The First Encounter

“Did you get the maximum height nine?”, “What did you get for that question?”... Conversations like these could be heard around the İşik College Upfield School in the anxious moments after the VCE mid-year exams which were held in week 10.

More than 82,000 VCE students sat their first real test between June 11 and 13.

Our VCE teachers finished the Units 3 coursework nearly three weeks before the exam week and started doing revisions and trial exams to give the best opportunity for the students to achieve the highest results in the exams. İşik College teachers also arranged weekend and evening classes and motivational talks to help the students to feel more confident before the examinations.

Continued page 4
Dear Parents and Students,

Once again we have come to the end of another semester that is the middle of the 2008 school year. At ISIK College, the end of the first semester involves the settling-in of new staff and new students, and we also gain a truer insight into students’ performances. Teachers and students (and parents I guess) have had a very busy fortnight with exams and everyone is now in need of a well deserved refreshing semester break after a very long school term compared to Term 1!

Just prior to the Year 7 to 11 exam week, our Year 12s had their first VCE exam experience being the mid-year exams. They all seemed to be excited, anxious and nervous before relaxing at camp. Yes, they had been relaxing over the first weekend following the exams with a spiritually, mentally and physically rejuvenating camp at Eltham, and came back with huge smiles on their faces. I would like to thank Mahir Kara and Ahmet Arif Haktan for organising such a camp with impeccable timing. They are now all waiting the release of their results in August.

On the 1 June, ISIK Colleges held their Entrance Exams for the 2009 school year. It pleases us to see an increasing demand from the community urging us to increase our intake. Incidentally, our school’s administration has experienced great difficulty in receiving from our current parents their Enrolment Renewal Forms. It appears that every year, about one fifth of our parents need to be repeatedly reminded through letters and phone calls etc. that their sons’ places are about to be replaced with new enrolments before they will take any action! Regrettably, having to “chase” these parents and forms puts an unnecessary toll on all of us.

As you may be aware, in late May the 6th International Turkish Olympiads were held in Istanbul, Turkey. We proudly sent four ISIK College students accompanied by Ercan Sakarya, Head Teacher of our Turkish Department. Year 8 student Mohamed Haidar proudly returned with a silver medal in the Speaking category; Year 11 student Adem Caksak won a silver medal for Grammar and a bronze medal for Writing; and Year 10 student Anil Yasar Zirek earned our school two bronze medals for Poetry and Grammar. I congratulate our Turkish Department and students for their hard work and our parents for their trust in allowing us to send their sons to Turkey to represent our school at an international level.

Also, in line with government requirements that schools report to their community about students’ performances, retention rates, teachers’ qualifications and professional development expenses, AIM test benchmark comparisons, VCE results etc., on pages 6 and 7 of this bulletin you will find School Performance Data.

Before I leave you, I am proud to say that amongst the 436 secondary schools our girls’ campus has again come first in Victoria with 96% of students enrolled in university while our boys’ campus came in 15th with a figure of 81%. These figures have been taken from the official On Track Results for the 2007 VCE graduates. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations and appreciation to the teachers at both campuses for having contributed to this great success.

Spend some quality time with your family and enjoy your semester break.

Yours sincerely,

Deniz Erdogan

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“Turkish Department and students...represent our school at an international level.”

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Year 11 Legal Studies

On Thursday 29 June 2008, Year 11 and 12 Legal Studies students were visited by Senior Constables Sahin Sahinkaya and Ali Gurdag from Braodmeadows Police Station. Students learnt about police powers and citizen rights. This visit brought to life some of the topics in the course for students and was much appreciated.

Mr Traikovski
Head of Humanities
The Upfield Chess Club will meet weekly on Tuesdays after school till 4:30 in the library, beginning 22nd July. Learn to play chess better, with instruction and learning materials to be provided by the club, including:

- Weekly chess instruction at the beginning of each meeting using a large demonstration board;
- Chess books and videos for the library;
- Occasional expert visitors to coach and demonstrate.

Meet new friends with a common interest in an adult supervised and academically enriching environment that promotes good sportsmanship and other positive social skills.

Regulation size chess sets, chess tournament clocks and scoresheets will be provided for all meetings. Learn how to play in nationally sanctioned chess tournaments.

There will be a $5 annual fee for membership to the Club. All funds will go to club equipment, learning materials, activities and occasional expert coaching. This is going to be a first rate scholastic chess club that all Upfield students can be proud of.

For more information call Upfield Chess Club on (03)93592411. The forms and information will continue to be available in the school office and library.

Puzzle -Time

It's another forced checkmate for white, three moves and it's the all over for the black player. We could give you a hint but that would make it too easy!!

White to play

By Mr Okan Alkin
This year the Işık Conference Hall was used as the Işık College Exam Centre which was much more comfortable and cosier when compared with last year’s exam room: the school’s gym.

During the examination week, yard duty teachers also paid extra attention to provide the quietest conditions for the examinees.

A total of 38,514 students sit at least one exam in Biology, Physics and Accounting, Psychology, Chemistry and Environmental Science in Victoria. All other examinations, except Environmental Science, were held at our campus.

On Friday 13 June, 82,420 Victorian students, including 79 Işık College students, sat the General Achievement Test (GAT). The GAT is a compulsory exam, but does not directly contribute to students’ VCE scores. It is used by the state’s curriculum authority to ensure school-based assessment is the same across all schools. It is also a “safety net” for students who experience serious hardship which might affect their performance in end-of-year exams.

The mid-year VCE exams are equally as important as end-of-year exams because they are the final assessment of Unit 3 work, with each exam counting toward a third of the students’ final assessment.

VCE Mid Year Examinations results will be released August 4.

We wish students all the best for their exams.

By Mr Ahmet Arif Haktan

VCE Co-ordinator

Debating News

In semester one six boys have been competing in the Victorian Schools Debating Competition. Through hard work and determination these year nine boys have had a very successful year so far. After round 4, Isik College Team 1 is ranked second in the Essendon region and Isik College Team 2 is ranked fourth.

The upcoming round five debate will determine whether our debating teams will progress to the state finals.

In the next round the teams will be debating the topic “That Australia should have a nuclear energy program.” The teams are well-prepared and ready for this debate. We wish them all the best.

Mr Norman Capapas

Debating Coordinator

Congratulations

We extend our best wishes to Bihter Altuntas and his wife Mehtap on the arrival of their twin sons, Mirza Altay and Baturay Muhammed, born 1 June 2008 at 11:14am (each one minute apart) at St Vincent’s Private Hospital.
2008 “On Track” Results

What is On Track Results?

On Track is a research program which provides a comprehensive picture of what happens to young people after they leave school. Every year the Victorian Government contacts year 12 graduates from government and non government schools to make sure that they are on a pathway to further education, training or employment after leaving school.

Why publish the destinations of young people after they complete Year 12?

This research helps parents to make a decision about choosing a high school for their children. It also highlights the diversity of options young people pursue after leaving secondary school. Options available include TAFE or other Vocational Education and Training (VET), apprenticeships or traineeships, university or employment.

How was the data collected?

Over 43,500 students from both government and non-government schools who completed Year 12 in 2007 consented to take part in a telephone survey. A total of 76.4 per cent participated in the On Track survey conducted during April 2008. They responded to a range of questions related to their activities after leaving school.

Every year Işık Colleges receive very high university enrolment rates since our first graduates in 2002. The success data can be seen in the following graph.

This year Isik College Eastmeadows (Girls) Campus had the highest university enrolment for the second year in a row in Victoria, where more than 400 high schools competed for the VCE. We would like to congratulate our sister school. Işık College Upfield Campus also received satisfactory results. Twenty two out of twenty five graduates entered different universities which makes 88% success.

Jewish Museum Visit

As part of their Dialogue studies, a group of year 9 & 10 students took part in a trip to the Melbourne Jewish Museum and Synagogue. It was a day in which students extended their knowledge about another faith, while realising what brings all those who believe closer together. Students learnt some interesting information including

- how approximately 0.5% of the Australian population is Jewish;
- the eternal light which is a continually lit lamp as a reminder of menorah of the temple in Jerusalem; and
- how a horn called a Shofar is blown to wake the people of Jerusalem to announce new years.

By Kazim Haksever
How Isik College Performed In 2007

ISIK COLLEGE School Performance Data - 2007

As part of the agreement made between schools and the Commonwealth Government to secure federal funding, schools in all sectors are now required to publish a range of performance data. All schools have to present specified information once a year, relating to the previous school year. The information applies, therefore, to 2007 unless otherwise stated.

Student Attendance:
Our students’ average attendance rate for 2007 was 96%

Retention Years 9 to 12:
In 2007, 68% of the students who were enrolled in Year 9 in 2004 completed their VCE at ISIK College. This figure does not take into account new students to the school after 2004 who completed Year 12 last year.

Literacy and Numeracy Benchmarks:
Percentage of Year 3, 5 and 7 students meeting or exceeding national benchmark standards in AIM Tests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff attendance:
Our teachers’ average attendance rate for 2007 was 96%

Staff retention:
Teaching staff remaining at the school from 2006 to 2007 was 93%

Professional learning:
All teachers took part in professional learning activities during 2007. Activities included school-base meetings conferences as well as attendance at external conferences and workshops in different areas.
Average school expenditure per teacher on PD: $193.40
Note: This sum only covers course fees and does not include the costs of providing replacement teachers for staff on PD, which is very substantial (over $200 per teacher per day).

Teacher Qualification:
All teachers in ISIK Colleges are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student satisfaction:
Students identified the following as the top perceived strengths of the school:
- My teachers give me extra help when I need it.
- I feel safe at this school.
- Students are encouraged to participate in school events.
- I am involved in making decisions about my education.
- My class activities are interesting and help me learn.

Parent Satisfaction:
Parents identified the following as the top perceived strengths of the school:
- My child is happy at this school this year.
- This school provides a safe and secure environment.
- I am comfortable about approaching my child’s teachers.
- Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching.
- Teachers at this school really want to help my child to build moral values through Pastoral Care.
How Isik College Performed In 2007

Teacher Satisfaction:
Teachers identified the following as the top perceived strengths of the school:
- School encourages teachers to attend professional development.
- Teachers at this school are focused on their studies.
- This school provides a safe and secure working environment.
- I am comfortable about approaching administration regarding any issue.
- The school is always looking for ways to improve the services it provides.

Year 12 Outcomes and destinations:
Our class of 2007 produced a fine set of VCE results.

Value added:
University offers have increased from 86% to 96% from 2005 to 2007. ISIK College continues to be the number one school in terms of university offers in the north western region.

World Tours continue to be the highlight for year 12 students completing their studies at ISIK College. In addition, to our compulsory camping program in senior primary and junior secondary selected students attend interstate camps and activities.

VCAL was introduced in 2006 to provide an alternative pathway to students not wanting to go to university. The program has allowed students to continue further study at TAFE or start an apprenticeship. VCAL students have been studying a TAFE course of their choice one day a week in addition to literacy, numeracy and personal development studies.

Pastoral Care is an integral part of the school culture. Pastoral Care teachers and mentors work hand in hand with academic staff, parents and students to provide students with individual care and support in all areas of child and adolescent development. Pastoral care also allows students to develop social skills and understanding of one another.

Values Education has become a whole-school commitment after a pilot programme in 2006 and community forums held in 2007. Aspects of the programme involve senior students mentoring junior primary students, students visiting and developing a relationship with residents in a local retirement home and student performances.

Extra and Co-Curricular Activities are an important part of our school. Activities may vary from campus to campus, however, there is a large variety on offer to students such as Arabic, Language, Astronomy, Choir, Debating, Drama, Folk-Dancing, Food Technology, Forensic Science, Horticulture, Instrumental Music, Maths Extension, Ottoman History, Table Tennis, Textiles.

Debating, which year 7-11 students became involved in last year, has expanded to include year 12 students. As a result, students have added to their repertoire of speaking and argumentative skills.

Sports are an important part of our curricular and extra-curricular program. Our primary students actively participate in interschool sports. Our secondary students compete annually in the FUTSAL competitions and continue to maintain their success in national and international wrestling competitions.
Organisational skills are the keys to your success

Students do not always know how to organise themselves and often find that disorganisation leads to inconsistency and chaos leaving them frustrated and with little motivation.

Parents can help students with organisational skills by providing the following:

An area in the house that is a designated ‘study only’ area.

A large calendar that marks deadlines and upcoming events. (In the study area).

A regular study time e.g. 6.30pm – 8.30pm uninterrupted ‘quiet’ study time.

A filing box/s that will hold all relevant school work.

A box for stationery: staplers, highlighters, pens, post it notes etc storage / access.

A ring Binder/ Folder with plastic dividers and reinforced A4 paper, this allows the student to have all subjects together and the student often feels less disoriented.

A tutor for added support. The best support is sometimes closer attention; this will often boost your child’s confidence in an area that they are struggling with.

Computers and televisions should be located in a public area of the house, minimising the risk of too many hours spent online or watching the box.

Many students tell me that whilst their parents want them to succeed, they often end up nagging them, rather than setting up a system at home to better assist them. Setting up a regular system/routine at home will often minimise arguments and give both you and your child a solid study base with keys to success.

Many parents say they would like to help their child but do not know how. As a parent you can help watch over the home environment, materials, and skills, assisting when necessary and without emotion, communicating acceptance and love towards the child. Parents also need to know that children do not have a system to protect themselves against phrases like, "you are so lazy" and "try harder" when it is obvious that the student is struggling. These words will stick with them forever. Parents can contribute positively to the academic success of their child by overseeing the organisational system, making sure materials are in their proper place, checking assignments, providing a quiet atmosphere to study, and by being a cheerleader for their child’s success.

( Parents and students who are struggling with organisation and routine please book a time to see me, we can talk about setting up a space and routine at home that you and your child can begin to implement )

Serife Ucar - Psychotherapist: ISIK Student Welfare and Counselling Services.

Gardening News

G'day folks,

We are heading towards the end of semester 1. Throughout this term we have harvested vegetables from our garden. Some of the vegetables we have reaped were radishes, turnips, spring onions, lettuce and broccoli. Unfortunately our peas have frosted due to cold weather.

I would like to thank Saban bey, the garden guru for all his help and the year 7 and 8 boys who chose gardening as their elective. The boys have enjoyed gardening this season, and are looking forward to planting new vegetables in spring.

By Mr Okan Alkin