

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF BOSTON



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021





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THROUGH THE STORM

FOREWORD FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

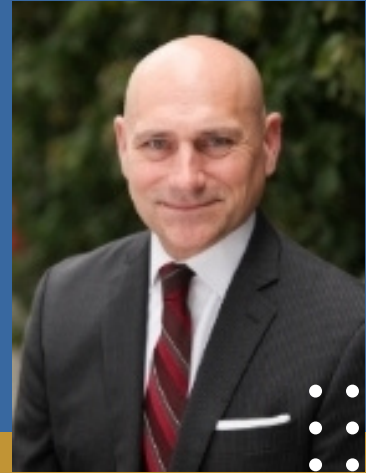
Difficult times test the character of any institution, and our school is no exception. For ISB, the academic year 2020–2021 was indeed a test, but one which we thankfully passed with distinction. In the midst of a pandemic that left most schools physically shuttered, we kept our doors open throughout.

In the pages that follow, we lay out some of the pieces that went into this massive effort—the resourcefulness of our faculty and staff, the character of our student body, and the resolve of our parents and guardians. As we approach our 60th anniversary, our community continues to reveal itself in amazing ways: its determination, its diversity, and its pride. I hope that this report captures at least some of this spirit.

Moreover, we take the opportunity to raise our heads above the tree line and look forward once again to where our unique institution is headed. As we emerge out of the worst of the pandemic, the value of an international perspective has perhaps never been clearer.

As always, thank you for entrusting your children's learning with us. I don't believe there is a greater privilege than working together in nurturing the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and doers.

Sincerely,
Richard Ulfers



Richard Ulfers



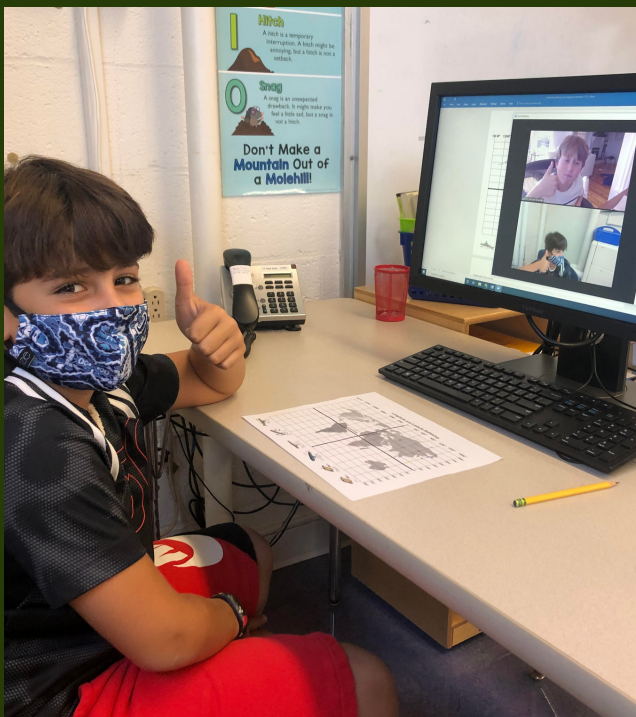
PROTECTING THE MISSION

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD



As a beacon for international education, our school has much to take pride in. From the excellence of our academic program to the diversity of our wonderful community, we have many reasons for celebration.

It is in this spirit that I am reminded daily of the Board's responsibility for protecting our school's mission: of cultivating excellence through bilingual and multicultural learning. This mission has defined ISB since its inception almost six decades ago. And so when a once-in-a-century pandemic tears across the globe with unprecedented effects, the Board's duty of care to the mission becomes more important than ever.



In uncertain times, it's important to think practically—then act decisively. Throughout the pandemic, the Board's overriding priority has been to help the school protect the health and safety of the ISB community while safeguarding our core mission.

Needless to say, our faculty and staff responded brilliantly to this challenge from the outset. As I look back over the 2020-21 academic year, I recognize the immense efforts required of our educators in implementing new protocols and providing instruction in novel forms. To all of you who made this happen and who continue to step up every day as we navigate a pandemic that has marked a generation, I would like to extend my sincere thanks.

I would also like to take a moment to convey my deep gratitude to our school community—to our parents, guardians, extended and former families, grandparents; to our business partners, the wider school network, the French consulate and French ministry of national education; and to all of our generous donors. The manner in which our entire community rallied to provide support, share knowledge, and get involved gives me great confidence for our school's future as we continue to implement our ambitious strategic plan.

Similarly, our students—from TPS through senior year—deserve huge commendation. Growing up comes with challenges at the best of times, and never more so during a period of extreme stress. Young minds need the interaction of their peers, their teachers, and their mentors to keep them grounded and growing. During the pandemic and despite the circumstances, ISB students have shown incredible resilience and good spirit while demonstrating deep care for the welfare of others. Each of you represents a future we can be proud of.

As ISB approaches its 60th anniversary, I'm struck by what an amazing journey our school has already undertaken. Looking ahead to the next 60 years, please know that we—as your Board of Trustees—could not be more committed to further advancing ISB's mission and vision. As our school continues to build its status as an international leader in bilingual and multilingual education, I wish to give a heartfelt thanks to each of you who is helping every day to further our mission.

Sincerely,
Florence Bourgeois



Florence Bourgeois



A BILINGUAL, MULTICULTURAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The International School of Boston (ISB) is an independent, non-profit, PK-12, French-English bilingual and international school located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, one of the most vibrant metropolitan areas in the United States. As a world-class, accredited academic institution, ISB places the development of the bilingual brain at the heart of its mission. ISB students graduate with an American high school diploma and choose between two internationally renowned diplomas, the French or the International Baccalaureate, giving them the opportunity to thrive at leading universities in the United States, France, and around the world. Offering a rich experience with rigorous programs, ISB prepares its students for a lifetime of learning and service.

WORLD LANGUAGE FEST

DIFFERENT TOGETHER

At ISB, multilingualism and multiculturalism is at the heart of our mission. No surprise then that our school embraced the 2021 World Language Festival, a celebration of the wonder of language and the beauty of cultural difference.



Semaine des Langues
World Language Festival

-March 29th - April 2nd 2021 / Du 29 mars au 2 avril 2021-



ISB IN NUMBERS

OUR FACULTY

- Faculty: 90
- Teaching staff (administration): 10
- Faculty with an advanced degree: 71
- Average student to faculty ratio: 6

OUR STUDENTS

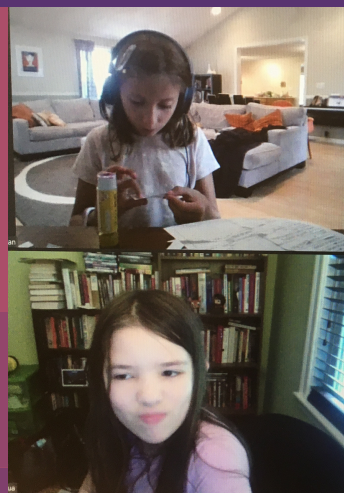
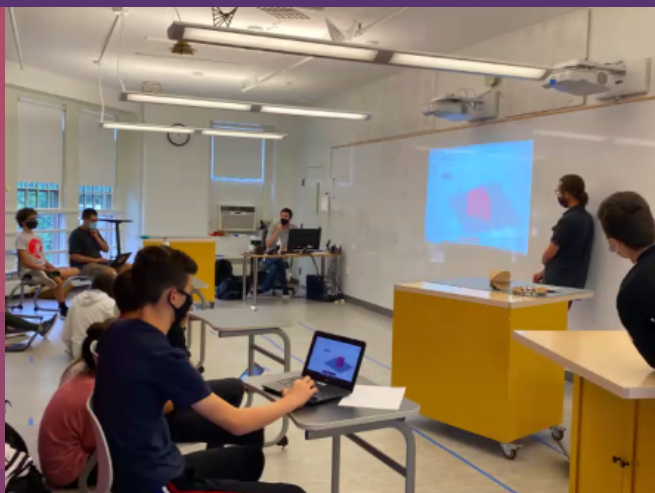
- Students: 531
- Maternelle: 128 (24%)
- Lower School: 164 (31%)
- Middle School: 133 (25%)
- Upper School : 106 (20%)

THE ISB COMMUNITY REPRESENTS 43 COUNTRIES

Algeria
Angola
Australia
Austria
Belgium
Brazil
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Denmark
Egypt
France
Germany
Greece
Guinea
Haiti
India
Indonesia
Iran
Ireland



Israel
Italy
Japan
Korea
Lebanon
Mexico
Morocco
Netherlands
Palestine
Romania
Russia
Senegal
Serbia
Slovakia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Tunisia
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States



CLASS OF 2021



2021 French Baccalaureate Results

This year saw the introduction of the new version of the Baccalauréat, and not only did 100% of our 10 candidates obtain the General Baccalaureate, 100% also completed with high honors (Mention Bien and Très Bien). The overall average for the class was 16.5 out of 20. One of our students received the rarely given congratulations of the jury. Of the 10 candidates, 6 students completed the International Option of the French Baccalaureate (OIB), combining the breadth and rigor of the French Baccalaureate with extra subjects taught and examined in English, resulting in a bilingual, bi-cultural diploma. Bravo!

2021 IB Results

This is the sixteenth year of the IB Program at ISB. The top score for the class of 2021 was 39, and the average class score was 36. We are very proud of these results, which are well above the world averages for both diploma pass rate (88.96%) and average score (33). One Diploma candidate completed a Bilingual Diploma, a significant achievement studying English and French Literature, exemplifying the journey students take at ISB.

Herzliche Glückwünsche!

In January, all ISB German students in Upper School took the National German Exam of the American Association of Teachers of German. Of the 19 ISB students who took the exam, three scored in the 90th percentile and received the gold award. 2 students won the silver award and 6 students received the bronze award. One of our gold award students qualified to apply for the prestigious study trip award.

¡Felicidades!

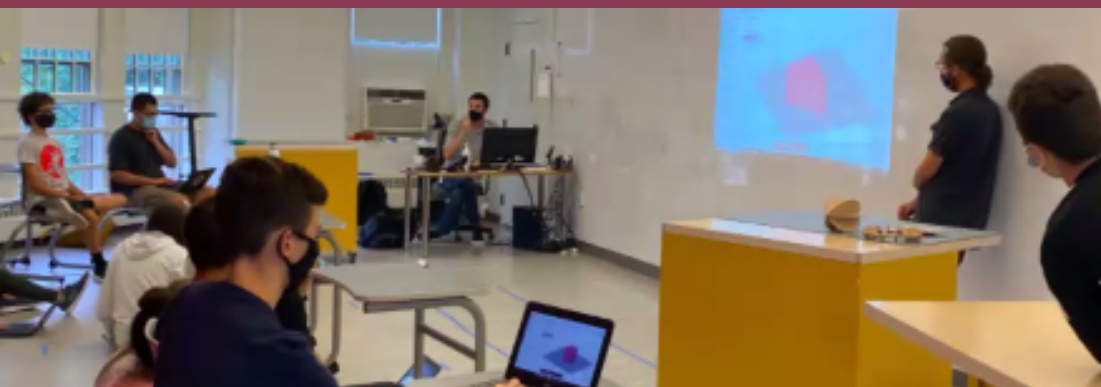
Congratulations to our Upper School Spanish students who attained national recognition for excellent performance on the 2021 National Spanish Examinations. ISB students earned a total of 1 gold, 6 silver, and 6 bronze medals, along with 23 honorable mentions. The exams are most numerous of their kind in the United States, with more than 55,000 students registered in 2021.

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ACCEPTANCES AND PLACEMENTS ***MATRICULATIONS IN BOLD**

UNITED STATES: Arizona State University, Bard College, Bentley University, **Boston University**, **Brandeis University**, **University of California-Davis**, **University of California-Los Angeles**, **University of California-San Diego**, University of California-Santa Cruz, Clarkson University, Colorado College, **Connecticut College**, University of Connecticut, Denison University, University of Denver, Drexel University, Eckerd College, Embry, Emerson College, Florida Institute of Technology, George Washington University, Gordon College, Harvey Mudd College, Haverford College, Hofstra University, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, Indiana University-Bloomington, Ithaca College, Johnson & Wales University, **Lesley University**, Lewis & Clark College, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Massachusetts-Boston, University of Massachusetts-Lowell, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, University of Miami, Moore College of Art & Design, University of New Hampshire, The New School, New York University, Northeastern University, **Oberlin College**, Occidental College, University of Oregon, University of the Pacific, Pennsylvania State University, University of Pittsburgh, Quinnipiac University, Reed College, Regis College, University of Rhode Island, Rhodes College, Riddle Aeronautical University, Ringling College of Art & Design, University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, Roger Williams University, University of San Diego, Sarah Lawrence College, Savannah College of Art & Design, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, **Simmons University**, University of South Carolina, **Suffolk University**, Syracuse University, Temple University, Tufts University, Union College, University of Vermont, Wake Forest University, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Western Michigan University, Westfield State University, Wheaton College, Whittier College, College of Wooster, Worcester State University

FRANCE: American University of Paris, Université d'Aix-Marseilles, Lycée Blomet, Université Bordeaux I, II, III, Université Catholique I, II, III, Institute Catholique de Paris, ECAM, Ecole Polytechnique, Ecole Supérieure de Chimie Physique Electronique de Lyon, EDHEC, EISTI, EPITA, ESCP, ESIGLEC, ESME, ESSEC Business School, Université d'Evry-Val-d'Essonne, Université de Grenoble-Alpes, ESEO, HEI Campus Lille, IDRAC Paris, IESEG School of Management-Lille, ISEP, Sciences PO Reims, Institutes Universitaires de Technologie d'Orsay, IPSA, IUT de Cachan Paris, IUT de Vélizy, Paris-Est Créteil University, Université de Lille, Lycée Gustave Eiffel Lyon, Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yveline

CANADA: Bishop's University, **Concordia University**, University of British Columbia, McGill University, **Université de Montreal**, University of Toronto



GERMANY: Bard College Berlin, Jacobs University

IRELAND: Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin

ITALY: Bocconi University, John Cabot University

THE NETHERLANDS: University College Amsterdam, Leiden University, University College Utrecht

NORTHERN IRELAND: Queen's University Belfast

SCOTLAND: University of Edinburgh, University of St Andrews

SPAIN: **Esade Business School**, IE University

SWITZERLAND: Franklin University

AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



There was no playbook for operating a school through the worst pandemic in a century. But in an exceptional display of resourcefulness and resolve, the International School of Boston came together as a community and navigated perhaps the most challenging year in its almost six-decade history.

“Swift action was key,” says Head of School Richard Ulfers, reflecting on the events of March 2020 when life in the United States abruptly shut down. “Across the course of a weekend, ISB went from completely in-person to completely remote—we didn’t skip a beat.”

Fast forward to September 1st, 2020 and the school was reopening its doors, even though the pandemic was far from over and most other schools remained remote. “We took the whole summer to prepare, look at all the protocols, create the cohorts, and put in place everything we could possibly think of,” Ulfers remarks.

Fortunately, the intense planning proved key. In spite of highly unpredictable conditions, hard work and dedication paved the way for an extraordinary outcome. During the academic year that followed, ISB reported incredibly few cases of COVID throughout its entire community. “Guided by our protocols, we were able to mitigate those cases as they presented themselves. And we never discovered a single case transmitted in the school building itself.”



Community as the Hero

To pull this feat off required a Herculean effort. “There were many, many shoulders to the wheel,” says Ulffers. “I have to give a huge thanks to the teachers. They did amazing things.”

Compliance among the parent community was equally vital. “When the school reopened its doors in September, it was unclear how long the building would remain open. We thought if we could make it to the October break that would be a victory. But our community listened and responded, and we made it through to the winter break. Then by February vacation, case loads were starting to drop. It gave us an opportunity to raise our heads above the tree line and think again about where we were going.”

Even as conditions improved on the ground in Massachusetts, the school kept a close eye on the international situation. “We have to remember that things like a pandemic—rather like climate—don’t know borders,” says Ulffers. “If there’s still a part of the world that isn’t getting the help they need, we all suffer.”

Of course, students and families were delighted that ISB’s doors stayed open throughout the academic year. This sentiment came through strongly in the independent community survey the school commissioned in the spring. “It’s something we, as a school administration, warmly welcomed.”

The Benefits of In-Person Learning

“COVID-19 turned many things on their head, not the least education. In the early stages of the pandemic, the establishment of virtual classrooms went into overdrive. But despite the convenience of digital platforms, the online experience remained a poor substitute for in-school learning,” says Ulffers.

“What we learned about learning in the pandemic is that all day online every day is limiting,” he remarks. “The interactions that happen in a classroom environment—the side conversations and the random interactions in the corridor—these are not so easy to recreate in an online environment. Even if you create breakout rooms in a virtual class, the call eventually ends—then it’s over and you’re by yourself once again.” →



“

We have to remember that things like a pandemic—rather like climate—don’t know borders. If there’s still a part of the world that isn’t getting the help they need, we all suffer.”

”



Experiential learning has always been a point of passion for Ulffers, who argues the pandemic underscored the desire for connected experiences in every aspect of learning. "When I say experiential, of course I mean the trips, the sports activities, the arts programs, all those things. But also the more casual interactions, the 'let's go have lunch, let's walk outside together, and so on.'"



“What we learned about learning in the pandemic is that all day online every day is limiting. The interactions that happen in a classroom environment—the side conversations and the random interactions in the corridor—these are not so easy to recreate in an online environment.”

Planning for Growth

Thinking about a fully-rounded learning environment leads Ulffers back to a key commitment articulated in the school's Strategic Report—the search for a separate high school campus. "High school kids are different from other age groups. They're growing into their own and becoming young adults. They need their own space so they can feel that way."

As with anything in commercial real estate though, securing a bigger space isn't a simple proposition. "The three things we need to do to make this happen—find the additional space, increase enrollment to fill it, and strengthen our finances along the way—are highly linked. You can't do one without the other two."

At the same time, doing nothing is not an option. Ulffers harkens back to the decision by school administrators to move to the Cambridge campus in 1996. "We were fewer than 80 students at the time. Now here we are in the next school year with an enrollment of 550, and we don't know where to put everyone. Sometimes boldness is the best approach."

Central to an expanded high school are the school's two flagship college entrance programs, the French Bac and the International Baccalaureate (IB). The IB is a highly accessible program for students in North America, with its emphasis on critical thinking and its mix of ongoing assessment and targeted examination. Meanwhile, the French Bac—fresh from a series of reforms that bring it closer in pedagogical approach to the IB—continues to represent the gold standard for rigorous, French-first learning.

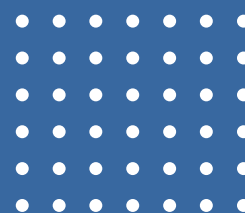
"Together, the ISB programs constitute a compelling alternative to the conventional high school approach in the United States, with its emphasis on the grade point average and occasional examinations," says Ulffers.

Moving Forward

While consideration of a separate high school is beginning in earnest, ISB has already achieved much since the publication of the Strategic Report.

"We moved the Maternelle to the Cambridge campus, and we opened up the Toute Petite Section. We launched the Spanish program in the Elementary School, and we wholeheartedly embraced our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). We successfully navigated a pandemic, and we continually advocate the benefits of a multilingual, multicultural education. It's been a busy time at the wheel."

Indeed, the value of an international education has never been so clear. "One thing the pandemic has taught us is that being insular is not a viable option. Having an international perspective is increasingly a necessity, not a choice, in an interconnected world." ■



A YEAR IN REVIEW

LOOKING BACK AT SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS

MASKS JUST MAKE IT SPOOKIER!

COVID-19 could not dampen the Halloween 2020 spirit of students as they celebrated in their classrooms. Plus, students from every division took place in the first-ever Halloween badminton tournament!



THE SHOW MUST GO ON

The performances were magical. From twirling and swirling to singing and more, the Lower School Winter Show was a roaring success.

INTERNATIONAL WINNERS!

Mme Catherine De Palma's 6th grade French class took first place in an international competition—organized by the Mission Laïque française—for its stop-motion video, "Dessine-moi un logement."

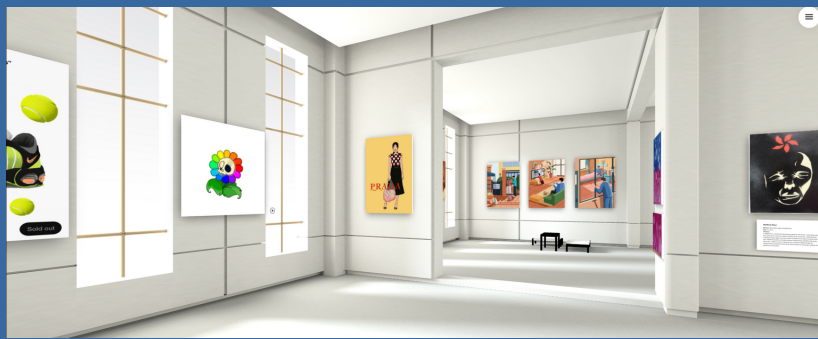


GALA IN A BUBBLE

The pandemic didn't stand a chance! ISB's second all-virtual Gala took it to the next level with a superb program of entertainment and celebration. Together, we raised a sparkling \$128K.

VAN GOGH WATCH OUT!

The 2021 IB Art Exhibition went virtual with amazing artwork from our Upper School students. The impressive exhibition included a number of musical scores written by our Middle Schoolers.

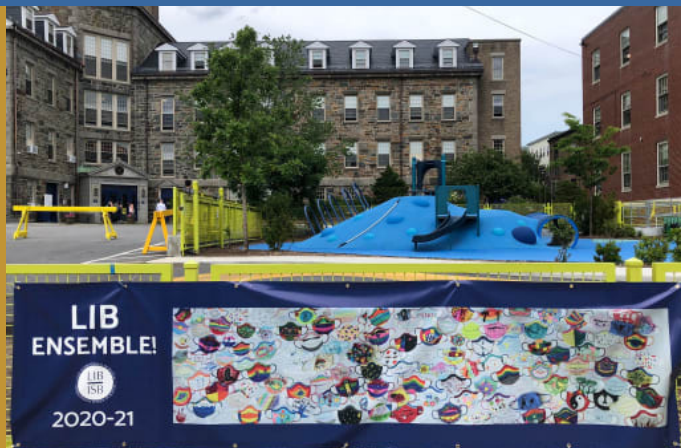


SOUNDS GOOD

2020-21 saw ISB ramp up its audio game. The all-day Virtual Music Recital featured recorded performances by 20 students. Meanwhile, ISB Radio made its SoundCloud debut!

SERVICE IS A VIRTUE

As part of ISB's annual community service program, our Middle Schoolers beautified the ISB campus and served with local groups such as Arlington Food Link, the Charles River Conservancy and Cradles to Crayons.



TOGETHER AS ONE

The PTO invited members of the ISB community to decorate a mask any way they wanted. We displayed these brilliant, colorful masks across two school banners in a statement of pandemic solidarity.

CELEBRATING EUROPE DAY

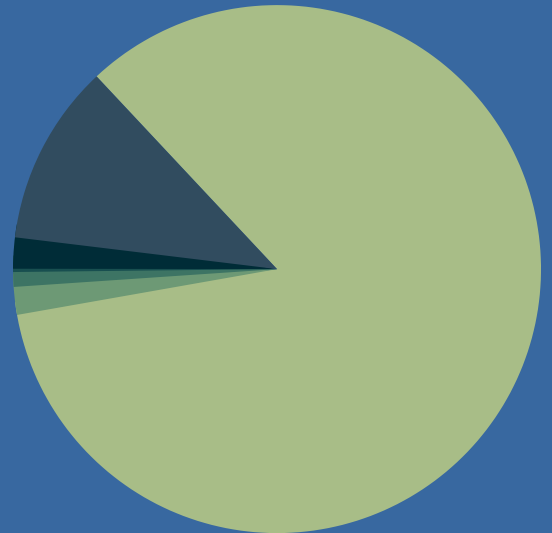
Richard Ulfers welcomed Arnaud Mentré (Consul General of France in Boston), Nicole Menzenbach (Consul General of Germany to New England), and Holger Wirtz (Head of School, German International School Boston) to plant a tree symbolizing the depth of Franco-German friendship.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

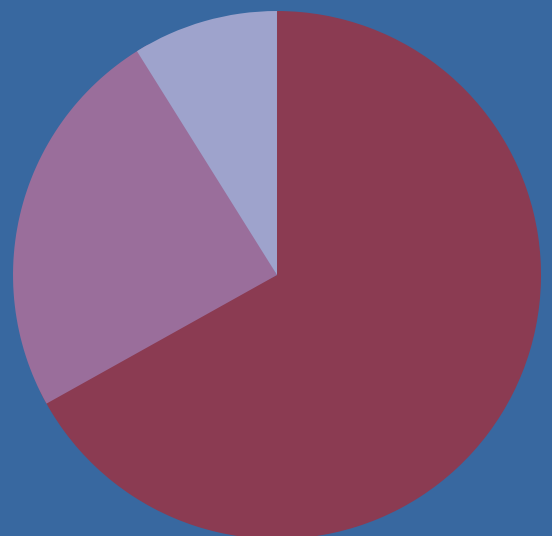
STATEMENT OF INCOME

Tuition and Fees	\$ 16,714,400	84.2%
Other Programs	\$ 178,621	0.9%
Development Income	\$ 340,780	1.7%
Other Income	\$ 376,591	1.9%
Interest and Dividends	\$ 47,317	0.2%
Forgiveness of PPP Loan	\$ 2,200,207	11.1%
Total Revenue (Gross)	\$ 19,857,916	100.0%



STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 12,582,506	66.9%
General Operations	\$ 4,553,828	24.2%
Financial Aid	\$ 1,678,720	8.9%
Total Expenses	\$ 18,815,054	100.0%



NET INCOME: \$1,042,862

THANK YOU DONORS

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Houman Amirfarzan and Marta Braschi Amirfarzan

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- Milica Gallucci, Chief Advancement Officer
- Lucy Pelham, Director of Admissions and Enrollment Manager
- Philippe Caron-Audet, Secondary School Director
- Pauline Dides, Elementary School Director

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