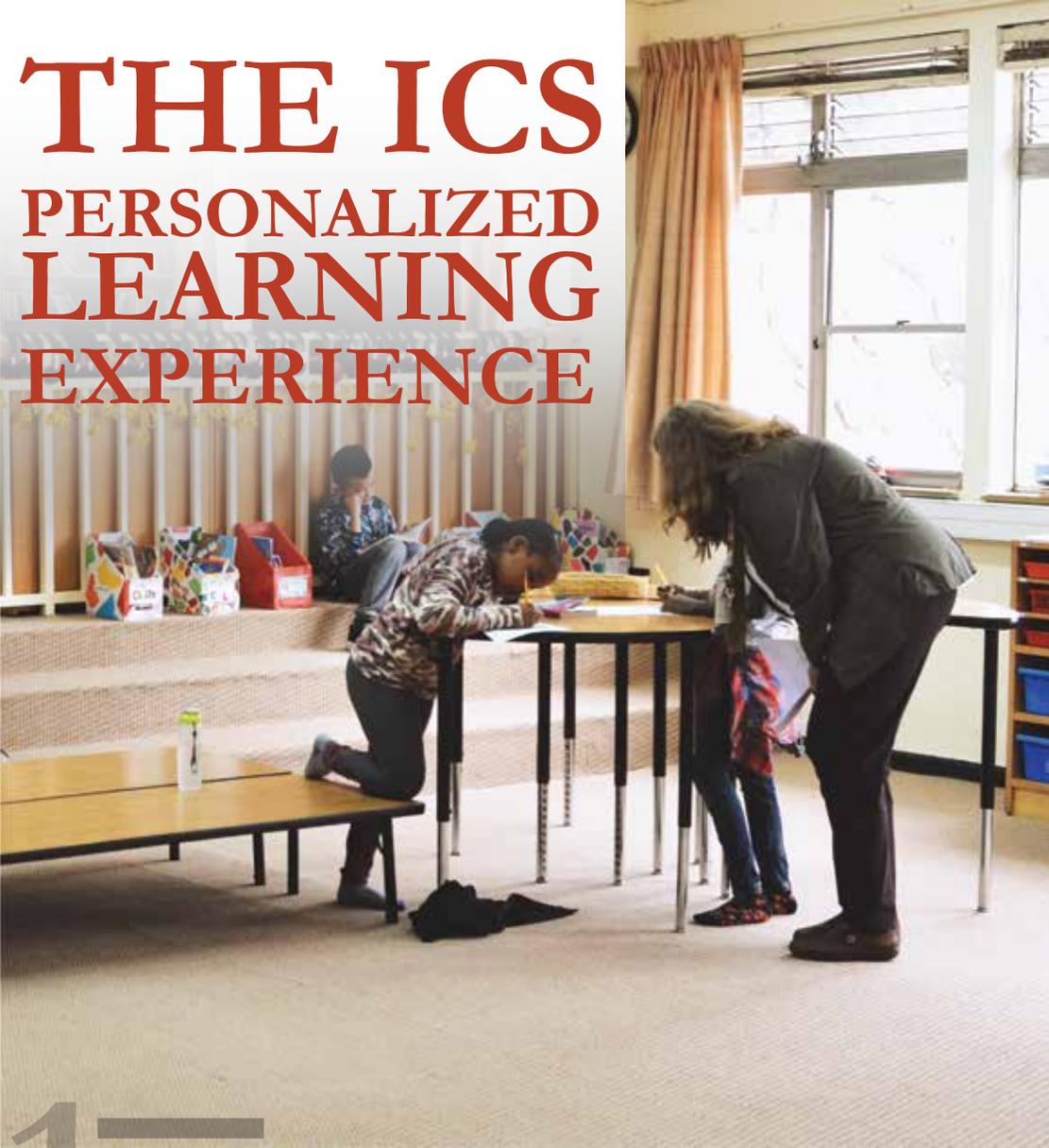


# THE ICS PERSONALIZED LEARNING EXPERIENCE



Personalized learning offers your children joyful ownership of what and how they learn (the learning process), so they can apply it to any other learning in school and to life beyond ICS.

## **Why personalized learning is vital.**

As you likely see in your own workplace and personal life, new realities like project management, collaborative working environments, and choice are starting to change the way our students will be expected to perform in the world. We believe we have a responsibility to equip each student to learn in ways that align with reality and give them skills and dispositions that prepare them to meet these expectations. Colleges are also increasingly seeking students who are at the intersection of being competent and interesting: who bring their own quests, ideas, and discoveries in addition to their academic excellence. Students who engage in experiences of this nature will be given natural and exciting ways to distinguish themselves with projects they really care about. We want to prepare our students for their futures and help them get the most out of their own high-value experiences at ICS like the Grade 5 IB PYP exhibition and the IBDP extended essay.

## **What is ICS doing to make this possible?**

We are inspiring and equipping all teachers to support high levels of learning for all students through our commitment to Professional Learning Communities. In addition, we are creating a final interdisciplinary unit at the end of the school year, focusing on personalized learning experiences for all students. This personalized learning experience will give our students the opportunity to inquire and apply their learning in **authentic** and **meaningful** ways.

While personalized learning happens throughout the year and in pockets like our Grade 8 GILA course and the Grade 11 Internship Program, ICS wants to make sure each of our students benefits from this kind of learning.

While our Early Learning Program will continue with inquiry and play-based learning through the end of the school year, the **ICS Personalized Learning Experience** for students in KG through Grade 5 will be scheduled during their usual sixth and final PYP unit. However, now, it will incorporate a number of deep learning aspects as the Grade 5 PYP exhibition currently does, so all students become prepared for that experience when it comes. For students in Grade 6 through Grade 10, the experience will involve age-appropriate and personalized research projects. This will not only tap into their curiosity, interests

1 The International Community School of Addis Ababa is committed to ensure that all students learn and engage at the highest levels. Our first goal is for you to see evidence of your child's positive growth and academic excellence in age-appropriate ways through every course or subject taken at ICS. As children find high levels of challenge and support here, we believe they will master essential standards and will gain both competence and confidence as learners and people. Any personalized learning that students undertake should only add relevance, engagement, personal inquiry, and motivation to their academic achievement.

and passions but will also equip them to develop these into projects that may very well become topics for their research in the IB Diploma Program down the road. At the start of this experience in May, our Grade 12 students will graduate, allowing our Grade 11 IB Diploma students (rising seniors) time to focus on their three IB higher level courses and their extended essays. This rescheduled time will give them the recommended 240 learning hours for higher level courses, something most IB schools in the world, including ICS, have struggled to offer in the past. Our goal is that, during this time, our students will discover topics and projects of interest and develop academic skills across disciplines inspiring inquiry into the summer, the next year, and perhaps a lifetime.



ICS has formed a Research & Development Team of teachers and administrators who are leading the way to create this experience schoolwide. Their job is to investigate and recommend a framework for the ICS Personalized Learning Experience, one that provides engaging learning practices while maintaining highly effective academic achievement and growth for all students. The ICS R&D team consists of two teachers from each division along with the deputy principals and the Executive Director of Learning.

## 2 THE PURPOSE AND OUTCOME

The purpose is to create a sustainable Personalized Learning Experience unit in the last five weeks of the school year for every KG-grade 10 student. Each experience will be student appropriate and specific to each student.

## 3 THE PROCESS

HOW:

The ICS R&D team will research, investigate, pilot, and use feedback to develop this framework. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Continue to visit successful schools around the world that are implementing highly effective, learning progressive programs.
- Continue to visit and collaborate with “other” teaching opportunities such as YouTube, Khan Academy, Journeys.
- Continue to make use of our greater education network and interview education experts such as Tom Vander Ark, Dr. James Fabionar, and Anthony Mohammed.
- Work in collaboration with ICS teachers in all subjects and divisions.

- Pilot small programs throughout the school year to see what would work on a larger scale
- Work in collaboration with ICS teachers to ensure personalization for every grade, every class, and every child, appropriate to their own unique needs, abilities, and interests

WHEN:

- Aug – Nov | The R&D team researches and investigates
- Nov – Dec | Develops a framework for the Personalized Learning Experience
- Dec | Presents proposal to ICS Leadership | Receives approval to move forward
- Jan – Feb | Develops and clarifies additional details within the framework, in collaboration with PLCs and leadership
- Mar - May | Begins teacher training/coaching to implement
- May 20 | Begins Personalized Learning Experience

## 4 COMMUNITY SHARING

- 17 Oct | Introduce the ICS Personalized Learning Experience philosophy at the HoS/Parent Forum
- 1 Nov | Share key best practices in place and key takeaways from schools visited by the R&D team
- 30 Jan | Share key components of the recommended Personalized Learning Experience framework
- April | Share what the Personalized Learning Experience will look like for each grade level
- 20 May | Launch Program
- June | Student Presentations

