

## What does it mean to be smart?

Have you ever thought about something over and over again and then you read or hear someone describe it perfectly? In the world of education, where there is such a craving for testing knowledge and learning information, I have spent many years trying to work out what it really means to be smart. I am also very interested in how we know when someone is smart.

At the risk of sounding like the world's dullest person I spent last Sunday, a rainy day, catching up on educational podcasts. In one rather dry interview Dylan Wiliam ([www.dylanwiliam.net](http://www.dylanwiliam.net)) the renowned and, at times, controversial educationist was being asked about his career, what he had learned from the research he led at Princeton University and the research he is now leading at the Institute for Education in London. He is among a growing group of influential researchers who have written about the detrimental impact of over reliance on standardised testing in the UK and USA. He is not opposed to testing, just the style of testing and teaching to those tests at the expense of so much other important skill development, particularly in primary education. While testing is being reduced and seriously rethought in many parts of the UK and USA, it is surprising to see Australia about to embark on what failed in other countries - more and more testing.

Wiliam was trying to explain the importance of trying to teach children to think and be smart. He feels we are still too reliant on content at a time when we cannot predict the future. Here he paraphrased this simple summary of what makes someone smart...

***“The ability to act intelligently when faced with something you’ve never seen before.”***

Having thinking skills, being a creative problem solver and being able to deal with new situations is what our children need for their future, this is what will define them as smart. All the knowledge, balance in their learning, excitement about asking questions and facing challenges together with inspiring teachers will help them meet the true test of whether they are smart. Everyone has the potential to be smart.

Please feel free to discuss, challenge or reflect on my views.

Laurie McLellan  
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**PTA Announcement:**

**T-shirts are on sale every morning  
in the lobby.**

**Upcoming Events:**

Monday 19th of April  
Spring Performing Arts Evening  
Technical Rehearsal

Tuesday 20th of April  
Spring Performing Arts Evening

Thursday 22nd of April -  
Saturday 24th of April  
ACAMIS Football - Hong Kong

Friday 23rd of April  
G12 Leaving Assembly  
ISA Parent Coffee Morning

Saturday 24th of April  
PTA Spring Fun Day

## G12 Leaving Assembly

Our G12 will be finishing their school days on April 23rd. This is their last day in school, as they go on study leave to prepare for their IB exams in May.

We are having a special assembly on Friday April 23rd, 8:10 am in the cafeteria.

Please join us in remembering their days at NIS and wish them best of success in their exams.

All NIS community welcome!

Juan Saavedra  
DP Coordinator

## ACAMIS Badminton Division II Tournament

NIS is hosting the ACAMIS Badminton Division II tournament this week. There will be seven schools (including NIS) participating in this tournament. There are two schools (including NIS) which have two teams so there are a total of nine teams involved in the competition.

On Thursday afternoon, Friday morning and Saturday morning, there will be a round robin schedule. On Saturday afternoon, the top four teams will vie for the title and the bottom five teams will compete for a fifth place prize. There will be awards offered to the top three places for boys singles, girls singles, boys doubles, girls doubles and mixed doubles.

The awards are nice, but the main thing is that young people from various international schools can gather together and participate in a sporting event. This is a great opportunity for students to meet their peers from other schools in China and share their enjoyment for the game of badminton.

Many people from NIS have helped to organize the tournament, but a special thanks to Ms. Jacqui Weatherly from the PE department and to the men and women from the facilities department who help to set up and take down the numerous events that happen at NIS.

The NIS team.

Mr. Charlie McBride (MYP/DP Science)

Ms. Shelly Xue ( MYP/DP Mandarin)

# Parent Coffee Morning

**Date:** Friday 23rd April

**Focus:** International Schools Assessment results

**Location:** MYP Large Group Room

Dear Parents,

You might remember that in October NIS participated in the International Schools Assessment (ISA), aimed at providing information on student and school progress. If your child participated in the assessment (Grades 3 - 10) you received a report of their results together with the Quarter Three reports. I'd like to take the opportunity at the Coffee Morning to share results of our school performance with you.

The ISA is one of the ways in which we gather information on student achievement, our curricula, as well as providing a wealth of data for continual school improvement. Some 50 000 students participated in these assessments in schools around the world, providing valuable reference points for us. In addition, Grade 10 results can be compared to national norms from over 50 countries from the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). We'll be looking at those comparisons, as well as some of the changes that have occurred over the past 4 years in our results.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Richard Swart

Principal

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