

The Hilltopper

Issue No 3. | November 30, 2023



Mr. Corey Johnson, Head of School



St. Johnsbury Academy Jeju Annual Bazaar

Message from HoS

On Saturday, November 18th, SJA Jeju hosted the annual school Bazaar. This is an annual event created and organized by the Parents Association and hosted by SJA Jeju. I am delighted to extend my sincere congratulations to the Parents Association for running an exceptionally successful Fall Charity Bazaar.

Your unwavering dedication, meticulous planning, and tireless efforts transformed this year's event into a resounding success. The enthusiasm and support from our community made this occasion truly remarkable. It was delightful to see everyone coming together with such happiness and a genuine sense of community.

Your collective efforts exemplify the essence of collaboration and community engagement, creating a heartwarming impact and showing what we can do when we unite for a common purpose. I firmly believe that the success of this event will have a lasting positive effect on our school community.

Character, Inquiry, Community

18th Korea Public Speaking Championship

The 18th Korea Public Speaking Championship and World Individuals Qualifier was hosted by SJA Jeju on November 19th and was a resounding success. The event brought together a multitude of high school talents from diverse corners of Korea, each showcasing their exceptional skills in public speaking and debate. Through a rigorous selection, six exceptional students earned the honor of representing the National Korean WIPSC Team at the 2024 World Individuals Public Speaking Championship in Canberra, Australia. Additionally, one of our 9th Graders placed as the 3rd overall speaker in all of South Korea and she earned a spot on the National Team.

Inaugural SJA Jeju Robotics Tournament

November 25th marked an impressive display of innovation and collaborative spirit among the students. Our first-ever SJA Jeju Robotics Tournament was a resounding success, showcasing the remarkable talents and dedication of the participants. The atmosphere was charged with excitement and ingenuity. Students demonstrated not only technical prowess but also exemplary teamwork, combining their skills to navigate challenges and solve complex problems. The tournament was a testament to the school's commitment to fostering creativity, technological advancement, teamwork, and innovative spirit in our students.

Curriculum, Teaching, & Learning

Techbytes Unconference

SJA held our first TechBytes Unconference on November 1st. This event focused on integrating technology into the curriculum, creating collaborative learning practices, and fostering discussions on innovative approaches to teaching and learning. The collective enthusiasm and exchange of ideas underscored the commitment of our educators to staying at the forefront of educational technology.

During our TechBytes Unconference, we had the opportunity to explore the concept of a blind Kahoot as a teaching activity, shifting its traditional use from review to direct instruction. Led by Olivia Weller, the session featured an example of blind Kahoot to showcase its potential utility in various classroom settings, spanning upper elementary, middle school, and high school levels.

Wanda Adams guided teachers through the world of Canva EDU, emphasizing its free accessibility for educators and students. The session focused on leveraging the fantastic AI features within Canva to enhance class presentations, videos, and other educational materials. Wanda's insights provided valuable guidance on incorporating AI seamlessly into our educational content.



OSMO Educational Gaming

Jayden An facilitated a session during our TechBytes Unconference, focused on the OSMO gaming system. Osmo is an exceptional educational tool, incorporating innovative reflective artificial intelligence technology that seamlessly bridges the gap between the physical and digital realms. The Osmo suite encompasses a variety of engaging games and apps, spanning drawing, literacy, physics puzzles, spatial reasoning, coding, counting, basic arithmetic, and more. Each application offers a hands-on and enjoyable learning experience.

In exploring Osmo, teachers delved into its versatile features and discussed practical ways to integrate it into our classrooms. Teachers received valuable insights on embedding technology into the curriculum. This session demonstrated the power OSMO can have to enhance interactive learning experiences.

Campus Operations, EdTech, and Res Life

Operations Highlights

In cooperation with the Jeju Fire Department, a successful Fire Evacuation Drill was conducted, resulting in the **best time ever** for our students and staff to exit the buildings and gather in the assigned evacuation areas. Thank you all!!

Students, staff, and parents are enjoying the high-quality meals prepared by our new catering company, Shinsegae Foods, in our newly renovated cafeteria. SJA Jeju is proud to be the first PK-12 customer for Shinsegae, and we are excited for this new partnership.



EdTech Highlights

Technology Addiction and the use of Mobile phones were a couple of topics discussed in November by Middle and High School.

Further guidance and support are available from;

[Technology Addiction: Concern, Controversy, and Finding Balance.](#)

[What Parents Need to Know About Technology Addiction](#)

Res Life Highlights

This month, I would like to discuss the SJAJ student-led SJAJ Curiosity Lab. The club is led by two of our G11 boarders, Roh (James) KyungHwan/노 경환 and Jun Yulin/전 율인. The boys do a fantastic job of organizing, procuring, and delivering practical science experiments that our MS students can participate in.

As you can see from the pictures, the MS students have fun voluntarily giving up some of their free time on a Sunday to be involved in the group. We are keen believers in letting students share (and hopefully pass on) some of their passion for learning. Great job! Jay and James, The dorm staff are very proud!



Early Childhood Highlights

PreK3 Highlights

November was full of learning and fun activities for the PreK3 Puppies. We explored topics like winter, arctic animals, and holidays. We also learned about Thanksgiving through funny songs and books. The students talked about everything they are thankful for too!

The PreK3 Puppies practiced using their words and continued to learn about feelings.

Our classroom is starting to look very festive and we'll continue to have fun while learning about the holidays!



PreK4 Highlights

PreK4 had an amazing November, learning, playing, creating, inquiring and interacting together. As part of our Unit of Inquiry, we have been noticing all the changes around us - the weather getting colder, leaves changing colors and falling off the trees. We have been learning about small versus big problems and how we can solve these when they arise. We thought about all the reasons why we are thankful, and even had the Thanksgiving Turkey come visit us! It was such a wonderful surprise!



KG Highlights

We had another fantastic month of learning in KG! The students have been hard at work practicing their new literacy skills, developing their "writing muscles", and learning about their reading "superpowers!" The KG students finished exploring their math unit on shapes in November, becoming experts in both 2D and 3D shapes. To celebrate, the students created some unique robots using only shapes. We also began our next Social Studies unit about geography and are already so excited to learn about the landforms, bodies of waters, and maps!



Elementary School Highlights

G1 Highlights

This month, the grade 1 students went on an exciting field trip to Hallim Park. They explored many of the lush gardens, interesting animals, and captivating habitats. They learned all about cactuses in class and this excursion made their learning come alive. The children focused their attention on cactuses by stopping for an extended amount of time in the subtropical botanic garden. While there, they studied these resilient plants closely, noticing different shapes, sizes, and parts. This hands-on experience sparked the students' curiosity and gave them a deep appreciation for nature and living things.



G2 Highlights

November brought many changes. The weather took a colder turn, surrounding us in the ambiance of autumn. Our Grade 2 scholars have been busy writing informational texts to share what they know. They are also navigating nonfiction texts with expert use of text features to enhance their understanding of what they are reading. Simultaneously, in math, students are using various measurement tools and exploring data collection and presentation. In science, our focus has centered on the examination of various solids and liquids. The integration of literacy, math, and science has created a dynamic and enriching learning experience.



G3 Highlights

Grade 3 has had a productive month of learning. In writing we worked hard to publish our narrative writing. We learned how to make our stories exciting by adding dialogue and detail. After completing our publishing, we had an opportunity to share with other classes which was wonderful.

In math, we enjoyed learning to measure and estimate. This included measuring weight, capacity, and length as well as time. Students enjoyed making real life connections by measuring real things outside in our school environment!



Elementary School Highlights

G4 Highlights

With a shift to fall in November, Grade 4 has moved into some new and exciting learning. In Science the students explored animal adaptations by inquiring into isopods and how their adaptations help them survive in their environment. In Math, students have been exploring a variety of multiplication and division strategies. They have put on their detective gear to find key vocabulary words in story problems to know what strategy to use to solve word problems about mass, length and distance with metric measurements. As winter break approaches, we look forward to leading the assembly in December. We are ready to shine!



G5 Highlights

Throughout November, our Grade 5 classes have been buzzing with excitement. From unraveling the mysteries of math and learning more about fractions, to exploring the wonders of science in our mixtures and solutions unit, every day is an adventure in learning. With curiosity as our compass, we're diving into fascinating lessons that make our minds sparkle. The air is filled with the joy of discovery as students attended a learning conference with a Haenyeo to further their understanding of primary and secondary sources. We're uncovering the magic of knowledge together as we move forward in our learning and prepare for our Winter Concert!



Specialists Highlights

This month SJA Jeju hosted a book fair. We had excellent family participation, and students had a wonderful time picking out some new and exciting books to add to their home collections. Thank you SJA Jeju community for all of your support!

This month we'd also like to highlight our librarian, Ms. Sarah, who enjoys helping students find books and develop a love of reading. She also supports students' research projects. Our literacy coach, Mr. Mallory, supports teachers with curriculum implementation, assessment, and student-centered coaching cycles.



Middle School Highlights

Musical: Students Shine

All Shook Up, Young@Part had a highly successful run of four shows. Congratulations are in order to all the students involved. All of the Middle School Habit of Learning were evident. They demonstrated a tremendous amount of GRIT, as they worked through challenges. Students needed to be REFLECTIVE during the process to see how their scenes could evolve. Students were RISK-TAKERS by putting their work in public. They showed CARING for each other providing support through the stress. Students were OPEN-MINDED about working with different students in different roles each production. Lastly, students demonstrated successful COLLABORATION.



Musical: Giving Gratitude

The production was made possible by Mr. Johnson's commitment to performing arts at SJA. Special thanks to the Parent Association for support throughout the rehearsals and for all the gifts and flowers at the final show. Thanks also to Dr. Hong for music, Mr. Chavez and Mr. Acta for tech, Mr. Wilson and Mr. Howell for props. The Director, Mr. Yu Da Kim, is to be thanked for believing that all students are capable of doing something extraordinary. Mr. Yu Da Kim's unwavering commitment to all aspects of the production is commendable. We are thankful for the opportunity the musical provides to build character and community within our students.



Musical: Extend Learning

The setting for the musical was 1950's America. The MS saw the musical as an opportunity to learn more about the era. Assemblies were used to explore issues like racism, sexism, and tension between conformity and social change. Mr. Kim stressed the idea that all voices need to be heard, especially those that have been oppressed. The play is at its core a celebration of the possibilities of youth. As the lead Chad said, "Love is never impossible... all you have to do is open our hearts." This 1950's style celebration of youth will continue into the first MS "Sock Hop" dance as part of WinterFest.



High School Highlights

Taipei Art Trip

Following the successful Tokyo Art Trip last year, over 20 students travelled to Taipei for the Arts and Culture Trip. This allowed students to experience galleries and museums, studios, architecture and monuments of Taiwan. They also visited ArtTaipei, one of the oldest contemporary art fairs in the Asia Pacific region. We were able to compare and contrast cultures and art from different time periods, specifically from Korea to Taiwan. We believe learning is enhanced from these real world learning experiences and students found inspiration for their own work by choosing to participate in the event.



CAE Season 1 Success!

The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) is a student-to-student tutoring center that aims to support our community of learning in Middle and High Schools. It has successfully been helping a great number of students to raise their academic achievements while providing voluntary opportunities for high achievers to serve within the community too. Students find it more comfortable to ask for help from another student. Student tutors find it rewarding when they can guide one of their peers through an assignment and they get a good grade on it. The CAE is truly a beneficial program for every body within the SJA community.



Public Speaking Qualifier

St. Johnsbury Academy, Jeju hosted the South Korean regional qualifier for the World Individuals Public Speaking Championship on Sunday, November 19th 2023. We had students from all over South Korea vying for 7 spots on the Korean National Team for the World Individuals Championship in 2024 (held in Canberra, Australia) on our beautiful campus. Additionally one of our 9th Graders, Minnie Kim placed as the 3rd overall speaker in all of South Korea and she earned a spot on the National Team!



Sports / After School Activities

December Athletic Events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				1 V/JV Boys BB vs. NCS	2	3
4 Season 2 of ASAs Start V Boys BB @ KISJ JV Boys BB vs. KISJ	5 Boys Swimming @KISJ Girls Swimming at BHA	6	7 V Girls BB vs. KISJ JV Girls BB @ KISJ	8	9	10
11 MS G VB A vs. KISJ MS G VB B/C @ KISJ	12 MS B VB A/B @ KISJ MS B VB C vs. SJA V G BB @BHA JV G BB vs. BHA TT @ NLCS	13	14	-----> Winter Break <-----		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		-----> Winter Break <-----				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		-----> Winter Break <-----				

Sporting Events Updates

Season 1 Athletics has come to a close. In November our HS Volleyball teams competed in KISAC. Our Varsity boys placed 3rd and our JV boys placed 1st. Our Varsity girls placed 5th and our JV girls placed 3rd. Great job volleyball players.

Season 2 of athletics is underway with High School having tryouts for Basketball, swimming, and table tennis. Middle school students have the opportunity to try out for Volleyball, Swimming, and Table tennis. Along with robotics continuing from season 1 for high school and middle school.

Season 2 of ASAs will begin on December 4th. The last date of Season 2 of ASAs will be March 1st.

Our online store will have new items available for purchase on December 4th. The store has hoodies, polos, bags, zip-ups, and much more. [Here is the link for the store.](#) These items are available for all of our community to purchase.

If you haven't yet, please give us a follow on Instagram @sja_jeju_hilltoppers. This is where you will see all our updates for Athletics.



Parent Education

ES Parent University

November provided opportunity for a variety of Parent University sessions to take place. Last week, our High School College Counseling Team gave a deep dive into holistic review, highlighting how early exploration and development shape students' essays for college applications. We had around 100 parents attend this session & it was very informative.

We also presented two more sessions on Second Language Acquisition & SEL/Bullying Prevention. These were also attended by over 100 parents. All recordings for Parent University will be uploaded to the [ES Parents Corner](#).

Dec Important Dates (ES)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1 *EC Parent Performance @ 8:45 (Mini PAC) *LE Music Concert @ 12:00 (PAC)
4 ASA Session 2 Begins	5 Parent University Session 7 & 8 : Tech & Makerspace	6	7	8 UE Music concert for parents @ 9:30
←-----ALL SCHOOL SPIRIT WEEK-----→				
11	12	13	14	15 Grade 4 Assembly
18	19	20	21	22
←-----Winter Break-----→				
25	26	27	28	29
←-----Winter Break-----→				

MS Parent Coffee: TECH

The theme of the November Middle School Parent coffee was moving forward with technology. Parents took a live survey asking for their questions and perspective on technology use in school and balance at home. Ms Counselor, Ms. Gloria Kim, presented on the potential negative impact of technology on student health and wellbeing. MS Assistant Principal, Mr. King shared the how and why of the MS phone policy and acceptable use policy. English teacher Ms. Fromme discussed some possibilities with AI in the classroom as an educational tool. All three then took questions from MS parents.

Dec Important Dates (MS)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1
4 Character Day Fashion Show	5 Layers Day Challenge	6 Winter Olympics: Ice Ball Relay	7 SOCK HOP DANCE 4 - 6	8 MS/HS House Castle Ball
←-----ALL SCHOOL SPIRIT WEEK: WINTER FEST-----→				
11	12	13	14 MS Winter Concert 2:00 - 3:30	15
18	19	20	21	22
←-----Winter Break-----→				
25	26	27	28	29
←-----Winter Break-----→				

HS Experiential Learning

In the month of November, high school students were involved in a wide variety of experiential learning events including Seoul MUN Conference, KISAC Volleyball and Cross Country tournaments, Jeju MUN Conference at KIS, the WMTC Math Competition and the Jeju Island Robotics competition. While these many activities give student the opportunity to grow academically, student also have valuable chances to meet new people and build important relationships with students and teachers. These many activities contribute to a broad sense of community and reflect the diverse abilities and relationships of students.

Dec Important Dates (HS)

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				1
4	5	6	7	8 Homecoming Dance
←-----ALL SCHOOL SPIRIT WEEK-----→				
11	12 HS Band Concert	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
←-----Winter Break-----→				
25	26	27	28	29
←-----Winter Break-----→				