

ULLENS NEWS

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Message from the Principal

Dear Parents,

As the academic year comes to a close, we would like to wish all of you a safe and healthy end to the year. While wrapping up the year I would like to share with you updates on two topics. The first is about actions we have taken to protect our Ullens School Community given the recent global outbreak of Covid-19 and the second is to share with you about how we are gearing up for the new academic session that is scheduled to start in Baishakh 2077.

On the 6th of March we held an Emergency Preparedness Task Force meeting with school leaders as well as key members of the public health and medical professional community who are also parents of our students. We are grateful to these parents, who are also experts in this field, for taking time out and updating us on the latest government planning, directives, as well as measures we can take to keep our community safe. This taskforce continues to stay in touch.

After the Task Force meeting, we took the following steps at the school: We encouraged all students to practice handwashing with soap frequently, along with placing educational signage all around campus. We have been disinfecting all areas where there are many touch points (such as railings, and fingerprint scanners, bathrooms) frequently every day. We have stopped serving non-cooked food items and started serving hot foods only. More recently we removed spoons for self-service and have asked canteen staff to put food onto

plates. We encourage all of you to exercise all necessary precautions and to limit interactions in large mass gatherings.

During this time of global pandemic, the best we can do is support one another at the Ullens community, and help maintain a sense of calm for our children and families, even as we adopt best practices of social distancing. As we send this, we have ended the academic year early for Grades 1-5 and Kindergarten on March 13th, and for Grades 6-9 on March 18th. We had worked closely with the SEE testing centre and sent out staff to disinfect all tables and chairs as well as to provide liquid soap for handwashing when the news came of the postponement of the SEE. As per the government's new directive we have shut down all classes for the time being, have reduced staffing at our campuses to skeletal levels, and have started exploring various options for online instruction.

On the second topic: While we are preparing contingency plans in case we cannot reopen school as planned, we are of course proceeding with preparations with the assumption that we *can* all meet again in mid April.

I am immensely grateful to all the parents who filled out self-nomination forms to be class representatives and join our Action Team of Partnership (ATP). Our first ATP meeting was held on March 4th, with parents passionately engaging in and giving feedback on a number of discussion points. We are very happy that the first meeting of 2020 started off on a



promising note, and look forward to much closer parental engagement than in the past. Below is a brief summary of the discussions that took place at the meeting:

Our CEO Dr. Arnico Panday, described his role at the Foundation. He described the foundation's new projects including the Outdoor Learning Center in the Nala and the long-term plans to establish a college. He described efforts to strengthen the Ullens Community, and the school's response to the corona virus emergency. He shared efforts to increase professionalism in management and to improve communications. He also shared openly the challenge faced by the foundation to balance income and expenditures in the face of increasing costs and increasing competition for students above grade 10 (which has led to a decreased enrollment of students from elsewhere joining Ullens for Grade eleven), while honoring the commitment made to parents to increase fees



UEF Board of Trustees with our newly inducted CEO, Dr. Arnico Panday

only twice during a child's journey from Grade 1 to 10.

The CEO's overview was followed by an open discussion during which ATP members voiced their views on a range of topics: Extracurricular activities, opportunities, and competitions for students; the use of underutilized assets; and the future of ATP and increased parent engagement. The bulk of the discussion focused on how to meet the increasing financial challenges: The roles and limitations of fund raising; whether the school should raise fees; the implications of adding an extra section in Grade 1; and the implications of increasing the number of students in each section, and what accompanying commitments would be required from the school.

Following the ATP discussion, taking inputs from all the ATP members, and additional consultation with the SMC and Board of Trustees, we will work on implementing the following action steps in the new academic year:

1. Improve infrastructure and partnerships for more extra-curricular activities, increased opportunities to participate in competitions, and more exposure to Nepali culture and values for all of our students.
2. From the new academic year we will be increasing the intake of students in Grade 1 by adding a third section. This generates additional revenue needed to close the gap created by rising costs. We will ensure that additionally hired teachers are trained to meet Ullens standards, and also that this does not result in overcrowding in spaces such as the cafeteria, canteen, playground, and staircases.
3. We will be increasing the size of each section by two students, from 30 to 32, while committing that the entire additional income thus generated will be spent on improving the quality of instruction, and that the size of sections will be capped at 32 students for at least the next 6 years.
4. Enrolling two additional students per section allows new students from other

schools, countries and communities to become a part of our system, to add to the richness and diversity of our classrooms.

5. With two additional students added in each section taught by two teachers, the student to teacher ratio will go from 15 to 16. The classroom area per student will be more than 18.75 sq ft. A building safety assessment will be carried out by experts to ensure that there are sufficient exits for the additional students.
6. In addition, we will be putting emphasis on Professional Development of all our staff, to sustain and improve the quality of the overall learning environment.

As of now, Baisakh 3, 2076 (15 April 2020) will mark the beginning of our new Academic year. This will of course depend on how the global situation evolves in the coming weeks.

We will keep you posted on any changes via email by early April. I urge all of you to maintain social distance and stay safe during what is an uncertain time.

Kind regards,

Medin Lamichhane
Principal
March 18, 2020

Action Team for Partnership Meeting 2020

March 4, 2020 | School administration and parent representatives came together for the Action Team for Partnership Meeting 2020. The Principal of Ullens School, Medin Lamichhane, opened the meeting and handed the floor to the new CEO of Ullens Education Foundation, Arnico Panday. The CEO welcomed participants and gave an overview of a range of issues. He described his role at the foundation, new projects such as the Outdoor Learning Center and plans for a college in Nala, efforts to strengthen the Ullens Community, as well as the school's response to the coronavirus emergency. Thank you to all the ATP members for your valuable time and inputs. We look forward to our work ahead to strengthen and grow our community.



IB Visual Arts Exhibition

March 6, 2020 | The final exhibition of IB Visual Arts students of Class of 2020 titled "here, we begin" celebrates the student's various interests and their effort and engagement in the arts in the past year and a half. While this marks the culmination of their studio practices as IB students, it is in fact their beginning as artists, observers, creators, and learners in the days to come.



NISSA Boy's School Basketball Tournament

March 13, 2020 | Congratulations to our Ullens School Boy's Basketball team for securing 3rd position at NISSA!



Kindergarten Graduation 2020

March 13, 2020 | Kudos to our little achievers who have graduated Kindergarten with flying colors! Ullens Kindergarten successfully hosted this year's Graduation Ceremony which was streamed live for KG parents instead of inviting them to the school to avoid mass gatherings as per the Government Directive.



Grade Nine Annual Play 2020

March 3, 2020 | On 3rd March, 2020 Grade nine students came together for their Annual Play. Instead of starting from a script written by a playwright, students started from the seed of an idea: the environment. Eight groups of students explored this concept, and used a series of activities and games to develop short vignette performances around that central idea. Each group took the concept of the environment and ran with it, producing eight very different pieces. These pieces were then mashed up to create the final performance.



Grade Five Edu Farm 2020

March 2, 2020 | Early this month of March, 2020, grade 5 students had their Edu Farm visit. Our objective was to develop their learning on an economic activity (agriculture; cash & subsistence crop) in Nepal, interconnectedness of its system and how an organization is beneficial to its society. We also want to extend their participation in selecting vegetables to buy, composting/ utilizing the biodegradable waste effectively.

Nepali Saptah कार्यक्रम

February 26, 2020 | कक्षा ९ का विद्यार्थीहरूले नेपाली भाषाको सम्मान र जगेर्ना गर्नका निम्ति एक हप्ता भरि विभिन्न कार्यक्रमहरू गरे। नाटक, गीत, कथा, कविता लगाएत अरु थुप्रै विषयको अध्ययन गरे र अन्तिम दिनमा त्यसको प्रस्तुति समेत गरे।

Nepal Economic Olympiad

February 14, 2020 | Nepal Economic forum organized Nepal economic Olympiad at Ullens school Campus II from February 14- February 16 where different activities like talk show, essay writing etc were held to increase the knowledge horizon of the Nepalese students.

Grade Four Class day celebration

February 9, 2020 | Grade Four students performed different activities on the stage like dances, songs, plays, instrumental etc. in presence of their parents. Parents were highly appreciative about the level of hard work and dedication that our student have put on for the excellent show.

Ullens Spring Fest

February 8, 2020 | Ullens IBDP first year students organized the Spring Fest 2020 on 8th February 2020. All funds raised from this event goes towards project week and giving back to the community. Students put together an amazing event with games, music, dance, food stalls and live performances.



Zoo Expedition

February 16, 2020 | Grade One students visited the zoo to observe different kinds of birds and to learn about different types of beaks and feet. They also learnt about the adaptation of food habits due to different kinds of beaks.



CAN infotech 2020

February 17, 2020 | Grade Nine students visited CAN infotech 2020 on 17th February 2020 to learn about latest development in information technology. Students were divided into different groups and assigned to develop a video on latest inventions that they observed on CAN infotech.



Congratulations

February 14, 2020 | Subhashree Shrestha for winning the gold medal in 3rd Samjhana Cup Int'l Table tennis championships-2020.





अन्तरक्रिया कार्यक्रम

February 5, 2020 | कक्षा पाँचका विद्यार्थीहरूले नेपाली भाषाको कक्षामा कविता र जीवनी विधा पढ्ने कार्य सकेका छन्। उनीहरूलाई जीवनी र कविता लेखन सीप सिकाइमा सहयोग पुगोस् भन्ने उद्देश्यले विद्यालयकै अपरेशन प्रबन्धक साकार बाबु सुवेदीसँग अन्तरक्रिया गराइएको थियो। साकार सरले आफ्नो पेशागत कार्यका साथै नेपाली भाषामा थुप्रै कविताहरू र कथा लेखन कार्य गर्दै आउनु भएको छ। उक्त कार्यक्रममा विद्यार्थीहरूले उहाँको जीवन र कविता लेखन कार्य सम्बन्धित विभिन्न प्रश्नहरू सोधेर जानकारी संकलन गर्नुका साथै उहाँले लेख्नुभएका केही रमाइला बाल कविता पनि सुनेका थिए।

Interaction session with parent, Dr. Saujanya Karmacharya

February 5, 2020 | Grade Five students had an engaging interaction session with parent, Dr. Saujanya Karmacharya, who came to talk about the digestive system and eating balanced food. She presented age-appropriate information to the students on the topic. Students really enjoyed and learnt a lot from this session. They will be building connections to their immediate environment by identifying other interconnected system. A big thank you from the students and teachers of Grade 5!

Grade Three Class day celebration

February 2, 2020 | Grade Three students performed different activities on the stage like dances, songs, plays, instrumental etc. in presence of their parents. Parents enjoyed the show and appreciated the effort made by students.



Ullens Education Foundation (UEF) Welcomes new CEO

February 1, 2020 | With the growing scope of UEF's work, there is a need for dedicated leadership. UEF Trustee Dr. Arnico Panday has graciously accepted to serve as UEF's first Chief Executive Officer starting 1 February 2020. For the past eight years he led the development of the Atmosphere Program at ICIMOD. Welcoming him into the role, Mr. Som Paneru, President of UEF shares, "It's an absolute honor to have Dr. Panday onboard to help us continue to raise the standards of quality higher education in Nepal. Our community has already benefitted tremendously from his engagement as a trustee and we are looking forward to initiating Nepal's first liberal arts college with him at the helm of strategic planning and execution."

Faculty and Management visit to Nala Outdoor Learning Centre

January 28, 2020 | The entire Ullens school faculty and management went on a day long team bonding retreat to get an orientation on the newly built Nala Outdoor Learning center. The day was filled with magnificent mountain views, fresh food, exploratory hikes and a chance for teachers and staff working on different campuses to mingle.



Lincoln School Invitational Boys basketball tournament 2020

January 27, 2020 | Congratulations Ullens IB team for winning the Lincoln School Invitational Boys basketball tournament 2020!



Environment- friendly sanitary pads distribution

January 17, 2020 | With the mentorship of "Nepali Pad-man" Gyan Maharjan, IBDP year II students went to Sindhupalchowk district to distribute sanitary pads to government school students. The sanitary pads distributed are reusable for up to 2 years. The IBDP Year II students talked about the importance of hygiene and sanitation with the government school students and came back with cross leanings.

Unit of Inquiry Exhibition (UIE)

January 5, 2020 | Grade 5 hosted Unit of Inquiry Exhibition (UIE) where they demonstrated their learning through various activities. We would like to appreciate all parents for their active participation in encouraging the children.



Ullens Education Foundation's Outdoor Learning Centre

The Outdoor Learning Center is located at Kashi Bhanjyang near Nala, 7 km from Banepa, Kavre and 35 km from Kathmandu.

We are happy to share with you that the facilities at our Outdoor Learning Center (OLC) are complete. We look forward to welcoming our students on overnight fieldtrips as soon as the Covid-19 crisis ends.

The Outdoor Learning Center in Nala is a safe, green and environment-friendly space that blends seamlessly into the natural landscape of Kavre District, where children and young adults can learn and play in nature. The OLC meets the growing demand for students of city schools to reconnect with nature and the need to inspire future

generations about the value of the natural world.

The Outdoor Learning Center is located at Kashi Bhanjyang, 7 km from Banepa, Kavre and 35 km from Kathmandu. The site has beautiful ridges, valleys, slopes, streams, and wetlands, and spots with panoramic views of the Himalayan peaks as well as of Nala, Bhaktapur and Panchkhal. The site sits along the trekking trail from Dhulikhel to Nagarkot. Authentic Newari culture in Nala, Brahmin/Chhetri and Tamang culture in the vicinity can be experienced.





Facilities

- Sustainably designed bamboo structures.
- Rooms can accommodate upto 72 students in bunk beds and 6 teachers in double rooms. There are also two family cottages.
- Clean modern kitchen and bathrooms.
- Meeting and group activity hall
- Organic, healthy Nepali food cooked by Ullens staff.
- Electricity.
- Good mobile phone coverage
- Hiking trails on the property and nearby for 2-3 hour hikes.
- Nearby rural roads suitable for mountain biking.



While we prepare programs and activities at the Outdoor Learning Center for students of Ullens and other schools, the Center is already available for retreats or getaways for the Ullens community as soon as the lockdown ends. You are welcome to make use of this space even as we continue to practice appropriate social distancing. Please contact us if you'd like to plan a getaway with your family for a few days away from the busy city life after the lock down measures are ameliorated by the Government.

You can contact Sneh Rajbhandari @9851024008 in case of any queries.



Letter from the CEO to the Ullens Community

Dear Parents, Students and other members of the Ullens Community,

With the first new Coronavirus (Covid-19) infection detected in Kathmandu, it is now clear that Nepal will not be spared by the pandemic. Learning from the experience of other countries, we need to take measures to keep ourselves, our community and our loved ones safe. This includes making extraordinary efforts to change our daily habits to ensure that we don't pass the virus on to each other – changes that go beyond following government lock-down orders. Note that one of the most common ways in which the virus gets transmitted is through touch: You might touch a surface or someone's hand that is contaminated, and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth, infecting yourself. The virus also gets transmitted through coughing or sneezing. While anyone can catch it – and serious cases have occurred in young people as well – the virus is especially deadly for the elderly. The way to stay safe is social distancing.

Responding to the government directive of 18 March 2020, we immediately closed school for all remaining students, and we greatly reduced the number of staff who needed to be physically present on campus, while introducing strict rules on social distancing at work. These rules included staying home if unwell, washing hands frequently, standing and sitting far apart, and ensuring that fewer than 25 people were in one space at any given time. We also deactivated the fingerprint based biometric attendance machines, removed shared serving spoons in the cafeteria, and banned shaking hands as well as sharing pens and mobile phones. We continued with the earlier practice of disinfecting stair rails, door knobs, handles, and lift buttons several times a day.

With the new directive from the Prime Minister on the evening of 20 March 2020, we have shut down in-person work at Ullens campuses through 21 Chaitra (3 April), and many staff have started to work from home. Our hope is to welcome staff back

to campus on 5 April 2020, and to begin the new academic year for KG through Grade 10 on 15 April 2020, as originally planned. At the same time we are closely monitoring the global and local situation, and preparing contingency plans in case of further government-mandated delays.

The current situation is confusing, stressful and scary for many of us. Familiar routines are gone; plans have fallen apart, and families stuck at home. We hope you can use this time to build new bonds within the family, to have the slow time together that is otherwise so rare, and to engage children in real-life learning by engaging them in cooking, cleaning, repairing and other housework. While it is very important to limit screen-time for growing children, we are exploring educational websites, exercises, and online communication tools that we will be sharing with you later.

In the mean time, we would like to ask you to do all you can to reduce the spreading of the Coronavirus. Please stay home, interact with as few people as possible, and only go for allowed essential tasks – and even then stay away from other people. Do all you can to keep the virus out of your family, and do all you can to avoid infecting others in case you have already picked it up. Keep the following tips in mind:

At home:

- Wash your hands with soap frequently, thoroughly.
- If you need to cough, cover with your elbow, not your hand.
- Avoid touching your face. If you see someone else touching their face, call them out.
- Separate clothes you wear outside from ones you wear at home. When you get home, wash your hands and change clothes. Keep clothes you wear outside separate.
- Clean your mobile phones daily with a cloth soaked in Dettol water or some other sanitizer.
- Wash or sanitize hands immediately after handling cash.

- Elderly people are more at risk, so if you have been out and about in the past two weeks, including coming to school, stay away from elderly relatives.
- Avoid inviting guests into your house, even after the lockdown ends.

Outside home:

- Avoid crowded places, and keep at least 5-6 ft distance from strangers.
- Avoid shaking hands with people. Do Namaste instead.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Wear a mask or cover with your elbow if you need to cough.
- Avoid using public transport, even after it reopens.
- Wash or sanitize your hands after you have touched surfaces that others might have also touched (stair rails, counters, door knobs).
- Wash or sanitize hands immediately after you handle cash or items at shops.
- Carry your own pens. Never lend or borrow a pen.
- Never lend or borrow a mobile phone. Do not touch anyone else's. Don't touch yours if your hands touched cash or surfaces that others have touched.
- Avoid visiting other people's homes even after the lockdown ends. This includes playdates.
- Avoid attending any events that gather people who are not part of your circle of daily interactions.

We appreciate that all of this takes extraordinary effort, and we thank you for your effort to keep yourselves and our entire community safe during these extraordinary times.

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions please feel free to contact me directly by email at arnico@ullens.edu.np or by sending me a text message at 9851113096.

Best wishes,

Arnico Panday

CEO, Ullens Education Foundation
March 24, 2020



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