



# MAR QARDAKH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MQIS– *Where Students Get a World Class Education!*

## Parent Newsletter

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### January, 2021



*His Excellency Archbishop*  
**BASHAR WARDA**  
*Governor of the School*

*An International Baccalaureate School in the Heart of Ankawa-Erbil, Kurdistan-IRAQ*

Volume 1

Dr. Frano Ivezaj, Editor & MYP Coordinator

Issue 1

**Governor's Corner**– Dear parents. As a result of three surveys we administered last academic year, we are taking measures to address the areas of concern: curriculum, more direct communication with parents, teachers and administration and hire international staff with good experience in helping us turn the school around. Be advised more homework will be assigned. In addition, in the next six months we will be addressing the following: improve reading and writing, address the needs of SEN students, provide a world class education according to IB standards and as a result with your assistance increase student enrollment at our school. In this first issue of the Parent Newsletter, you will meet the new international staff and your involvement during this process of transition is highly encouraged. As research shows, when parents, teachers and school administration work together, academic success is guaranteed for your child (ren). I encourage you to work with the staff. They are there to serve the educational needs of your most precious prize on this earth, your child (ren).

**MYP Coordinator Corner**- My name is Dr. Frano Ivezaj. I am an Albanian-American who grew up, went to school, and worked for many years in the education field with Chaldean-Americans in Michigan, particularly in the city of Detroit. I worked for 33 years as teacher, assistant principal, principal and two years prior to my retirement as assistant superintendent for Detroit Public Schools, where I oversaw 20 public schools and created the Department of Multilingual-Multicultural Education. Following my retirement in 2015, I worked in Malaysia to train school leaders to transform the public schools for to 21st Century Teaching and Learning. After this experience, I worked as a principal for one year at a Swedish School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. For the past two years, I was the principal of a non-governmental school here in Kurdistan where during my tenure the school was ranked number one among 30 non-governmental schools, and was accredited by an American Accreditation Association enabling the school to establish a dual system-American and British. Considering my mission was accomplished at this school, I undertook the challenge of assisting Ms. Hala to turn MQIS around and make it a high achieving school as I write my book on my contribution to international education. I am passionate about education of the future of the world but it takes all of us working together to ensure a quality education for all students.



**Introducing Fr. Milan Kakone** who was ordained as a Catholic priest on January 9, 2021 by his excellency Archbishop Bashar Warda will continue to teach religion at MQIS starting in February. He received his BA in Philosophy and Theology from Babel College. His goal is to share the love of Jesus with students. Through teaching he has learned students have a hungry desire for the Christian faith. Father Milan has participated in many courses including courses in English, safeguarding children, catechism and participated in conferences on human development.



**Due to Covid 19**-MQIS was closed until January 17th. The school was suppose to open on Sunday January 10th but the KMofE– Kurdistan Ministry of Education decided to keep schools closed. This did not prevent the the committed staff from meeting and preparing so we would be ready and prepared when the school opens. During the week of January 10th, teachers prepared their syllabuses, lesson plans, held in-service training and developed the teaching schedule either for face to face, online



or hybrid. Consistent with KMofE, on January the 17th MYP students only were allowed to come to school for summative assessment preparation. Teachers and students were all happy to see each other. Students were excited to meet the new MYP Coordinator and several international teachers. On this issue you will meet all the new staff at MQIS. According to KMofE, students in PYP will continue receiving their education online until March 1, 2021. We are all waiting for KMofE to come out with an announcement to open schools before then! Hope to God soon our PYP students will be able to attend school and receive education face to face or hybrid. Young students need to be in school and this pandemic has become a burden on their parents who are required to supervise them during distance learning. We appreciate parents and students for adhering to safety guidelines when visiting the school and meeting with the teachers. *Parents, teachers and school administrators must work together to ensure student academic success.*

**Principal's Corner**- Greetings parents. Happy, Healthy, Safe and Prosperous New Year. With passion I undertook the responsibility of running the school to make a difference for your children. I have an open door policy and I encourage you to meet with me at your convenience, call, email or text me at the number provided. I am here for your children. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, I am excited of working with you and the staff so your children receive a world class education either face to face, online or hybrid (some days at the school others at home via online). I have been at MQIS for the past four months and have been working diligently to get to know the school community. I am from San Diego, California. I am a Chaldean-American who emigrated to USA in 2014 and attended Franciscan University in the state of Ohio. I was summoned to come and run the school by his excellency Archbishop BasharWarda. I took the challenge with a passion to make a difference for your children. We have a lot to accomplish but we could do it together. May God help us to accompany our children, so they grow in Grace and Wisdom.



**Ms. Maryam Teaching** her MYP1A class online bright and early on Thursday January 21st at 8:00am. Of 18 students, only two students did not participate. Following her lesson, Ms. Maryam contacted the family and learned one student had some internet issues and the other joined in but left early. Students receive their assignments through Managebac program which all students have access to it.



**COVID 19**– Mr. Najib & Mr. Abuziad checking student temperature upon arrival. All who enter MQIS compound, including students, parents and staff are required to wear masks, keep the distance, temperature checked, maintain a social distance and wash/disinfect hands regularly. Any student or staff member who has any symptoms are required to stay at home. Hopefully PYP students will be able to attend school soon either face to face or hybrid.

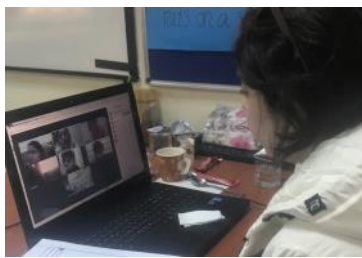


## Distance Learning for all MQIS PYP Students is at a Full Swing!

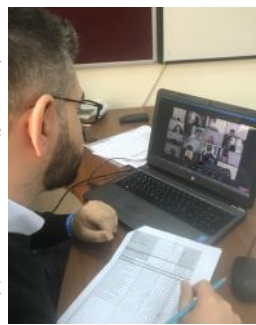
Consistent with KMofE- Kurdistan Ministry of Education requirements, all students during the month of January received their education through the hard work and commitment of the teachers through online. Ms. Hala developed a schedule for all teachers in PYP ensuring the core subjects- English, Math, Social Studies and Science were covered from 8am to 2:30p.m. as if they were in school with a ten minute break between lessons and also allocated time for students at home to have lunch. But all seven lessons were covered. We managed to include in the schedule electives



and KMofE and Social exploring Art through will home until encouraged ensure your



requirements; Studies in options to also online since continue March 1, 2021. to work with the children do not



Kurdish, Arabic Arabic. We are cover PE and PYP students learning from Parents are teachers to fall behind in related to your



school. Please feel free to contact the school for any concerns or issue you may have child(ren) education. If you have some IT issues please let us know so we can have our IT department handle it for you. Remember the staff of MQIS are at the school Sunday to Thursday from 7:45 am to 3:00pm and parents are welcome to meet with the teachers and/or school administrator.

### The new I&S Teacher- Mr. Leonard

Mr. Leonard grew up in Easton, Massachusetts. He earned his degree in Mechanical Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology. Mr. Leonard and his wife volunteered for United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Botswana, Africa. His wife worked as psychiatric nursing at the Institute for Health Sciences and Mr. Leonard was appointed as the Director of Appropriate Building Technology for Rural Industries Innovation Centre in Botswana, Africa. Upon return to the United States in 1996, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard relocated to Steubenville, Ohio. Mr. Leonard worked as Project Manager during which time he earned his Master's in Education from Franciscan University in Ohio. His educational career spanned both public education and a private Catholic school setting, mostly at Catholic Central High School in Steubenville. It is Mr. Leonard's goal to bring his education and experiences to his students at Mar Qardakh International School and, in turn, learn from them and to experience the deep, rich history and culture of Iraq.



**Ms. Mariam Mikhael-** the new English, and Language & Literature teacher for MYP1 and MYP2. She is very passionate about education, particularly joining this great and truly inspirational school. Ms. Mikhael was raised in Australia where she attained her BA degree at Monash University. Ms. Mikhael discovered her calling to education when she visited Mar Qardakh International School back in 2018. She loves teaching English and enjoys reading, storytelling, traveling, and gardening! She is firm believer in collaborative learning, built-in motivation, project-based inquiry, and the IB educational framework. She makes every effort to include these projects and philosophies into her planning for teaching and learning as much as possible. Ms. Mikhael is excited to teach English, and Language & Literature courses to our MYP1&2 students.



### Our New School Secretary- Mariana Sabah Ayub

Ms. Mariana has been working at our school since November 2020. She graduated from Salahadin University where she received her Bachelor's degree in agriculture. She loves her new job and enjoys assisting Ms. Hala and the rest of the staff including teachers. She handles all clerical work and arranges appointments for parents or others who want to meet either with the principal, MYP coordinator or teachers. In addition, when a student is not feeling well, Ms. Mariana handles the calling of the parents. When students don't participate online learning, or if the student is absent, she contacts parents to find out the reason why their child has not participated in the lesson.



**Our new Interior Design Teacher -Ms. Saveen Yousif** who will be teaching Interior Design in MYP. She studied at Salahaddin University and at Tish International university where she received a degree in Interior Design Engineering in 2020. Ms. Saveen has volunteered in a number of ngo groups including with World Vision organization

helping the refugees and at the festival in the Babylon media. She worked as a private language teacher covering Arabic, Kurdish and Arabic. In the area of



her field, she designed a pharmacy in Ganjan City. She not only will work at our school teaching Interior Design but she will also work part time as an interviewer for a radio here in Ankawa. Saveen participated in many church activities and presently she is attends Babel College for philosophy and Theology- Christian education institute. On her spare time she plays the guitar.

**Our New English Teacher- Miss Jenny Korkes**, was born and raised in the suburbs of Toronto-Canada and moved to Hamilton, Ontario about 10 years ago. She is Assyrian-Canadian and have always wanted to explore northern Iraq, which is what inspired her to

move here after a few visits. She is the oldest of 3 siblings. Her family is still in Canada, but they hope to visit soon! Jenny has a good friend, a small dog, Beame. Jenny graduated from McMaster University with an Honours Bachelors Degree in Political Science and Labour Studies and went to work in the field of Human Resources. While working as HR for 4 years she started her Master of Education at Brock University, focusing on international educational development. She is scheduled to graduate in Spring 2021! Ms. Jenny moved to Ankawa in August 2019 and worked as an English teacher for the International School of Choueifat for 1.5 years where she taught grade 10, 11, 12 English and 10 History. She is very excited to join the MYP team at Mar Qardakh School where she will be teaching MYP 3 and 4 English.



**Ms. Yara Korani-** attended MQIS for six years and then through Archdiocese received a scholarship to attend University of Roehampton in London, England. She was in London in September 2019 and then returned to Ankawa. She has been volunteering at MQIS as a support teacher for PYP 4 & 5 teachers while she takes classes online at the university in London. She will be receiving her Bachelors in Science in Management and Economics in 2022. Ms. Yara is passionate about helping students with virtues through various kinds of readings she does through distance learning. The staff and school administration truly appreciate her efforts and the time she devotes to helping the students excel academically especially in area of English language acquisition. It refreshing to hear her speak with students regarding a short story about the characters, plot, setting and the message the story conveys. Thank you Ms. Yara for a job well done!



**Welcome to MQIS-** On Wednesday, January 13th, at the end of a work day, the staff of MQIS hosted a luncheon for the new staff. Dr. Frano thanked Ms. Hala and the rest of the staff for preparing the homemade meals. The new staff truly appreciated the hospitality, warm welcome and the delicious food they provided.



**On Thursday, January 14th at 10:30am Mr. Kareem and Ms Shadad** conducted an inservice training on use of Managebac – an application that is used by the staff as the gradebook, communication with students, unit/lesson plans, and other features that enables teachers to monitor their teaching and learning on line for students, parents, and administrators. Dr. Frano will be able to monitor teachers teaching and students learning through the view of the data of the academic progress of students from which he will be able to make necessary adjustments with approval of Ms. Hala to improve academic success for all students. Data driven decisions!



**D.E.A.R & P.O.P-** Effective January 17th for those students who attend MQIS will be required for the the first 10 minutes of first hour which will be 55 minutes, students will do D.E.A.R- Drop Everything and Read on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays whereas on Mondays and Wednesdays they will be required to do P.O.P- Pencil On Paper of their reading and writing of their choice. So, the dismissal for MYP 3&4 will be 2:35p.m.

**Face to Face and Online-Its Doable!**

Our teachers are so well versed in technology that they can teach students face to face and online at the same time. Here we see Ms. Shayma teaching Kurdish to students who came to prepare for exam while several students were able to participate from home via Zoom. Teachers at MQIS are passionate about teaching and work well together to come up with creative ways of delivering instructions so students don't fall behind academically. During this pandemic, it is imperative for us educators and of course parents that students acquire all the skills and concepts they need to move on to the next grade.



Ms. Shayma teaching Kurdish to students who came to prepare for exam while several students were able to participate from home via Zoom.

Teachers at MQIS are passionate about teaching and work well together to come up with creative ways of delivering instructions so students don't fall behind academically. During this pandemic, it is imperative for us educators and of course parents that students acquire all the skills and concepts they need to move on to the next grade.

**Our English Teacher, Ms. Jenny** working hard with MYP 3 students in preparing them for their upcoming exam. Ms. Jenny is an experienced teacher and students in her class have fun learning with hands on experiences. A teacher on his/her feet is worth ten on the seat!



**Students taking a break from summative exams preparation-** all students were required to wear masks and maintain distance while

they enjoyed playing in our spacious gym. Some students event played football in our relatively new field. Students are continuously supervised.



**MQIS Resource Room-** Effective January 16th we will be addressing all the educational needs of our students including SEN –Special Education Needs Students.



Mr. Nashwan who has a degree in Psychology will be providing additional one on one educational support to students who lag behind other students in their respective classes. For such students we will be developing IEP- Individual Educational Plans whereby regular teacher, Mr. Nashwan, MYP Coordinator, principal and student's parents will meet every three months to develop an action plan to address the educational needs of the student. For such cases, it requires all stakeholders to work together to ensure academic success for each student. San here is getting the one on one help he needs.

**PYP Students Taking Summative Exams**

Although PYP students cannot report to school to receive face to face education, they are allowed to come to school only to take the summative exams. Students at MQIS take education seriously and based on observation one can discern that these students



continuously participated online learning according to the schedule. Students who do not participate for whatever reason, teachers are required to establish contact with parents and find out the reason. If there are any technical issues, the school is prepared to assist. Attendance is taken daily for each online scheduled classes. Excessive absences are not permitted. Make up work and independent study time is allotted in the distance learning schedule. Teachers regularly monitor student work through Managebac program.

**Employee of the Month**

**Congratulations Mr. Kareem-** Each month, the school principal will select the employee of the month who will receive a Certificate as well as Cash bonus for going above and beyond his/her call of duty to reach out and do what is best for the students and the institution. The recipient must have a perfect attendance, outstanding performance, service and dedication. For the month of January, Ms. Hala selected Mr. Kareem.



**The BEST of the BEST at MQIS!**  
*During the Month of January, 2021*

**Students of the Month-PYP**

Each homeroom teacher selects a student to be the student of the month for that particular class. The principal purchased gifts for these students and each was awarded a Certificate. Students who had great academic achievement, good citizenship, good attendance record and displayed leadership qualities in the classroom among his/her peers is selected to be the student of the month. Parents were present and proud to witness this joyous occasion!



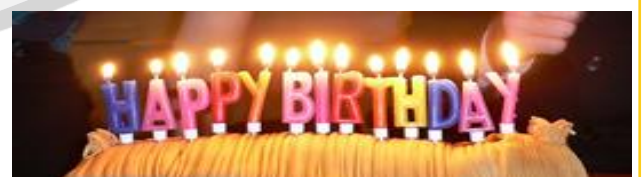
**Front Row from left to right:** Ramos Yakoo –PYP3A, Sherbel Sherza-PYP3B, Fidel Firas –PYP1B, & Mirka Wisam –PYP1A  
**Back Row from left to right:** Yanni Mithaq-PYP5A, Natalie Nabeel-PYP5B, Samantha Saif PYP2A, Yousif Hanjuin-PYP2B, Nardeen Musa-PYP4B, Marly Hedo –PYP4A

**Students of the Month –MYP1-4**

The teachers in the MYP meet at the end of each month to decide what student in each group shall be selected to be the Student of the Month-exceptional students. On Wednesday, January 27th, our principal, Ms. Hala congregated the students in the football field during lunch hour. MYP Coordinator, Dr. Frano explained the criteria to be selected students of the month. Students who stand out for academic achievement, citizenship, attendance and leadership qualities are nominated by their teachers as the student of the month. Each student of the Month received a Certificate and a gift from their teachers.



**Front Row-Kneeling from left to right:** Meron Armata-MYP1B & Rami Youhanna-MYP2B  
**Back Row from Left to Right:** Mariam Alkadani-MYP3, Merrienne Suliman-MYP2A, Amy Bataq-MYP1A & Senfya Kakoma – MYP4



**To Our January Born Students!**

- PYP1-** Rami Basam Saher
- PYP3-** Ryon Rimoun Shamoun
- PYP5-** Stavros Nihad Isshaq  
Gozyan Marwan Hekmat  
Bronail Diar Rophail  
Natalee Nabeel Seryoka  
Rama Mazin Yousif
- MYP1-** Rand Akram Butrus  
Daniel Edmon Khammo  
Damian Raad Najat  
Amy Raid Mikhael  
Malak Naseem Sulaqah
- MYP2-** Andrew Robert William
- MYP4-** Marina Adil Slewa  
Tallin Hagob Serob





# MQIS-Mar Qardakh International School

## Calendar

### February, 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 <i>International Catholic School Week</i>	2 <i>International Catholic School Week</i> <i>-MYP4- Social Studies Exam - Arabic</i> <i>-MYP3&amp;4 Field Trip-Maryamana Hospital</i>	3 <i>International Catholic School Week</i>	4 <i>International Catholic School Week</i>	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 <i>-MYP3&amp;4- Language and Lit. Exam</i>	12	13
14	15 <i>-MYP3&amp;4- I &amp;S Exam</i>	16 MYP4- Physics Exam MYP 3- Science Exam <i>-MYP2a&amp;b-I&amp;S Exam</i>	17 MYP4-Chemistry Exam <i>-MYP1A&amp; B- I&amp; S Exam</i> <i>-MYP3- Mathematics Exam</i>	18 MYP4-Mathematics Exam <i>-PYP1- Summative Exam</i>	19	20
21 <i>-MYP1- Science Exam</i>	22 <i>-MYP2- Science Exam</i> <i>-PYP3- Summative Exam</i>	23 <i>-MYP4- Biology Exam</i> <i>-MYP3 3&amp;4 English Exam</i>	24 <i>-MYP1-4- Design Project Due</i> <i>-PYP4-Summative Exam</i>	25 <i>-MYP3&amp;4 Arabic Exam</i>	26	27
28 <i>-MYP 1&amp; 2 -Arabic Exam</i> <i>-PYP 2 &amp; 5 Summative Exams</i>						