

December 15th, 2023

Dear Parents,

I want to express my profound gratitude to all the parents who actively participated in the recent General Assembly. Your presence and commitment are not only a testament to the importance you place on your children's education but also a reflection of your unwavering support for our institution. I understand that for various reasons some parents could not attend the General Assembly. Thus, we present below a brief summary of the topics discussed.

- We began by presenting the results of the perception survey conducted with parents which highlighted that out of every 10 parents who responded, 8 are satisfied with the school. The parent survey feedback emphasized strengths in bilingualism, infrastructure, the educational project, the staff, and the academic level. The parent survey feedback highlighted opportunities for improvement in communication, discipline, rigor, sports, and internationalization.
- During the presentation, we also shared important news regarding changes in the code of conduct that will take effect in January 2024. **This included the new rule that cellphones will be banned during school hours for all grade levels including High School.**
- Our report also focused on showcasing the celebrations, improvements, and goals of each section.

In the Preschool section:

- We celebrated having a "Day in Preschool" for grades K2 to K5 (an activity for parents to experience the dynamics of classes and routines in these grades), a talk by Manuela Molina on the Crystal Generation, staff training in Positive Discipline and Reggio Emilia, and 25 children enrolled in the stimulation program this semester.
- We implemented a more robust values program in K4 and K5, bilingual music classes, departmental alignment between grade levels, and math classes that are focused on play and access to manipulatives.
- We are working on updating the English curriculum from K1 to K5, setting up a new organic kitchen through a project led by parent representatives, and launching a new garden in collaboration with STUCO.

In the Elementary section:

- We celebrated the successful hiring of both foreign and local teachers, a "Day in Elementary" for grades 1 to 5, the opening of the third classroom for grade 4, the acquisition of 42 new Chromebooks for classrooms, and new math materials as well as a climbing wall.
- We improved the mentoring program for new teachers and assistants, introduced Open House before the first day of school, offered a study habits course for parents, changed grade deliveries to involve teachers, parents, and students, and implemented weekly announcements from the Principal on the parent site.
- We are working on optimizing connections between classes and teachers, incorporating resources, tools, and strategies from the Science of Reading, and decided that for the next school year there will not be tablets required for 5th grade as students will work instead with Chromebooks acquired by the school.

In the Secondary section:

- We celebrated increased student participation in the Model United Nations (from 90 to 130 students this year), conducted joint activities with Middle and High School, advanced social service outings, excelled in the ART Fest, Philosophy Forum, and Mathematics Olympiad, updated the PECES program for parents, and continued implementing the high-performance athlete program which is currently benefiting 6 of our students.
- We implemented a new schedule where instructional time has increased by 30 hours for the entire school year, introduced new AP courses, and provided preparation for the Saber 11 tests during the school day.
- We are working on promoting critical and creative thinking in students through projects, enhancing leadership skills, optimizing internal and external communication, and fostering collaborative work among students, teachers, and parents.

University acceptances:

- 75% of students who graduated last year are enrolled in Colombian universities, 16% outside of Colombia, and 9% are taking preparatory courses before entering university. Additionally, students have received 2 scholarships in Spain, 7 scholarships in the United States, 4 scholarships at universities in Bogotá, and 5 scholarships at universities in Manizales.

Standardized test results:

- On the MAP test, in Mathematics and Reading in English, grades 5, 6, and 8 are above the norm. In Spanish, there is also growth compared to the test taken the previous year in grades 2, 6, and 8.
- With the MAP test results, *Data Talks* have been conducted with each subject teacher, the Learning Support Team, Technology Director, Data Coach, Curriculum Leader, Literacy Coach, Principal, and Director to analyze and create action plans according to the needs of each group as well as individual students. Additionally, we are monitoring the action plan of each teacher, offering individual or group support to students who need it and aligning the curriculum across all sections.
- In the SABER 11 tests (ICFES), we improved our overall national percentile in relation to the last 3 years.

Sports

- In the area of sports, we have 340 students participating in sports training and 185 participate in the school of sports. We sent a survey to parents and students to receive feedback and generate an action plan for continuous improvement in this area.

Cognia Accreditation

- We shared that we will have our Cognia Re-accreditation visit from April 14th to 19th, 2024. We are working hard on our continuous improvement journey and looking forward to the feedback from this important visit.

Dr. Vicki Denmark

- During the General Assembly, we had the extraordinary visit of Dr. Vicki Denmark who is accompanying us with the creation of our new Strategic Plan. In addition to sharing the expected results of her work, she shared relevant information about the future of education and the future generation (Generation Alpha) which is growing at a time when efforts to combat intolerance, injustice, and discrimination are developing on a global stage. Dr. Denmark explained that everything is global for Generation Alpha, and they will be very aware of the diversity in the world. Guided by a strong moral compass and knowledgeable about technology from an early age, Generation Alpha will be empowered to demand changes.
- Dr. Vicki Denmark also shared her thoughts on the future of education explaining that in the future students will need an education that provides experiences that teach them how to think creatively, take responsibility for their actions, work collaboratively, engage in systemic thinking, develop and apply critical thinking skills, use digital resources to solve problems, create and innovate, acquire entrepreneurial skills, and have financial knowledge.
- I take this opportunity to thank the School Board for approving the proposal to commit to a significant partnership with Dr. Vicki Denmark. We are very privileged to have such a prominent figure in the global education field collaborating with us in the creation of our upcoming Strategic Plan.

In closing, I wish to offer some words of reflection concerning what I have identified as the fundamental essence of our community. More than simply being a warm and welcoming educational environment, our community resembles a family. Our strength lies in the solidarity, recognition, and mutual support among our members.

With great honor and joy, I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,



Mr. David Esch
Director