Climate Change group reported: “When we are stuck on something and not working very well, we use placing ideas on the table. We just know that we can just say what we are thinking and everyone will listen.” “Yeah! We know that no one will laugh and that no one will interrupt.”

Any parent or teacher who has spent more than two minutes with a group of 10-12 year olds will appreciate how difficult it is for them to listen without interrupting! “It’s because we have to pay attention to others in the group. If you are interrupting, you are not really paying attention to the ideas,” shared the Plastic Pollution Group. “We stop and we listen ... but our mentors have to help us do that sometimes”.

Being able to generate lots of ideas was the key for the Healthy Living group. “The more ideas we shared, the more unique and crazy they were and it was the really crazy ones that we wanted to use.”
The Prejudice group was very clear about how pausing helped them to collaborate and communicate, stating,

“We had to learn to listen to each other and give each other time to say what they want to say.”

The Food Waste group made great connections to how this helps them develop the IB Learner Profile traits. “We need to be good communicators and listening is part of being a good communicator.”

One member of the Endangered Animals group took the connection between the Norms and the Learner Profile further by stating, “Usually, I don’t work with boys but I am in this group and I have learned to communicate differently. Working with all boys is really different from working with all girls.”

Paraphrasing is often the most difficult tool to use for adults, but the Children’s Rights group found it to be extremely helpful when they were working with children from a local school and communicating in English.

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The Deforestation group succinctly summed up what they were most looking forward to in the exhibition itself: “Knowing that you are helping is really rewarding and we can’t wait to share our knowledge with lots of people — old and young, new people and friends. Just sharing how people can help.”

Finally, what piece of advice do our now well-experienced Exhibitors have for their G4 successors? The consistent advice is to avoid just going with an issue that your friends are choosing but to follow your passion. As the Anti Shark Finning group said: “Make sure you are working on something you are really passionate about so that you won’t be bored. You will be much more motivated in your action. Oh! And make sure you attend the ASA Exhibition activity as a whole group so you can have more time to work together and share tasks.”

For detailed profiles on all the 2016 Grade 5 Exhibition Groups, visit http://g5exhibition2016.weebly.com. The Anti Shark Finning group chose an HKA Voices article as one of their Actions. To read the article, go to page 16.
A few years ago, I received a call from a parent seeking counsel on what she should be doing to make sure her daughter would get into a “good” university; how she should be preparing. Not recognising the student’s name, I asked what grade her daughter was in. Grade 1, came the reply.

My initial thoughts were, “At that age university should be the last thing on her mind. Encourage her to make mud pies, climb trees, build forts, use her imagination, make mistakes and move on, fall down and get back up again, play with other kids her age, play by herself, learn to fight her own battles, ask lots of questions, especially why? Give her the latitude to figure out who she is, what makes her tick, what she’s good at, and what makes her happy. This will take time and exploration. Only by knowing these things about herself will she get herself into a ‘good’ university.”

When an athlete and his or her coaches discover at an early age speed, agility, flexibility, and the quick reaction time to be a good goalkeeper, those innate abilities are nurtured, practised and encouraged so that he or she can become an even better goalkeeper. Swimmers spend hours in the pool perfecting their stroke, always seeking to shave a couple more seconds off their times. Most athletes start out with raw talent that they build upon, and it helps that they like the sport they are pursuing. Everyone in the world has their own talents and strengths; we just need to find them, and then make them even stronger.

When I start working with the Grade 9 students, one of the first things we do after a learning style inventory is the Clifton Strengths Explorer survey. This is a short survey that identifies each student’s top three strengths of the following: Achieving, Caring, Competing, Confidence, Dependability, Discoverer, Future Thinker, Organiser, Presence, and Relating. The students then learn about what each of these strengths really means and they take a look at how that is exhibited in their daily life. We go on to talk about how we can each nurture and celebrate our individual strengths. This is a fun lesson for me because I get to watch the students approach this survey somewhat grudgingly (‘what’s she making us do now?’), to reading the results and realising that “Hey, that is me — I am good at that, and no one had to teach me; it’s just part of me!”

Students complete these assessments in their Family Connection accounts. Family Connection is a comprehensive website that we use with students and parents in Grades 9 – 12 to make plans about universities and careers. The surveys and assessments in Family Connection provide students with some of the tools that will help them find what we call the ‘best fit’ for each individual student in terms of a university. Teachers and counsellors use the Naviance side of Family Connection to help support students in the classroom, work more effectively with individuals, and, inevitably, to write letters of recommendation in support of students’ university, job or internship applications.

Throughout high school and beyond, we regularly come back to those strengths — when we work collaboratively toward a project, it’s nice to know who can be relied upon for which part of the project, and to be able to acknowledge growth in one of our teammate’s greater strengths. We start exploring post-secondary options in terms of individual strengths. What area of studies and/or careers might enable a student to focus on the strength of Discoverer, for example? Tying those strengths in to not only academic aspects but vocational opportunities opens up a whole new realm of possibilities to students they had previously not considered.

Finally, we start to look for the ‘good’ universities for each individual student. A ‘good’ university is the one that nurtures a student’s strengths and provides the opportunity to use them throughout their educational career and into the future. When we embrace our strengths, and challenge them, we will all grow and learn from them.

So, my counsel to the concerned Grade 1 parent on getting into a good university? Let her find out who she really is, and where her strengths lie — by truly being encouraged to be a kid, those things will naturally happen. She will find her own unique path.
Collaboration is a common topic in schools and education journals, and for good reason. It is one of the key ingredients to an effective learning environment for teachers, students and parents alike. The professional development time we allocate every week at HKA helps us to ensure we collaborate with each other and have rich, deep conversations about our students and how they learn.

Our professional development Wednesdays are a time when teachers have the opportunity to meet across grade levels and subjects. Our students are learning to collaborate too. From block play to the Grade 4 play, students are collaborating with their peers. The Grade 5 Exhibition is the ultimate collaboration as students in small groups collectively select an issue and passion to inquire into. In preparation for the exhibition, students reflect on their years in the PYP and apply their understanding to an issue of importance to both themselves and the larger world. In doing so, students are moved to take action from their knowledge and passion around the issue. Action is one of the five essential elements in the PYP. It is also a key element of the inquiry cycle and can happen along the way as well as at the end of the inquiry as a result of new knowledge and understanding. The goal is to inspire and guide students to take responsible and sustainable action.

HKA teachers and administrators are taking collaboration one step further by participating in the Collaboration for Growth (CFG) consortium. The CFG is a select group of five international schools who are about good practice, current research and trends, who come together to share and learn from each other.

In addition to HKA, other schools in the consortium are International School of Manila, New International School of Thailand, Western Academy of Beijing, and the Yokohama International School. Our schools meet twice a year, bringing teachers and administrators together to discuss various initiatives in international education ranging from classroom environments to inquiry to student portfolios and assessment. Our collaborations take place on one of our campuses and allow us to visit the others’ classrooms and share successful strategies and innovations. Participants are able to see first-hand what learning looks like in the others’ schools.

This past April, HKA hosted a CFG symposium with the theme “Out of the Classroom and into the World”. As educators, we discussed how children bring the world into their learning and themselves out into the world to discover and apply new knowledge. We focused on the uses of documentation and data to empower students in their own learning. We looked closely at the importance of allowing students to have personal inquiries into their interests and to make connections with their world. Participants observed children creating, solving problems, refining their work, collaborating, thinking deeply and making decisions.

In addition to classroom observations, HKA presented a panel of students who had taken action as a result of class inquiry. Students spoke passionately about their learning and their school. A teacher panel presented on service learning where teachers discussed how they take learning out of the classroom and into the world, both in large and small scaled ways. Service learning and action often go hand in hand and are commonplace here at HKA as students are regularly coming forth with initiatives.

It was an inspiring two and half days that gave us renewed energy for the work we do with students, teachers and parents.

We look forward to future symposiums and continuing our role as educational leaders in the international community.
As part of the Secondary School programme, Grade 11 students who are not studying the IB pathway complete a Work Experience Placement (WEP). The purpose of this fortnight activity is to introduce students to a working environment in their preferred field or chosen career path. It also forms an important foundation for their Reflective Report. Students self-source a local, national or an international company for two weeks of industry-related work experience in Hong Kong. The placements of greatest value are genuine experiences which reflect the student’s interests, abilities, talents, personal strengths and possible career direction. The students’ activities, tasks and routines are recorded daily for identifying, analysing and creating links with criteria from CAS and the Reflective Report as well as considering the development of their own inter/intra personal skills, such as time and money management, identifying and prioritising workloads and communication skills.

This has been the second year of this initiative and once again it has proved its worth in terms of experiences for the students. Not only are they exposed to authentic working environments, their confidence levels increase as they interact with various people in a professional setting.

The transformations are amazing! It is always a positive experience to be a part of the project: facilitating placements, visiting students’ working environments and witnessing a huge confidence shift in the workplace. This is an integral part of the HKA Diploma Programme that allows students to identify and use their strengths vocationally. We are proud of the achievements that students have made so far — may this collaboration grow from strength to strength.

This is also an opportunity for the students to engage in personal inquiry, action and reflection on a specific ethical and cultural issue within the workplace experience. The students are required to identify, analyse, critically discuss and evaluate an ethical issue with their workplace supervisors, colleagues and teachers. The information is then used as primary research for their reflective project. When visiting the students on site they were able to discuss their ideas and findings in the context of the workplace.

A huge thanks to the HKA community who have offered their working environments and their mentorship to our students. To take part in this rewarding experience and help provide depth and diversity in workplace experiences available to students, please contact us to discuss involving your workplace in the WEP programme.

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Alex Widmer  
The Body Group  
HK, 2015-16

I had the amazing opportunity to work with the physiotherapists of The Body Group. The Body Group is a physiotherapy clinic designed to help people with chronic pain and those with body issues. I was tasked with aiding the therapists and helping around the clinic whenever they needed assistance. My biggest opportunity though, was being able to sit in with the physiotherapists and their clients to learn about the people I work with and how they work with their clients. I was able to watch massages, machine therapy and even acupuncture. It was an incredible experience since I was able to discover how the real world works and the level of responsibility needed to cope with it. I also learnt about physiotherapy as a whole and this made me even more interested in it. I considered multiple ethical and cultural issues related to privacy and culturally sensitive care for my reflective project whilst I worked at The Body Group.

Dante Xystus  
Canyu.do  
HK, 2015-16

From February 1st through February 14th, I had the opportunity to work with the CEO of a company called Canyudo. Canyudo is a local recruitment app that helps restaurants and bars hire someone on the fly if they need an extra worker.

While there, I was creating presentations about the app from a user perspective as well as being a source of user feedback from other people’s work. One of the coolest things in my opinion that happened was that I gave suggestions on how to make the app better, and they were added! This included: what some notifications will say, how the app will look visually, and even what countries they should test out this app in!

The ethical issue that I was looking into while I was there was the concept of zero-hour contracts. This is because I noticed many similarities between these contracts and the app in how they work.

Overall, this was a good experience for me because it allowed me to understand how it feels to be in this kind of working environment.

Ian Sibal  
American Civil Services, US Consulate  
HK 2014-15

Throughout my work experience in the American Civil Services Unit, I learned a lot of specific skills in regards to immigration, especially in the United States. It was a very new experience for me as I have never worked in an office-like environment. Every day I learned something new. I had to repeat a lot of these tasks, however, and I found myself to be very efficient in performing these tasks nearing the end of my work experience. My organisational skills and collaboration skills grew stronger and I became much more responsible with the completion of my tasks in a timely manner in regards to deadlines. Overall, I think it was a very useful, interesting experience in which I learned a lot of new things about my job and have improved certain skills that can be applied into my academic career.
Amira Burgin  
Belk, USA 2014-15

Belk is the nation’s largest privately owned mainline department store company with more than 300 fashion department stores. Established in 1888 by William Belk, it is still managed by family members. I was fortunate to get the experience to work with Private brands for two weeks.

The experience was like no other. It allowed me to grow and understand life beyond school and what the workforce is really like. Private brands is the most important piece of Belk’s industry. This section demands one to be creative, open-minded and collaborative. I received hands-on interaction with designing textiles for the new clothing line that Belk will introduce later in the year. This process involved finding exact colour swatches, reviewing up-to-date trends and creative thinking. As a designer I was required to visually express my thoughts by creating a mood board. By using colour and different feelings along with fabrics, I was able demonstrate ideas for my designs. My team were open to my suggestions and allowed me to pitch these in team meetings. As a junior, I am currently looking into majors and career paths and this is certainly a path that I wish to pursue.

Nathan Ahn  
The Asia Pacific Soccer Schools  
HK, 2015-16

Over the course of first semester in 11th grade, I had the fortunate opportunity to work with Dave, Peter and almost all the coaches from Asia Pacific Soccer Schools. It was a very positive experience for me as I was able to see what it took to be employed as a full-time coach in a competitive market such as a football education programme in Hong Kong. It was an opportunity to communicate with my fellow employees and talk to adults with more life experience and to manage my time and balance work with coaching, which I managed to do. This work experience made me reflect critically about a company that I was working for for only two weeks. I observed the coaches’ teaching methods and used some of these techniques when teaching a group of students. I became increasingly confident in teaching students of a variety of ages. I was involved in the training sessions and office work. I considered the boundless opportunities to investigate the ethical and cultural issues regarding my reflective project. I looked at these aspects critically while doing office work and coaching students.

Ditte Juel  
HKA Sustainability  
HK, 2015-16

Over the course of my final year, I had the opportunity to work closely with Ms. Heather Linhardt, HKA’s Commercial Development and Sustainability Manager at HKA for my internship. I was tasked with investigating alternative methods to enhance sustainability at HKA through responsible development, implementation and management of initiatives that generate socially, economically and environmentally sustainable benefits. It was an incredible experience for me as I was given so much responsibility for my own learning as well as learning how to communicate effectively with adults in a work environment and effectively manage my time. The internship made it necessary for me to think critically about data given to me and all the research I conducted into sustainability. I considered numerous ethical and cultural issues related to sustainability for my reflective project where I conducted quality control at the HKA shop.

“I considered the boundless opportunities to investigate the ethical and cultural issues regarding my reflective project.” — Nathan Ahn
Hannah Montoya
Catherine’s Puppies
HK, 2015-16

For my Reflective project, I decided on the ethical issue of canine welfare in Hong Kong. My main focus was to discover, on a personal level, the depths of this issue. I decided that working closely with an animal shelter would allow me to discover relevant information regarding this, as well as it being a very enjoyable experience for myself.

I came into contact with multiple animal shelters and finally decided on Catherine’s Puppies, a local shelter in Ho Chung with many dogs in need of a home. While I was there, I undertook maintenance tasks such as making sure the area stayed clean, making sure the dogs were all well groomed, well fed/hydrated and exercised, and monitoring the facility to ensure no dogs were damaging the area. Supervision was also another one of my tasks, I had to ensure no dogs escaped enclosed areas or fought with one another. After just a short two weeks I was left with a very memorable and enlightening experience.

I loved every bit of Catherine’s Puppies — being with the dogs and being outdoors was something so enjoyable that it completely eliminated the ‘work’ factor. It was hard realising what some of the dogs had gone through and the negative impacts that it had on their lives, but I know that with love, care and a proper home, they can be happy. I learnt so much in such a small amount of time and would not hesitate to go back or recommend it to anyone.

Benjamin Cox
Deutsche Bank, HK 2014-15

My work placement was at the Deutsche Bank Hong Kong Head Office in ICC Kowloon. Deutsche Bank is a leading client-centric global universal bank. The German Bank established its Asia-Pacific presence in Hong Kong in 1958. The compliance department is huge. It is broken down into various smaller departments that focus on legal compliance. There’s a lot of reading involved, and I’ve had a few small cases to make decisions on which I’ve enjoyed.

I would say that my confidence has improved, as I have had to speak to people in a more professional environment. I have attended meetings with my colleagues and discussed issues such as the Due Diligence Review Committee. This is good to do because it gives you a better insight into what you think you might like to do. I would really recommend this opportunity to anyone. You really do find out what it’s like to be tired at the end of the day – I now have more empathy for my mum!

“My organisational skills and collaboration skills grew stronger and I became much more responsible with the completion of my tasks in a timely manner in regards to deadlines.” — Ian Sibal
“Writing a tune is like sculpting. You get four or five notes, you take one out and move one around, and you do a bit more and eventually, as the sculptor says, ‘in that rock there is a statue, we have to go find it.’” — John Williams

As composer John Williams or any sculptor will tell you, the creative process takes time and patience. On a parallel, so does getting to know your students. Beyond students, it takes time to get to know parents and establish strong connections with the community itself. And along with creativity, we also must have an inquiring mind for knowledge, including a knowledge of music. With that creativity and knowledge hand in hand, we can really begin to make music.

Since my arrival as the Secondary School music teacher just under two years ago, it has been truly astonishing to discover our students’ uniqueness and diversity as well as their enthusiasm for music. Starting in August 2015, music returned to the MYP Arts curriculum, now exposing all grade 6-8 students to learning music at a whole new level. This has been an exciting period of growth!

Building strong musical opportunities and striving to give students a thorough exposure to music is a real passion of mine, and I look forward to growing our programme over time. I am equally excited about building an inclusive curriculum, while striving for excellence in providing a rigorous Secondary music programme. In the future, we hope to see more extended learning opportunities for advancing musicians in support of their musical development through the MYP and into the Diploma Programme.

In the 2015-16 academic year alone, we successfully began a number of student music ensembles that reflect the growth and sophistication of our music programme, including:

- HKA Secondary Orchestra and Choir
- Secondary Show Band
- Grade 9 Jazz Band
- Grade 10 Student Jam Band
- HKA String Trio
- HKA String Quintet
- HKA Samba Band

Music was also integral to numerous events and performances throughout the year, including:

- Autumn Coffee House
- Alice In Wonderland School Production
- Winter Music Showcase
- Spring Coffee House
- HKA Music Recital
- Grade 12 Graduation Ceremony
- End of Year Assembly

It was also fantastic to have also worked with a number of parent volunteers at the school. Both Ms. Deanna Xystus and Ms. Kiri Lo contributed their time and musical talents considerably, participating in the Student Show Band for the Secondary School’s production of Alice In Wonderland. With their strong musical backgrounds, Deanna and Kiri took the concept of parents as partners to a new level and became ‘Parents As Musical Partners.’ Not only did their participation benefit the overall musical experience, they also gave students a firsthand experience of lifelong musicianship and the understanding of inclusivity that is at the heart of HKA. Parents were also partners this year in the inauguration of our recital programme. Mesh Tennakoon and Maria Lopes helped organise Hong Kong Academy’s first ever Music Recital.

With increasing involvement from parents, the music programme has been able to grow and become an even more diverse and exciting musical part of the community at HKA.
In addition to knowing who we are as a musical community, it’s also important to remember where we are. Sai Kung is a unique part of Hong Kong, with its beautiful terrain and coastal areas, and what lies at the heart of that is its community of people. Building a strong community connection is important to all of us at HKA, and music can be a part of that. In mid-2015 I learned that a young, local community member was interested in taking an internship in the HKA music department. I didn’t hesitate! Max Linnett, a local musician and student, was an integral part in supporting and collaborating in the music department in 2015-16. The opportunity to intern at HKA provided him with first-hand work experience as well as a key music assistant’s role, both in the classroom and beyond, not to mention the experience of working alongside other professional staff members during after-school activities, shows and music events. I wish Max every success as he moves on to other musical opportunities.

In reflection, thinking of Hong Kong Academy as our statue, then the students, teachers, parents and community are the sculptors. And through the art of music, we can truly begin to build new generations of inquiring minds and creative thinkers who are truly passionate and open-minded about the language and joy of music and what it has to offer to us all. Generations who can sculpt, mold and shape our school into an even more exciting place to be, to be seen and, of course, to be heard.

Hong Kong Academy’s Global Issues Network team is exactly that, a network of students that work together in hopes of lending relief to those in need. These past few months, our focus has been centred around refugees. There are thousands of refugees seeking asylum from their home country in Hong Kong. These refugees are not able to be employed and only receive a certain allotment of money for food every month. They may be protected in Hong Kong, however the government does not supply them with the money needed to live in this bustling city. As a team, we’ve been able to work alongside refugee organisations in Hong Kong and give our time and support to refugee children. The GIN team also invited refugees to speak at a Secondary School assembly. When one student asked, “What do you want most from the people and government of Hong Kong?” The answer received was completely unexpected. Their answer was respect.

These refugees are living with the bare minimum, yet only want to feel equal to every other person in Hong Kong. Not only is it our duty to show them that respect, but it’s also our chance to remind them that Hong Kong is their new home. We as a team have so much more to do for these people, and hope to continue to raise support and awareness in the HKA community.
We are FINished with Fins
Help us spread awareness about shark finning!

BY LUKE, JACINTA, JULIANA, AND STELLA
GRADE 5 STUDENTS

Shark fin soup is a prized delicacy in many parts of Asia ... but shark fin is only in the soup for the texture of it.

100 million is a huge number any way you look at it. But when it represents the number of sharks being killed each year, that impact becomes a lot stronger. Every day, sharks are being pulled out of the ocean. They have their fins sawn off by ruthless humans. This is a long and inhumane process, but it does not kill the shark. Instead, the shark is thrown back into the ocean, where it drowns, unable to swim ... the shark dies a slow, horrible death.

For our exhibition topic, we are taking action to prevent the horrible slaughter of sharks. We are attempting to stop the consumption of shark fins in Hong Kong.

One of our first steps was to contact Ms. Kitty about the restaurant that HKA goes to for the annual Lunar New Year staff lunch. Hung Kee Seafood serves eight different shark fin dishes. Therefore, the anti shark finning exhibition group has been hunting for shark fin free restaurants. Tung Kee and Chung Kee are big enough to house the staff of HKA, but may not have been telling the truth about not serving shark fins. Sing Kee has three floors but looks to be quite expensive. Many others were too small. Please make the effort to eat at shark fin free restaurants — your money may be going towards the finning of sharks.

After that, we organised a bake sale and, thanks to the generosity of the Upper Primary students, raised over $2,800! That money was put towards adopting a hammerhead shark and donating to an organisation called Hong Kong Shark Foundation, which strives to stop Hong Kong restaurants from serving shark fin soup.
Ralph Waldo Emerson once said:

“All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.”

Considering the often quoted statistics about how much we all hate public speaking, this is a comforting thought. The idea that we can all become skilled speakers is the core belief of the Hong Kong Schools Debating and Public Speaking Community (HKSDPSC), a local non-profit organisation with which Hong Kong Academy has been affiliated for the last three years. With an incremental approach to the teaching of public speaking and debate, the organisation strives to give students at both local and international schools the opportunity to practice their speaking skills through workshops, community outreach, and tournaments. They also select, organise, and train the HK national teams to send to international public speaking and debate competitions. By giving all students in Hong Kong opportunities to develop their skills within their own schools, as well as at inter-school and international competitions, HKSDPSC hopes to build articulate global citizens.

In August of 2013, I took on the task of coaching the HKA debate team, and it was a simple choice to pursue our school’s relationships with HKSDPSC. Growing as a speaker is not an easy task, but the students at HKA who have involved themselves in the activity continue to improve by leaps and bounds. In relation to her own experience, Anna Loretan (Grade 9) explained, “When you first start out you are really in awe of the more senior debaters, but as you learn more you realize that they aren’t perfect either.” This realisation has given her more confidence in her own developing skills and encouraged her to keep practising.

To put their skills to the test this year, the HKA senior level debaters/public speakers have now started teaching the junior level students. “When we were coaching the younger class I could see that that was the way we were in, like, Grade 7, and that was cool,” commented Graham Campbell (Grade 9). In a similar vein, when describing his experience judging for a junior level inter-school event, Alex Pringgoharjono (Grade 9) added, “When you are judging people you realise how much you have really learned.”

Of course, it isn’t only the students who have learned a great deal by preparing for HKSDPSC events. Within this network of Hong Kong schools, I have found a community of coaches who are happy to discuss training methods and help me to grow as an educator. At tournaments, as the kids nervously prepare for impromptu debates, coaches chat about resources and techniques over our stale coffee. Additionally, these last three years I have had the pleasure of being accepted as a volunteer coach to help prepare the national team for the annual World Individuals Debating and Public Speaking Championships. Working with the other volunteer coaches, who are experienced teachers from other schools as well as university level debaters, consistently exposes me to new ideas and new ways to approach teaching public speaking.

In the 2015/16 school year, HKA participated in four debate and public speaking competitions here in Hong Kong as well as hosting the Junior Individuals Public Speaking Championship in May. With the 2016/17 school year, we look forward to more opportunities for HKA students to get involved in public speaking and debate both within HKA and with our wider community.
“The 2015-2016 school year came and went so quickly, and what a year it was for Dragonflies on the sporting front!”

We saw fantastic results across multiple competitions in Volleyball, Basketball, Football, Netball, Swimming, Cross Country and Track and Field.

But it’s important to keep in mind that while celebrating our wins and successes this year, we must also reflect on something of equal, if not more, value than simply playing to the best of our ability, and that is sportsmanship. Sportsmanship, a tradition that involves playing clean and handling both victory and defeat with grace, style and dignity, has always been a key focus in sport at HKA. We define sportsmanship as: playing fair, following the rules of the game, respecting the judgment of referees and officials and treating opponents with respect.

Good sportsmanship means not having a “win at any cost” attitude. Often you will find that athletes who don’t have a “win at any cost” attitude are more likely to talk about how much they love their sport and about how much personal satisfaction and enjoyment they get from participating.

We have been very lucky at HKA to have benefited from the loyal support of parents and friends of those students in sporting teams. To have your loved ones cheering on the sidelines is often all that is required for students to overcome their fears and perform to the best of their abilities.

But sportsmanship and fair play isn’t just reserved for the people on the field. Parents and spectators also need to be aware of how they behave during competition. Sportsmanship is a style and an attitude, and it can have a positive influence on everyone around you. Sometimes parents and coaches can put too much pressure on athletes, emphasising winning at all costs. So although it’s great to be a champion, it’s even better to enjoy the process and have fun trying to reach the top.

Sportsmanship doesn’t always just relate to the sporting field. Mastering good sportsmanship and fairness on the field often results in that positive attitude carrying over into other areas of life, making us better, fairer, more grounded members of the community.

Participation, fun, forming new and positive relationships and living a healthy lifestyle are all key components and why joining a sporting team at HKA is a great option. With this in mind, I invite all parents to encourage their children to get involved in the new school year.
This past May I had the unique opportunity to collaborate with HKA in making promotional videos. Three years ago, at the old Kennedy Town campus, I graduated from HKA. Returning to the much more polished Sai Kung campus, I was struck by how little the school had changed...

This is by no means a bad thing; quite the opposite actually!

The material I was creating gave me the chance to talk to many of HKA’s dedicated teachers and staff, those I knew from before and those I didn’t, and together we were able to reflect on the school’s development.

This is what we discovered:

You don’t come to HKA for the facilities or the curriculum — you can get that at other schools. You come to HKA for the people. The staff, the students, and the parents. It is a nurturing community, and in such a positive atmosphere learning is inevitable!

The teachers I talked to are happy. They feel connected to everyone involved in the community, and they stay at school because they feel they are still learning and growing; just like the students. Some felt that the community has changed them after just a couple of years, and others still feel that way after being at the school from its founding ...

These conversations led me to the discovery that you should consider yourself lucky working in a community like HKA. I know I would.
I always knew I had a good thing going on at HKA. The school helped to form who I am as a teacher, looking back to when I was 21 and fresh out of university. I started my first teaching job here as a co-teacher. Back then, I was hopeful about joining HKA because I believed in the mission and philosophy, and I very much supported the inclusion of learning needs. We offered something that I didn’t feel, at the time, other schools in Hong Kong were able to offer. We had begun our journey to becoming an IB school, and inquiry based learning was definitely a style of teaching that worked for me. I left, for the first time, to pursue my postgraduate teaching degree in Australia, already having in mind that I would like to return to HKA in a lead teaching role.

I did just that 3 years later. I felt like I had found a school where above all else I was happy. I loved the community feel, the innovative learning and engagement that took place for students and teachers. Not only did my confidence as a teacher grow, but so too did my confidence in the school itself as it continued to flourish under new leadership.

Long story short, I left one more time when my then-boyfriend and I moved to London. Despite his best efforts to keep us there (including a marriage proposal), two years later we found ourselves returning to Hong Kong, and rather enthusiastically, back to HKA.

This time around I had a little more to compare it to. Having had the opportunity to see what life was like beyond the walls of HKA, I had the advantage of seeing, even more than ever before, what a special place Hong Kong Academy is. It’s not just the “job”, it’s the children, the parents, the colleagues, the inclusive environment, the facilities, the overall feel of being somewhere where you want to be, and where you see yourself growing as a professional and as an individual.

My respect for the leadership at the school has continued to grow. I cannot stress how important it is to feel valued at work and to respect who you work for — this is definitely not something that I take for granted. I can safely say that HKA is “the school” for me. I belong here. Who knows what will happen in the future, but right now, this is exactly where I want to be and I wouldn’t change it. Having a child this year made me think even more about how lucky I am to be working somewhere where I trust my colleagues and our community enough to want my child to join this school, above all other options. I feel that this gesture speaks volumes towards how highly I regard HKA.

Who wouldn’t want to come back?
Why I Came Back...

Interviewed by

Isabelle and Ravi, Grade 5 Students

Nurse Sam is a real hero behind the scenes: she helps the hurt and makes others feel better. She makes sure that everyone is happy and well. We interviewed Nurse Sam and found out some mind-blowing facts. For example, she is a pussy cat in disguise. Hope you enjoy the interview that we put together!

Are you a vegetarian?

Nurse Sam - “How did you know? Actually, I am not about any animal rights. I just don’t like it since I was a little girl. I like fish.”

What was the worst scenario you have faced?

Nurse Sam - “I think it was when someone went into anaphylactic shock. It was not because of nuts, but medicine. They had to be given an epipen and they had to go to hospital. The patient was allergic to the medicine.”

Izzy - “So it was a shock to you and him!”

Nurse Sam - “Yes, it was!”

What is it like being a nurse?

Nurse Sam - “I enjoy my job. I get to meet lots of people. I get lots of job satisfaction. People come to me and they get better.”

Would you rather work in a school or hospital?

Nurse Sam - “That is a hard question because they are so different. Schools are a lot more relaxed.”

What was/were your previous job/s?

Nurse Sam - “I’ve worked all over the world: America, Bermuda, England and now Hong Kong. My last job was an advanced practitioner, a fancy word for head nurse. I was a non-medical prescriber. I could diagnose patients. I thought I was going to retire in Hong Kong and that lasted three months. I need to work.”

When you grew up what did you want to be? Do you have a dream job?

Nurse Sam - “Lots of things, it changed all the time. I love animals, a vet. I love travel, I wanted to be an air hostess.”

Do you support any football clubs?

Nurse Sam - “How did you know? My favorite team is Burnley football club. They’re in the premiership!”

Ravi - “My favourite football club is Derby County.”

Izzy - “My favourite is Manchester United.”

Do you like Hong Kong and HKA?

Nurse Sam - “Yes, I do! It is completely opposite from where I live. You could walk for miles and never see anyone. Here there are lots of people. HKA is my favourite school.”

Do you know other schools?

Nurse Sam - “I do, I know quite a few. I can’t put my finger on it, but I remember when I came here for the first time I got a nice feeling and this is a nice school.”

If you were a superhero who would you be?

Nurse Sam - “I would be ... let me think ... I will go with Wonder Woman.”

Ravi - “I want to be the Flash.”

Izzy - “I would want to be a villain because I want to cause mischief.”

Thank you for letting us interview you.

This was awesome! Especially since we got to ask the dinosaur question.
HKA welcomed the Year of the Monkey with performances from the Primary School. Secondary students also participated in a variety of activities including traditional Chinese calligraphy and painting.

A beautiful day for students competing and participating in a variety of coordinated skill games.

Students made and sold products and services as they learned about commerce.

Friendly and fierce competition marked the events, with Pandas winning the day.

Reading was practised and celebrated with visiting authors, the Reading Chair, Stop Drop and Read and dressing up as your favourite literary character.

Secondary Students rose to their various challenges during their LOTC experiences.

Grade 2 shared their inquiries and learnings with peers and parents alike.

Extended Learning Programmes ELP's over the holidays continue to expand with athletic, artistic and academic options for students to enjoy.

Nature Works Environmental Leadership Training Returns to HKA HKA held Nature Works on campus for a second year, with 80 young environmental leaders from more than 28 schools.
11 APRIL
CASE Schools Conference

Communications and advancement professionals from all over the Asia Pacific region gathered at HKA to share ideas and learn from one another.

15 APRIL
PS and SS: HKA Music Recital
HKA held its first ever formal music recital featuring accomplished performances from all ages.

7 MAY
Rocktail Party

Parents bowled for the goal in support of the school’s inaugural annual fund campaign. More than 80% of families supported the school with countless volunteer hours and exceeded the goal of HKD1M in contributions.

12 - 13 MAY
PS: Grade 5 Exhibition

Grade 5 students worked in collaborative groups and shared their research, reflections and action on global issues with the HKA community.

23 - 26 MAY
PS: Art Exhibition

The Primary halls were a visual delight as each student displayed their artwork.

24 MAY
PS: Primary School Concerts

Early Childhood and Primary School students brought smiles to many faces with their musical performances.

27 MAY
PS: Hot Cocoa House

The Cocoa House tradition stayed strong in 2016 with exceptional acts of all types.

1 JUNE
PS: Service Learning Fair

Students took part in activities to support local charities and to meet representatives from these organisations.

2 JUNE
SS: Graduation - Class of 2016

HKA’s 5th graduating class took to the stage for commencement before a theatre full of family and friends.

7 JUNE
Parent Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

8 JUNE
SS: Renaissance Festival & PS Portfolio Day

Marking its third year, the SS Renaissance Festival is now an anticipated highlight of the year.
Happenings

LOOKING FORWARD

DON’T MISS...

BACK TO SCHOOL COFFEE
19 AUGUST - 8:10 AM at the Theatre
Come greet old friends, make new ones, and learn about volunteer opportunities at HKA for 2016-17!

SECONDARY SCHOOL
HIGHER EDUCATION NIGHTS
17-25 AUGUST - 6:30 PM
G9-12 parents and students alike begin the semester with information evenings about preparing for life after HKA. Led by College and University Counsellor Erin Nicolls, these evenings introduce parents to HKA’s pathways for Secondary School students and highlight various post-secondary options around the world, including university, gap year, and for some students, required national service in their home countries.

MARK ANDERSON PARENT EVENT
24 AUGUST - 6:30 PM
Apple Distinguished Educator, Google Certified Innovator, and Microsoft Certified Educator Mark Anderson comes to campus to talk about online health and well-being for students.

DAN FEIGELSON PARENT EVENT
20 OCTOBER - 6:30 PM
Literacy specialist Dan Feigelson will be at HKA to work with faculty and talk with parents at an evening event.

HKA GOLF TOURNAMENT
6 DECEMBER
Come join the fun for HKA's 4th Annual Golf Tournament at the Clearwater Bay Club.

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

16 AUGUST - TUESDAY
First Day of School - Half Day

17 AUGUST - WEDNESDAY
Second Day of School - Full Day
G12 Higher Education Night

18 AUGUST
SS: Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC) Information Evening

19 AUGUST
Back to School Coffee

22 AUGUST
G11 Higher Education Night

23 AUGUST
G10 Higher Education Night

24 AUGUST
Mark Anderson Parent Event

25 AUGUST
G9 Higher Education Night

1 SEPTEMBER
PS: Back to School Night

8 SEPTEMBER
Grade 6-8 Back to School Night

14 SEPTEMBER
Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration

15 SEPTEMBER
Grade 9-12 Back to School Night

16 SEPTEMBER
Mid-Autumn Festival Public Holiday - School Closed

19 - 23 SEPTEMBER
SS: Grade 6-8 LOTC

4 - 7 OCTOBER
Grade 5 Camp

5 - 7 OCTOBER
Grade 4 Camp

10 - 14 OCTOBER
Autumn Holiday - School Closed

17 OCTOBER
Classes Resume

20 OCTOBER
Dan Feigelson Parent Event

28 OCTOBER
SS: Coffee House

2 NOVEMBER
PS: Parent Teacher Student Conferences (PTSC) - no PS classes. SS: Regularly scheduled classes and PTSC from 3:30 to 7:30.

3 NOVEMBER
PS and SS: PTSC - no PS or SS classes.

4 NOVEMBER
PS and SS: Dinner and Movie Night

4 - 9 DECEMBER
SS: Grade 9-12 LOTC

6 DECEMBER
4th Annual Golf Tournament

16 DECEMBER
Last Day of School prior to Winter Holiday

19 DECEMBER - 6 JANUARY
Winter Holiday - School Closed

19 - 23 DECEMBER
HKA Extended Learning Programmes

3 - 6 JANUARY
HKA Extended Learning Programmes

9 JANUARY
Classes Resume

25 JANUARY
Lunar New Year Assembly

30 JANUARY - 3 FEBRUARY
Lunar New Year Holiday - School Closed

6 FEBRUARY
Classes Resume
CARLY SHANAHAN BUNTIN returned to HKA in August 2014 and is on her third “tour” at HKA, this time as a Kindergarten teacher. Originally from the UK, Carly grew up in Hong Kong and went through the international school system here. She considers Hong Kong to be home and is glad to be back.

AARON COOK rejoins HKA’s Physical Education department full-time this year as a Secondary School PE teacher. Previously, he had served as HKA’s Athletics Director since 2013, overseeing the school’s inter-school and conference athletics teams and managing the After School Activities Programme. Aaron has a bachelor’s degree in Human Movement from the University of Tasmania.

STEPHEN DARE is the Head of School at Hong Kong Academy. Before coming to HKA, Stephen was an administrator at the International School of Manila. In 2016, he began his doctoral studies in education and will be a Klingenstein Fellow at Columbia University in 2017.

NICOLA DIXON teaches Design in the Secondary School and coordinates the Grade 11 work experience program. Previously, she taught Design in Baku, Azerbaijan and the UK. Nicola also puts her prior experience in the fashion and make-up industry to good use working behind the scenes to support HKA theatrical productions and after school programmes.

LEE HOLT is the Secondary School music teacher at Hong Kong Academy, joining in January 2015. He has a degree in band musicianship from the University of Salford, England and was awarded the Elgar Howarth Composition Shield for most outstanding composition in 2000. He then pursued a path to teaching, training at the Manchester Metropolitan University, after which he began teaching music in a UK public school. From 2004 his international interests brought him overseas, teaching in Italy, Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong.

LAUREN HOUGHTON is a parent at HKA and has served on the Board of Trustees since 2014. From 2014-16 she chaired the Advancement Committee and helped launch the school’s first Annual Fund Campaign.

VIRGINIA HUNT is in her tenth year at Hong Kong Academy and has enjoyed all three campuses during her role as Primary School Principal. Prior to Hong Kong Academy, Virginia opened the Internationale Schule Frankfurt Rhein-Mein and was part of the build for Dubai National School and the design premise of the American School Dubai, Al Barsha campus.

ISABELLE AND RAVI from Grade 5 interviewed HKA’s new nurse Samantha Hall for this issue’s behind the scenes hero feature.

LUKE, JACINTA, JULIANA AND STELLA from Grade 5 chose the issue of shark finning for their Grade 5 Exhibition Project. For their action component, they contributed an article for hkaVoices.

MIRKO JECK Class of 2013 currently studies film at Lasalle College of the Arts in Singapore. Mirko returned to HKA for several weeks in the spring of 2016 to work with the Student Media Team to produce video content for the HKA website.

ROBIN MULLER has taught Secondary School art at HKA since 2012. She is a graduate of The Rhode Island School of Design and brought with her 14 years of teaching experience both in the United States and abroad. She frequently reminds her students that art is more about hard work and practice than “innate” talent and challenges them to explore their world through a wide variety of media.

ERIN NICOLLS has been the University Counsellor at HKA since 2014 after working at Suzhou Singapore International School in China and, before that, at the American International School in Cairo, Egypt. Prior to coming overseas, she taught in Juneau, Alaska. Erin completed her BA in French Secondary Education at Augsburg College (Minnesota) and a Master’s in International Education from the School for International Training in Vermont. She also holds a graduate certificate in College Admissions Counselling from UCLA. She is an active member of the International Association for College Admissions Counselors.

ANGELA REILLY is the Assistant Director of Institutional Advancement (Admissions and Enrolment) at HKA. She has worked in UK and international schools in various capacities for over 15 years, and HKA is her third International Baccalaureate school. With experience in both the PYP and MYP structure, she values the emphasis that it places on nurturing children’s natural inquiry and developing research skills. She feels teaching in an inquiry-based school, although challenging, is intensely rewarding.

KATHERINE ROUNDY is in her fifth year at HKA, teaching English, Humanities, and Theory of Knowledge. With her passion for extending learning outside the classroom, she spends many afternoons and weekends working with students in the debate and public speaking program. Additionally, she is a head coach for the Hong Kong national team which competes at the World Individuals Debating and Public Speaking Championship. Katherine studied at The Evergreen State College in the US for her BA and Master’s in Teaching and in the summer 2016 began studying for her doctorate in education through the University of Bath.

EMILY RUPPER Class of 2019 took on leadership roles for many activities while at HKA, including the Global Issues Network. In the summer of 2016, Emily and her family returned to the United States.
Reflective

“I finally finished grade 10. If you give effort and energy, you can have a good result in your grades.”
— Julia, Grade 10

REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.