December 2019 

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A Profile Series of AIMS Heads of School

What do you think is the most important innovation that independent schools must adapt?

I think we need to innovate around our schedule and calendar. These days we hear all the time about the financial model; the financial model can be adjusted if the calendar changes. With that said, I'm a big fan of balance, and I'm also interested in more year-round learning. I don't like models where kids are grinding all the time. I do like models where kids can have space to explore their interests, go deep, enjoy what they're doing, and through that learn how to commit and work hard. I think the answer is to distribute learning opportunities more evenly throughout a daily and/or annual calendar.

Booth Kyle, Head of School
Indian Creek School

A Note from the Desk of Peter Baily, Executive Director

Dear Friends,
One of the pleasures of my work at AIMS is the opportunity to get to know many different school communities and to connect with many professionals, like you, who create and sustain diverse institutional cultures and provide extraordinary educational experiences for children. Each of your schools has a distinct mission and personality, and each is vigorous and lively and purposeful in its own way. Altogether, AIMS schools enroll nearly 50,000 students, yet each of our 120 member schools has its own special identity and educates its students according to its own beliefs and values. I am astonished by the breadth and depth of the programs that our schools offer.

We live in a challenging and complex social, political, and economic environment. A healthy future for our human institutions and for the natural world rests in many respects upon the quality of education that our young people—your students—receive.

A healthy future also rests upon the compassionate values, critical and imaginative mindsets, and optimistic vision that you encourage your students to embrace. There is no more important work.

In the midst of these busy winter days and holiday celebrations of light and music and wonder, all of us at AIMS send our gratitude and admiration for your dedication to your students and your myriad contributions to our family of schools.

With warm wishes,
Peter
Directors of Professional Development Get Some Professional Development

You may have wondered how we pick what professional development programs to offer, or how we find speakers for large conferences. A big part of that process is learning from and with other associations across the United States. Twice a year, gatherings for Directors of Professional Development at independent school associations are offered in conjunction with NAIS events, like the national conference and the People of Color Conference. From December 3rd-5th, AIMS Director of Professional Development, Alecia Berman-Dry, traveled to Seattle, Washington to meet with 17 fellow directors to hear about topics of national interest. Our group heard from Rosetta Lee, a well-known Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultant, on what she sees as trends in her field of work. We also met Meg Bolger, who taught a hands-on workshop regarding How to Be A Better Facilitator. The most popular event is always the speaker sharing session, where we discuss the speakers who made the biggest impact in our communities. We’ve found some of our most inspiring workshop leaders in this fashion, from this Fall’s Dr. Kyati Joshi and her Institute for Teaching Diversity and Social Justice to Christian Talbot and his Innovative Schools work.

Accreditation News

The AIMS board proudly renews decennial accreditation to the following schools: The GreenMount School, St. John’s Episcopal School, and Washington Jesuit Academy. Each of these AIMS member schools has demonstrated ongoing dedication to continuously strengthen and adapt their educational programs and teaching – all for the benefit of students – who are not only at the heart of each school’s mission, but also central to AIMS accreditation.

An updated AIMS Accreditation Guide 7.0 has been posted on the AIMS website with the following edits: replacement of binary pronouns with gender neutral language and the addition of the terms equity and inclusion to the term diversity where appropriate throughout the document.
The DC Area Student Art Show Returns!

AIMS has offered a student art showcase in past years in partnership with The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, and expanded that show to Montgomery County in 2018 at The Strathmore. Unfortunately, we lost that partnership last year and have been searching for an ideal space to host student artwork from our member schools in the DC area, Montgomery County and surrounding regions. We are thrilled to say that The Landow Gallery, housed on Landon school’s campus, will host our AIMS Student Art Showcase for that region from January 22, 2020 to February 2, 2020 with a reception on February 2, 2020 from 1:00-3:00pm.

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