

## The American School of Kinshasa TASOK TALK – SEPTEMBER 2021

### In This Edition:

- ❖ Message from the Director–Welcome Back!
- ❖ First Impressions - Secondary Staff
- ❖ Elementary Insights & Updates
- ❖ PYP Coordinator Notes - Essential Agreements
- ❖ MYP Coordinator Notes - Approaches to Learning
- ❖ DP Updates - May 2021 and '22 exam sessions
- ❖ Business Office News
- ❖ Nurse's Corner – Contact Tracing/3 W's of Staying Safe
- ❖ Calendar & Upcoming Events



### Message from the Director – Welcome to the 2021/22 School Year!

What a pleasure it has been welcoming our new and returning students to campus this past week. The morning drop-offs have been filled with students sharing their summer adventures and their overwhelming excitement to be back at school.

Our 'New Family Orientation' took place on August 20th, where we welcomed over 84 students and parents to TASOK with an introduction to our programs, health & safety procedures, and guided tours led by teachers and returning students. Thank you '**TASOK Ambassadors**' for making our new students feel welcome as they transition to our community.

The summer months have been very busy here at TASOK, as we added additional outdoor learning spaces in both elementary and secondary. These multi-function spaces will prove to be very useful in providing a 'bug free' space to eat, play, and learn. Additionally, we are in the process of completing construction of additional bathrooms and updating safety areas in preparation for another great year.

Thank you parents for reading the '**Parent Partnership Guide**' and for your continued communication with Nurse Nathalie concerning travel and health updates in your family. This is crucial as we current have families still making their way back to Kinshasa due to changing travel restrictions. We also thank those of you that took advantage of COVID-19 vaccine access over the summer for you and your children. This will be instrumental in returning to 'normal' on a global scale.

As with the start of every school year, there is quite a bit of information that will be shared with you principals, teachers, and the nurse. Please make sure to update Ms. Lukeni (Registrar) at: [registrar@tasok.net](mailto:registrar@tasok.net) should any of your contact information change over the summer. We are looking forward to a fantastic school year!

Be safe, be well, be kind,  
Dan Mullen - TASOK Director



**Our Mission for Excellence:** *The American School of Kinshasa provides dynamic and individualized educational challenges and opportunities that promote diversity and empower each of its students to develop into independent global community leaders.*

# Secondary News:

*Lesley Peacock - Secondary Principal*

## Secondary New Staff

What are your first impressions of TASOK.....?

"Every day at TASOK I am meeting new members of the community. Everyone has been so great here and it quickly assuaged any worry I had about culture shock. The great abundance of events and activities means every day we have something to look towards." **Peter Brady Design**

"What an extraordinarily beautiful campus! This is a totally dreamy English classroom. My kids are going to love it here." **Amanda Dago MS English**

"When I entered TASOK for the first time, I was very happy and a bit nervous. Teacher orientation was very helpful and gave me the opportunity to understand the school better as well as introducing me to the school's community. Now I feel ready and excited to be immersed in this intercultural experience." **Jennifer Alegria PHE**

"TASOK is a close-knit and welcoming community of learners and educators. My family has enjoyed exploring the campus, and we have been impressed by the school buildings' integration into the forested surroundings. I am looking forward to a rewarding school year working with students and my colleagues." **Christopher Guttridge EAL**

"A tropical paradise with songbirds abound groceries galore to feed and comfort the soul, pagné heaven! And plenty of books to read. What can I say, living the dream! **Angela Baudoin. SS Librarian**

"The 12th graders are some of the most gracious, kind, well-prepared, and on-task students I've ever encountered! I'm very excited to have the honor to work with them this year. I enjoy the levity and fun of this tight-knit staff. People are welcoming and kind while keeping to the requirements and high standards of IB." **Heather Robison English, Performing Arts**



"New to Tasok, new to Kinshasa and DRC, my first impressions are diverse. I am very pleased to see respectful students and smiling faces ( yes, I could tell despite the masks we all had on). The students were interested in learning about their peers and their teacher's background and seemed ready to engage actively in their learning. "**Catherine Poudin French**

"Thank you for the wonderful welcome to TASOK. What a beautiful campus and community this is! The first week of school has been busy and your students have already started to work hard in my classroom. I look forward to getting to know the TASOK community." **Catherine Steinmetz MS Maths**



# Elementary News:

Mike Bailey - Elementary Principal

## Elementary New Staff

What are your first impressions of TASOK.....?



"How happy everyone is to be back at school and how relaxed and chill everybody feels to be back at school. It feels very comfortable already."

**Blair Cochran- G4**



"Everybody was so loving, kind, and helpful. It is such a warm community to be a part of. Both the teachers and students are so lovely."

**Elizabeth Gough- G1**



"TASOK is a beautiful and inviting community. Everyone is warm and welcoming. It's been very refreshing to walk on trails, to listen to birds singing, and to smell and touch different trees and plants on the campus. Meeting the students this week has been a great pleasure. I can't wait to get to know all the students and their families. It's going to be an amazing year for all of us!"

**Vitna Bailey- PYP Coordinator/ES Librarian**

"I already feel that I belong. I have only been here one week with the staff and kids and the amount of help I have received has really made me feel at home, so I really feel at home."

**Michael-Ashley Jones- G2**



"When I entered TASOK for the first time, I was very happy and a bit nervous. Teacher orientation was very helpful and gave me the opportunity to understand the school better as well as introducing me to the school's community. Now I feel excited to be immersed in this intercultural experience."

**Jennifer Alegria PE**



"It has been absolutely wonderful welcoming the staff, students and families onto the school campus this year. A school doesn't truly have the feel and essence of who it is until the students are in their spaces and engaging with each other and the staff. It was with great anticipation that I waited for the first day with students, the heart of the school. When the students arrived, it was great seeing the happy interactions, smiles, and enthusiasm as they met their teachers, connected with each other and found out more about their new community members. It has been a great start and I am looking forward to what the new year will bring."

**Mike Bailey-ES Principal**



# PYP Update

Vitna Bailey - Elementary PYP Coordinator/Librarian



We are off to a great start! Students are establishing their essential agreements and have started exploring their first unit of inquiry. They are also learning about each other and working hard to build a strong, positive, and inclusive community together. They will be deeply engaged in finding out and sorting out knowledge, understanding, and concepts through inquiry. We look forward to sharing more information during the Open House.

## First Unit of Inquiry

PS 1 & 2	Who We Are, Sharing the Planet, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works	
Kindergarten	Who We Are	Our shared rules and routines contribute to the well-being of our school community.
Grade 1	Who We Are	Our play changes as we grow.
Grade 2	Where We Are in Place and Time	Modern transportation has changed the way we live.
Grade 3	Who We Are	Traits influence how we understand ourselves and others.
Grade 4	Who We Are	People's beliefs and values influence how they approach problems and reach solutions.
Grade 5	Who We Are	People have different understandings of rights.

# MYP Program Update

*Kelley Marchant - MYP Coordinator/Theatre*

Our MYP Program is still celebrating the news of our authorization which we received at the tail end of last school year. We want to congratulate Garrett Austin, Lesley Peacock and all of last year's MYP Program Teachers as they worked tirelessly through last year to prepare for our program study and visit!

One of the goals of our MYP Team this year is to focus on the IB Approaches to Learning. What are they and why are they important? They are trans-disciplinary skills that are developed in students beginning in PYP, working through MYP, all the way to the DP in IB Schools. They are intended to develop students as lifelong learners and reinforce that we are teachers of learners as well as teachers of subjects.

*“Approaches to learning enable students to develop a variety of skills that help them become better learners by teaching them to ask: How do I learn best? How do I know? How do I communicate my understanding?” -IB Guide*



## ATL SKILL GROUPS

**\*Communication**

**\*Social (collaboration)**

**\*Self-Management (organization, affective, reflection)**

**\*Research (information literacy, media literacy)**

**\*Thinking (critical thinking, creative thinking, transfer)**

As you can imagine, all of these skills are important in the development of our students along with the individual subjects that we each teach. We look forward to partnering with you as family and friends in developing our MYP students in these areas!



## DP Update:

*Garrett Austin - DP Coordinator/History*

# May Diploma 2021 results and looking forward to May 2022

Last year, the International Baccalaureate (IB) created a two-track system for schools offering the Diploma Programme (DP), offering both an exam and non-exam option for students to earn their diplomas. The TASOK class of 2021 was placed on the non-exam route, and their results were published over this summer. There are a number of things to celebrate for TASOK students in the May 2021 session:

- 9 students earned full IB diplomas, including 3 that earned bilingual diplomas
- The highest score received was 34, with an average score of 28
- 10 cases where students received a score of 6 out of 7 in a subject

Despite a number of disruptions to the two-year programme, our students were still able to finish strong and celebrate their accomplishments, and we'd love to give them a round of applause.

The class of 2022 is on track to take their exams in May of next year. They will receive a number of accommodations due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. This includes the removal or amendment of assessment components to address the loss of instruction time over the past year, while ensuring the following objectives are met for all DP students:

- Rich, authentic, and integrated curriculum for all subjects studied
- Varied, valid, and reliable assessments of student learning
- Standards and expectations comparable to prior DP exam sessions

All adaptations aim to empower teachers to address their subject objectives with flexibility and fairness in preparation for the exam session during these challenging times.



# Business Office News

## Welcome TASOK Families!

Congratulations on your enrollment for 2021-2022. We are currently reviewing all tuition accounts to make sure all is in order for Semester 1. With Admissions still open, new students are arriving to TASOK this week and next.

We continue to issue invoices and tuition agreements to parents to new and returning families. You can follow the instructions on the letter for payments and return the signed agreements as soon as possible.



Note that all transmission is done electronically. Contact us if you have not received the (re) enrollment documents from us.

Payments are accepted through our online portal or via direct deposits or bank transfers to the school accounts. The tuition rates are published on our website [Tuition & Registration Fees 2021-2022](#).

### Important Notes

- The Capital Development (\$4000) & Admission (\$300) fees are one-time & non-refundable
- The enrollment & (re) enrollment \$1000-deposit for placement/seat guarantee is non-refundable
- Late payment penalties start to apply in September
- The late fee is 5% of the balance owed
- Bank charges are the responsibility of the issuer

You can request Receipts/Forms for UN/WB Education grants, anytime, at [accounts@tasok.net](mailto:accounts@tasok.net). For additional [inquiries](#), you can call or schedule an appointment with me.

Kareen Laplanche, Finance & Operations Manager  
Email: [business@tasok.net](mailto:business@tasok.net) | +(243) 81-880-1330 | [www.tasok.net](http://www.tasok.net)



### Stay informed.

Visit our website [Business Office](#) for details on current tuition rates, payment plans and education loans at local banks. [Link to ED Loans](#).

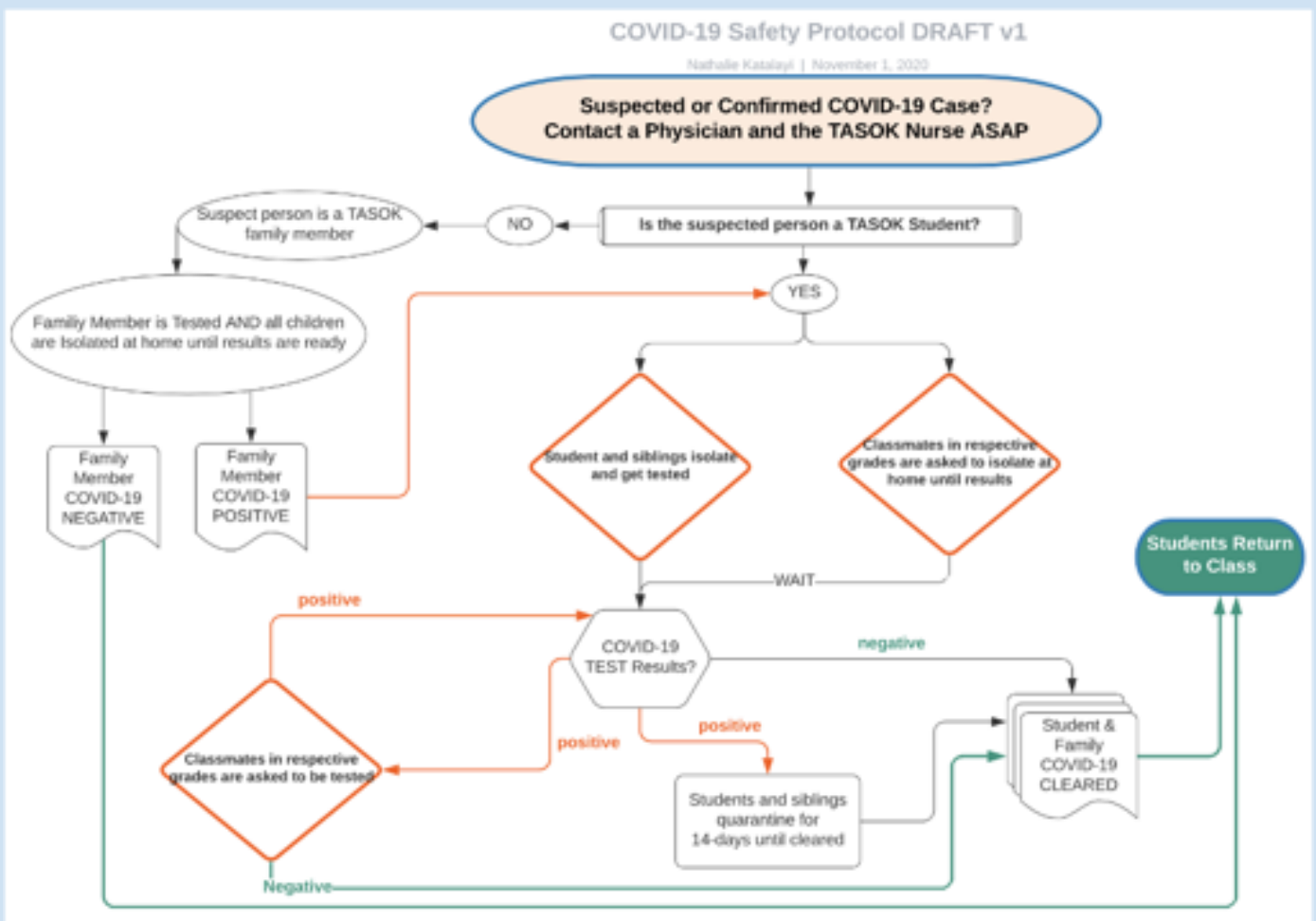


## Should Someone in Your Family/Household Test Positive for COVID-19:

1. Keep your child and all siblings home from school and isolate.
2. Immediately consult a doctor and have everyone in the household tested for COVID-19
  1. This includes all TASOK students (regardless of age)
  2. This includes all family members in the household
3. Immediately inform the school of your situation and all symptom/testing details so that we can start the contact tracing process.
4. Quarantine as recommended for up to 14 days until all family members retest negative.
5. Provide the Nurse with a negative COVID-19 test result and follow instructions.
6. Students will not be allowed to return until all family members have tested negative.

## Should a Family Member of a Student in Your Child's Class Test Positive for COVID-19:

1. Once the school is notified (Step 3 above), we may ask the remainder of students in that grade level (and teacher) to test or stay home and isolate until the student in question has COVID test results submitted to the school (Step 2 above).
2. If the test result is **POSITIVE** - the remaining students in that grade level (and teacher) will be required to have a COVID-19 test **AND** all siblings will be asked to remain at home until the test results are in.
3. If the test result is **NEGATIVE** - the remaining students in that grade level (and teacher) will return to school and resume normal instruction.





At TASOK, we continue to reinforce the following at school, are you doing the same at home?

## 3 W's to reduce risk of COVID-19

**W**ear a mask



**W**ash your hands



**W**atch your distance



COVID-19   [More info on PreventEpidemics.org](https://www.preventepidemics.org)

#KnowCOVID  
#PreventEpidemics

Teach your kids about the 3W's or 3M's:

## Les 3 M pour réduire les risques de COVID-19

**M**asque mis



**M**ains bien lavées



**M**aintenir la distance



COVID-19   [Plus d'informations sur PreventEpidemics.org](https://www.preventepidemics.org)

#KnowCOVID  
#PreventEpidemics



# TASOK CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOUND AT: <https://tasok.net/events-calendar/>



## All School Calendar - 2021-2022 Calendar At a Glance

ALL DATES ARE INCLUDED ON THE TASOK EVENTS CALENDAR. FOUND AT: <https://tasok.net/events-calendar/>

### August 2021

- 14-20 All Staff Orientation
- 20 New Family Orientation
- 23 First Day of School

### September 2021

- 2 Grades 6-12 Awards
- 6 Labor Day Holiday
- 8-30 ES Open house by Group
- 9 SS Open House and MYP Sessions
- 9 Grade 11 and 12 Parent Sessions
- 13-15 School Photos
- 13-17 ES MAP Testing
- 20-24 SS Map Testing
- 28-1 Oct. Mock Exhibition Grade 12 NW

### October 2021

- 2 SAT - Registration deadline Sept 3
- 4-15 Annual Financial Audit
- 7 MYP Assessment session for Parents
- 8 ES Parent Session
- 13 Grade 10 PSAT/NMSQT & Grade 11 USG
- 11-15 Congo Week
- 18-22 School Break
- 29 Quarter 1 Ends - Progress Reports Due
- 30 Halloween Carnival (Tentative)

### November 2021

- 1 Trimester 2 Begins
- 5 Parent/Teacher Conferences (No Scheduled Classes)
- 6 SAT - Registration deadline Oct 8
- 18 College Counseling session for parents
- 24 International Day
- 24-26 Thanksgiving Break

### December 2021

- 3 ES Parent Session
- 4 SAT - Registration deadline Nov 4
- 10 Early Dismissal (11:50 a.m.)
- 10-Jan 4 School Break

### January 2022

- 3 Classes Begin Again
- 10-15 Semester 1 Exams Grades 9-12
- 11 School Make-Up Photos
- 14-17 Heroes Day
- 21 Semester 1 Grading Period Ends
- 24 End of Semester 1 - Semester 1 Report Cards Due
- 27 Start of Semester 2 - Report Cards Go Home

### February 2022

- 11 ES Parent Session
- 16 Personal Project Exhibition (MS)
- 27 Personal Project Reports Due (MS)

### March 2022

- 12 SAT - Registration deadline Feb 11
- 12 Grade 12 Art Exhibition
- 14-18 Grade 12 Mock Exams
- 18 ES Parent Session
- 25-April 1 School Break

### April 2022

- March 21-April 1 School Break
- 8 Quarter 3 Ends - Progress Reports Due
- 11 Start of Quarter 4
- 15 Good Friday
- 18 Parent/Teacher Conferences (No scheduled Classes)
- 22 PYP Exhibition
- 22 Earth Day
- 23 TASOK Gala (Tentative fundraising event)
- 29 DP Exams Begin

### May 2022

- 1 International Labor Day
- 1-7 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 7 SAT - Registration deadline April 8
- 16-27 MAP Testing
- 17 Liberation Day
- 20 ES Parent Session
- 20 Senior Report Cards Due
- 20 DP exams finish
- 24 Grade 10 Transition Evening (6 pm-7:30 pm)
- 25 Senior Send-Off (2:10 p.m.)
- 26 TOK Exhibition
- 27 CAS and Service Celebration
- 28 Prom
- 30 Senior Day and send off
- 30 Grades 5-6 Transition Parent Meeting (8:00 am-9:30)
- 30-5 June Grades 9-12 Final Exams

### June 2022

- 1 High School Graduation
- 4 SAT - Registration deadline May 5
- 6-30 Group 4 Projects
- 10 Jump Up Day Grade 5-6
- 11 Annual Rummage Sale (Internal) - Tentative
- 15 Final Report Card Distribution
- 17 Final Day of Classes (Early Dismissal 11:30)

Last Modified: August 30, 2021 - SOME DATES & EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE DUE TO COVID MITIGATION

If you travel, please ensure you notify the school nurse and follow the new guidelines for reducing your quarantine to 7-days:

[TASOK Reduced Quarantine Guidelines Link](#)

## TASOK 2021-2022 Academic Calendar:

Also found at:

<https://tasok.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/TASOK-2021-2022-Approved-Academic-Calendar.pdf>

2021-2022 TASOK Academic Calendar																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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<b>August</b> 9 New Faculty First Day 16 Returning Faculty First Day 20 New Family Orientation 23 Student First Day	<b>September</b> 6 Labor Day	<b>October</b> 18-22 School Break	<b>November</b> 24 International Day (1/2) 25 - 26 Thanksgiving Break	<b>Q1:</b> August 23 - October 29 <b>Q2:</b> November 1 - January 26 <b>Q3:</b> January 27 - April 8 <b>Q4:</b> April 11 - June 17																																																																																																																																																																																																			
<b>December</b> Dec. 13 to Jan. 4 - School Break	<b>January</b> 1 New Year's Day 4 Martyr's Day 16-17 Heroes Day	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b> 21 - April 1: School Break	<b>Total student days: 178</b>																																																																																																																																																																																																			
<b>April</b> 15 Good Friday	<b>May</b> 1 International Labor Day	<b>June</b> 1 High School Graduation 17 Final Day of Classes 18 Faculty Final Day	<b>July</b> 4 Independence Day	<b>Quarters</b> Early Dismissal Campus Closed Important Date																																																																																																																																																																																																			

Approved December 5, 2020

### September 8-10- ES Open House

On September 8-10 we will be welcoming parents to come see the classrooms during morning drop off (7:30-8:00). and then will have a 30 minute parent information session about the Primary Years Programme (8:00-8:30). During the visit, your child can show you their learning spaces and then at 8:00 when students start for the day parents can join Mr. Bailey in Rm. 21 (Next to grade 5) for the parent session. Teachers will send out a notice to their classes for parents to RSVP for their preferred day.

### Upcoming Events:

- September 8 - 10 ES Open House
- September 9 - SS Open House
- September 9 - Grade 11 & 12 Parent Sessions
- September 13-15 - School Photos
- September 13-18 - ES MAP Testing
- September 20-24 - SS MAP Testing

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."* Nelson Mandela

