

# KODAIKANAL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Annual Report 2008-2009



## Chairman's report

It has been exciting to watch the school develop and flourish under the leadership of our Principal, Geoff Fisher. I would like to highlight some of the achievements for which we can be thankful to God.

- 1) Outstanding results in the 12<sup>th</sup> year IB with 50 of the 50 students who took the exam passing and 8 of them scoring more than 40 points. Our students were accepted in prestigious colleges such as Stanford, Cornell, NYU and other. This year one student has been accepted at Oxford.
- 2) The demand for admissions is growing and the limiting factor is availability of dormitory space. We are likely to reach the target of 500 to 525 fee paying students 2 years in advance of what we had targeted.
- 3) The financial health of the school is excellent and we will be able to fund much developmental activities from internal resources.
- 4) Teachers are more content with staff turn over being less than in earlier years. More and more of our staff are being offered places in International Schools internationally.
- 5) I think the progress and strength of the school is encapsulated in the first para of the Conclusions chapter of the MSA re accreditation report quoted below.

***“KIS is beautiful – of course the grounds and setting are indescribably magnificent, but the mission of the school and the staff’s selfless commitment to the students and the whole education of the child both in and out of the classroom is extraordinary. World class, excellent leaders head the school. The students speak of their passion for the community that is created at KIS, the classes, the teachers, and the friends they make. They love the extracurricular programs such as sports and music. The teachers are the heart and soul of what keeps this place vital.”***

It is particularly pleasing to report that as an outcome of the fiscal stability of the school we were able to fund the purchase of the Swedish House dorm and associated grounds. This purchase was pleasing in its own right as also of value to the school as it is being used to house two student dorms.

Apart from the obvious focus on our student body and their needs, particularly their academic development, the school has continued to work on:

- the planning permission necessary for the Ganga campus development
- the zoning issues associated with Poondi and our planned development there
- the improvement and maintenance of our infrastructure

One development that the Council has undertaken has been to support the move to change the Kodaikanal International School Alumni Association (KISAA) from a North American association to one with a world wide reach; with appropriate support from the KISCO office here at KIS.

The Council also took the opportunity to review Design '94 and following discussions, to reaffirm it as being the document and philosophy on which all of the school's efforts will be built.

I further report that:

1. In the preparation of the annual accounts, the applicable accounting standards have been followed
2. The Directors have selected such accounting policies and applied them consistently and made judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent so as to give a

- true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of the financial year and of the profit or loss of the company for that period
3. The Directors have taken proper and sufficient care for the maintenance of adequate accounting records in accordance with the provisions of this Act for safeguarding the assets of the company and for preventing and detecting fraud and other irregularities
  4. The Directors have prepared the annual accounts on a going concern basis

It was decided to amend the articles of Association and a special resolution will be passed in the ensuing AGM and an application sent to the Regional Director, Dept, of Company affairs, Chennai for his approval.

As we come to the close of this academic year we can look back with a sense of satisfaction over what has been accomplished and excitement over what is yet to be achieved. We thank God for his mercies and continued guidance.

Respectfully submitted

VI Mathan  
Chairman

## Principal's report

2008-09 has been marked as being a year of development in the history of the school but also a year in which a number of fundamentally important aspects of the school were reviewed and reaffirmed. As always our challenge in the school and the community is to focus on our efforts and priorities in the development of the students in our care.

I am pleased to be able to report the following:

- **Students:** KIS has now stabilized its admissions at around the 600 student mark with a maximum of 620. The school has worked hard over the last few years to provide appropriate resources, staffing and accommodation for this number of students. Our students continue to uphold the Kodai tradition of being hardworking, high achieving, involved and challenged. It gave us all great pleasure at Graduation to see what a fine group of young people the Class of 2009 have become and we look forward to hearing news of them in the future.
- **Academics:** Our results and university placements continue to be exceptional and I would like to record my thanks to all the staff who through their hard work have helped our students achieve so well. I refer you to the Vice Principal's report for the more detailed analysis of these results.
- **Staff:** The trend over the last couple of years with the turnover of our teaching staff of 5 – 10 % has been maintained and we continue to welcome a wide variety of volunteers who bring a diversity of skills and experiences to our community.
- **Financial:** As is clear from the report from the Director of Finance & Administration and the Chairman's report, we continue to benefit from the responsible approach to our financial management which has allowed us to increase salaries for all levels of staff, to invest widely into our infrastructure and to purchase Swedish House for the school.
- **Alumni:** This year we have continued to travel widely and to actively seek to foster our relationship with our alumni. To this end and with the support of KFI we have moved KISAA (Kodaikanal International School Alumni Association) from being a North American focused organization to being one which deliberately covers all regions of the world. This development will continue next year with the support of additional staff in Kodaikanal to assist KISAA.
- **Projects:** Due to our increased enrollment and the allied need for space on the High Clerc campus it has been decided that grades 7 & 8 will be moved to the Ganga campus. Plans are well underway for the necessary infrastructure developments and the associated management and staffing needs. Next year's annual report will inform you of the outcome of this move.
- **Ganga campus development:** The school's administration continues to work hard to get the necessary permissions for our planned buildings on the Ganga campus. This is a long process but we are making progress and I look forward to reporting further on this in the future.

Geoff Fisher  
Principal

## Vice Principal's report

It is with a firm sense of optimism that I present this annual report of 2008-2009 which will provide an account of the academic progress at KIS. I have been privileged to build on a remarkable base and am appreciative of the opportunity to serve KIS, an institution of breadth, vitality and distinction.

### Increased intake of students:

This year we markedly increased the number of students at the grade 11 level while in the previous year the increase in the number of students was more distributed throughout the school in all three sections. We had a record number of 198 new students, yet all scheduling, adjustments made with references to resources and use of infrastructure was overall smooth. Parents coming for the first time to the school this year report their decisions are based on the confidence that they have after hearing from our present families that we have a learning-driven school which cares for students, and where high standards of behavior and work ethic are encouraged. Continued student success on IB exams reflects the concerted efforts of students and staff to focus on the improvement of learning.

### IBDP May 2009 results:

#### Overall analysis –IB May 2009

Number of registered candidates	93	
Number of Diploma students	54	
Diploma awarded	53	
Diploma students awarded certificates	01	
Highest Diploma points	41	
Average points obtained by our Diploma candidates	34	
Average grade by our Diploma	5.37	
Certificate students (success)	34	(100%)
Anticipated candidates (success)	05	(100%)

#### Highlights of May 2009 results

- School average was higher than the world average in 20/31 subject levels offered by KIS
- On par with the world average - 7 subjects levels
- All-round excellence in English HL, Second Languages (no student got below grade 5)
- Significantly, higher school average than the world averages in English HL, French B-SL, German B- HL, Spanish B- SL & AB, Psychology HL, Biology HL & SL and Physics SL
- KIS registered students for the first time in IB French B – HL and Korean and after a gap of ten years in Psychology
- For two years in a row in all levels of Math the school average was higher than the world average
- In Extended Essay papers the performance was heartening with 13 students getting grade A, 22 students - grade B, 18 students – grade C

and only one student getting grade D

## KIS Diploma - Class of 2009

### KIS Diploma cumulative GPA analysis –Class of 2009

STANDARD	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
EXCELLENT (PRINCIPAL'S LIST) 3.7-4.0	7	6.67%
VERY GOOD (PRINCIPAL'S LIST)	11	10.48%
GOOD (VICE PRINCIPAL'S LIST) 3.30-3.6	35	33.33%
SATISFACTORY 2.99- 2.5	33	31.43%
MEDIOCRE 2.49- 1.8	16	18.10%
POOR 1.7 & below	0	None
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	

### Highlights of Cumulative GPA - KIS Diploma May 2009

- All students in this class received the KIS diploma
- 50.48% were in the category ranging from Excellent to Good
- This year in the Excellent category (7 students) 6 did full IB Diploma.
- In the Very Good category (11 students): 10 did full IB Diploma + 1 did IB certificates in 4 subjects

## Cumulative credit requirement analysis –Class of 2009

Credits	Number of Students
235 - 260	9 (8.57%)
261 - 280	37(35.2%)
281 - 300	30(28.57%)
301- 320	12(11.42%)
321-340	12(11.42%)
341- 360	3(2.85%)
361-380	2 (1.90%)

- Minimum credit requirement for KIS Diploma is 235 (from next year it will be 250) which in itself reflects a holistic approach to education
- All students received more than the minimum of 235

- The majority of students have secured cumulative credit requirements between 261-340 range (54/105 students)
- This is good reflection of our students' desire to go beyond the minimum credit requirement for the KIS Diploma
- The highest was 380 cumulative credits
- Those who are in the KIS Diploma from grade 9 tend to earn more credits, while those who join in grade 11, due to the stipulated minimum transfer credit of 60 for 9 and 10, secure lesser credits

## Monitoring of samples - MYP

This is our second year of monitoring of samples. The samples of grade 10 students' work from 12 subject areas have been sent for monitoring to the IBO for general guidance. Improvement on all the assessment tasks and criterion application in all subject areas is ongoing based on the feedback received from IBO last year. The objective for monitoring assessed samples is to ensure that our school assessments progressively become more in line with the expectations of the MYP. The last IBO report on monitoring of school assessed samples have indeed given the school valuable inputs to guide our development of the MYP in KIS.

## SAT results

Year	Critical Reading (KIS)	Math (KIS)	Writing (KIS)	Critical Reading (Global)	Math (Global)	Writing (Global)
2008	513	573	519	502	515	494
2007	528	569	539	502	515	494

The KIS SAT results compare very well with the global averages in each subject. KIS has traditionally only provided math preparatory classes for SAT during the weekends for those students who sign up for them. This year preparatory classes have been added in critical reading and writing too in a hope to improve student's performance especially in critical reading.

## RSM examinations

Cyril Poonoose Cherian was the 2008 top scorer in the RSM exams gaining a mighty 143 out of 150 for his grade 5 performance on the euphonium. Second place went to Wytze Ramnath on the trombone with 137, Irfana Hameed, 131 on the trumpet, Kyung Heui and Amy Kim, both with 130 and both playing the flute. Forty four students passed these exams in 2008.

## MSA accreditation / IBDP & MYP program evaluation follow-up

MSA actions were monitored throughout the year to ensure that over the next five years we will have met the goals that we have set for ourselves. We are on track and ahead of schedule in most of the main objectives that we have set as approved by the visiting team. Evacuation and safety issues have been a priority and our evidence of compliance has clearly satisfied the MSA in this additional area of improvement, which was outside the academic and cultural well-being of the school that are now where our concentration lies. The VP has assigned himself and each of the Coordinators their own task force area to oversee and report progress throughout each year.

The MYP and DP strategic plan is put in place and the follow up actions are now a part of the ongoing process of quality control in the delivery of the programs. The following extract from the IBDP five year report sums up our attempt to concentrate on the essentials of the teaching and learning process:

***‘Kodaikanal International School is to be commended on the continued success of its students, and for its sharp focus on international issues and social justice. Since its last five year review, it has clearly taken steps to address matters raised at the time, especially in regard to teacher training, and the response from staff in individual groups this year demonstrates strong support for the school and its programmes.’***

## PYP candidate school

After approximately two years of feasibility study work including workshops, visits with other PYP schools, questions and answer sessions with PYP Coordinators and finally an intense curriculum mapping processing with all teachers of ES, we took the first step in becoming a PYP school: a preliminary visit by Bill Fenton, Asia-Pacific Associate PYP Manager which was followed up with his report that from May 2009 KIS has the acquired the status of a PYP candidate school. I quote from Bill Fenton’s preliminary visit report:

***“All concerned with the development of PYP at Kodaikanal International School can be proud of the way the school reflects its special character and its traditions and I felt that there is a deep commitment to providing the students with quality, inquiry based learning experiences. As a result of the visit to the school and the discussions which occurred with the leadership team and staff, it is quite apparent that Kodaikanal International School has thoughtfully set themselves up for successful implementation of the PYP. I look forward to supporting the ongoing development of the programme at the school and wish them every success with the implementation.”***

## Senior thesis portfolio (STP)

For the past two years the Academic Affairs committee has been discussing the introduction of a Senior Thesis Portfolio (STP) for the non-IB Diploma students. This would be the equivalent of the Extended Essay which is mandatory for the IB students. We finally took off with STP in the second semester for the non IB students. This move has added the rigor of research to our KIS Diploma. The best research papers along with those of IBDP and MYP grade10 Personal Project will be published in “Abhivyakti” the KIS online research journal. The students will be awarded certificates of merit.

## Continued thrusts

The major thrusts on an ongoing basis have been the integration of technology in the learning process, library up gradation and professional development. The focus on integration of technology in the learning process has resulted in more LCDs and e-beam and smart boards being installed in the class rooms. The department web pages are updated and departments and the KIS library now have more CD roms and software as a part of their lager resource base. We have a new MYP reporting system while the intranet is been regularly fine tuned.

Usual curriculum reviews are taking place and with more funds allocated towards professional development we are able to have larger numbers of staff being trained on a regular basis. The professional development program has now a wider coverage – IB related workshops, sub-regional workshops, pedagogy related workshops – NESAS, KAGAN, RSM and specialist teacher workshops given by private providers.

Outside the classroom our students continue to excel in the inter-school tournaments while college placements continue to improve year after year.

The ripples going out from KIS will continue to amplify as we build on our strong foundation.

Kaisar Dopaishi  
Vice Principal

## Finance Director's report

It is my pleasure once again to be writing the financial section of the annual report. KIS has continued to strengthen its financial position. The hard work put in over the years by many people paid off when we were able to purchase Swedish House. It is a testament to the financial strength of the school that we were able to mobilize the funds required for the purchase within 48 hours of the final price being agreed upon. The purchase of Swedish House enabled us to cancel the lease on one of our rented dorms.

Expenditure continues to be monitored and justified. The Council which had committed to reviewing the salaries on a periodical basis increased the salaries this year also. Expenditure on staff continues to be the major recurring expenditure.

KIS continued to make substantial investments in information technology, music and has made significant budget allocations for other teaching departments and residential life this year.

The school has finally seen some progress on the planning permissions for the new dorms and houses. We are hoping that the plan approval process will be completed soon and that we will start construction shortly. This will ensure that we are no longer dependant on rented accommodation for our students. Further, these dorms will be more convenient for students as they will not have to travel to and from their dorms for classes and meals.

The Council of Directors continues to review the fee structure for the school annually. Last year, the fees were increased by 7.5%.

We have had good reports from our external and internal auditors.

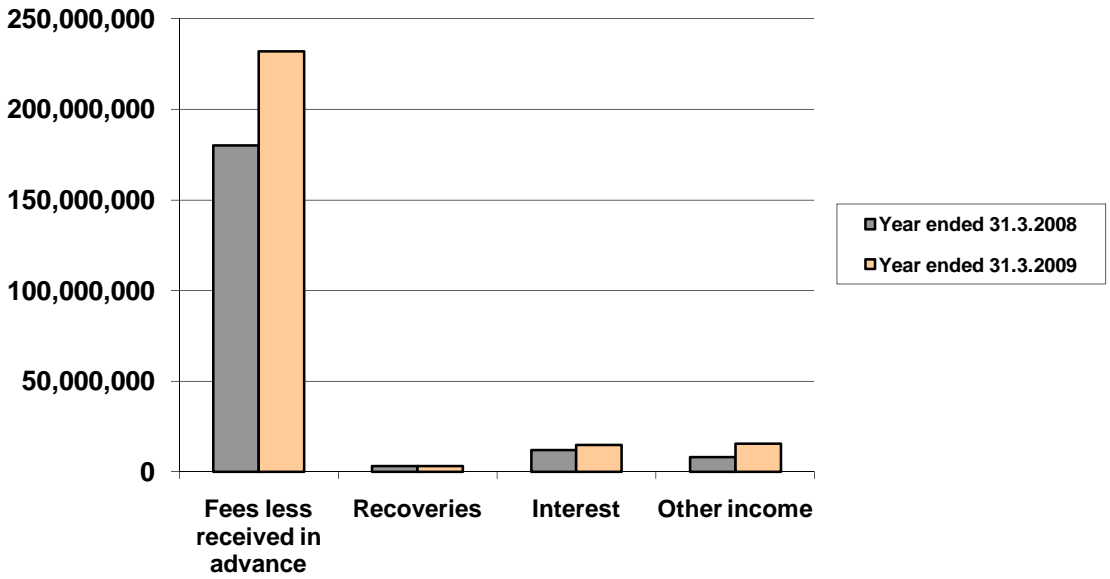
The finance office was able to identify and start using payroll software. With the help of the Information Systems Manager we have also made a huge step forward in terms of our budgeting process. Budget holders now fill in their requests online and this is compiled into a budget.

### Income

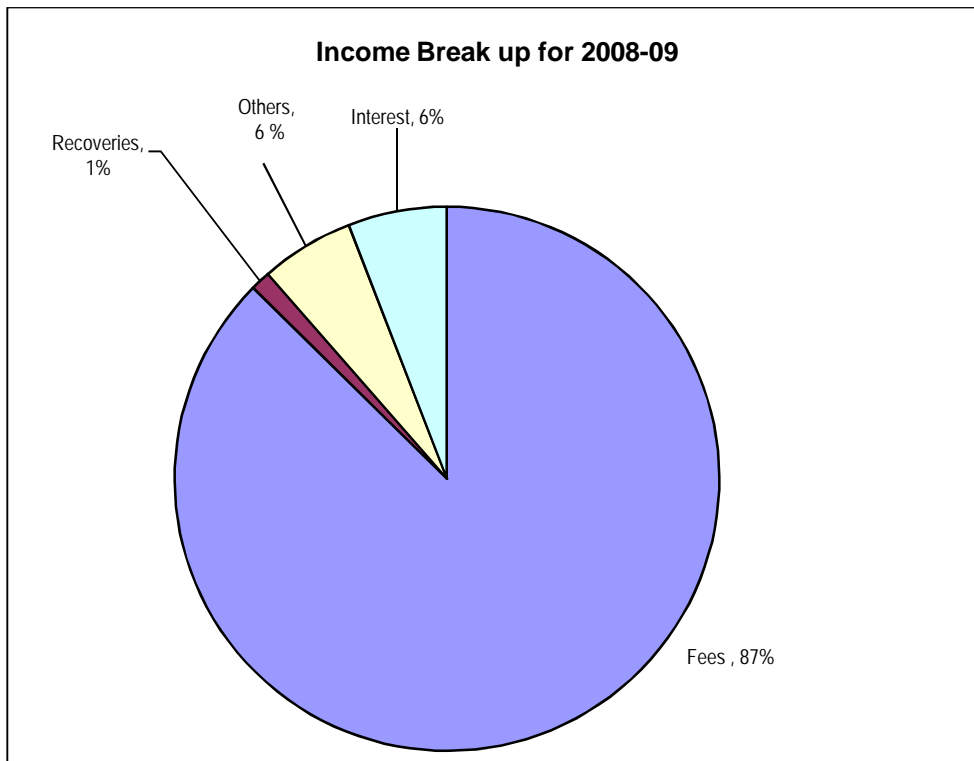
During the financial year 2008-09 the fee income has increased by 29% and the total income by 31% when compared to the previous year. A significant part of the fee income increase is due to the additional students that have been enrolled.

The comparison of the income of this year to the income of the previous year is given in the chart below:

**Comparison of income  
(Indian Rupees)**



Fees continue to be the major income source for the school as is seen in the pie chart below:



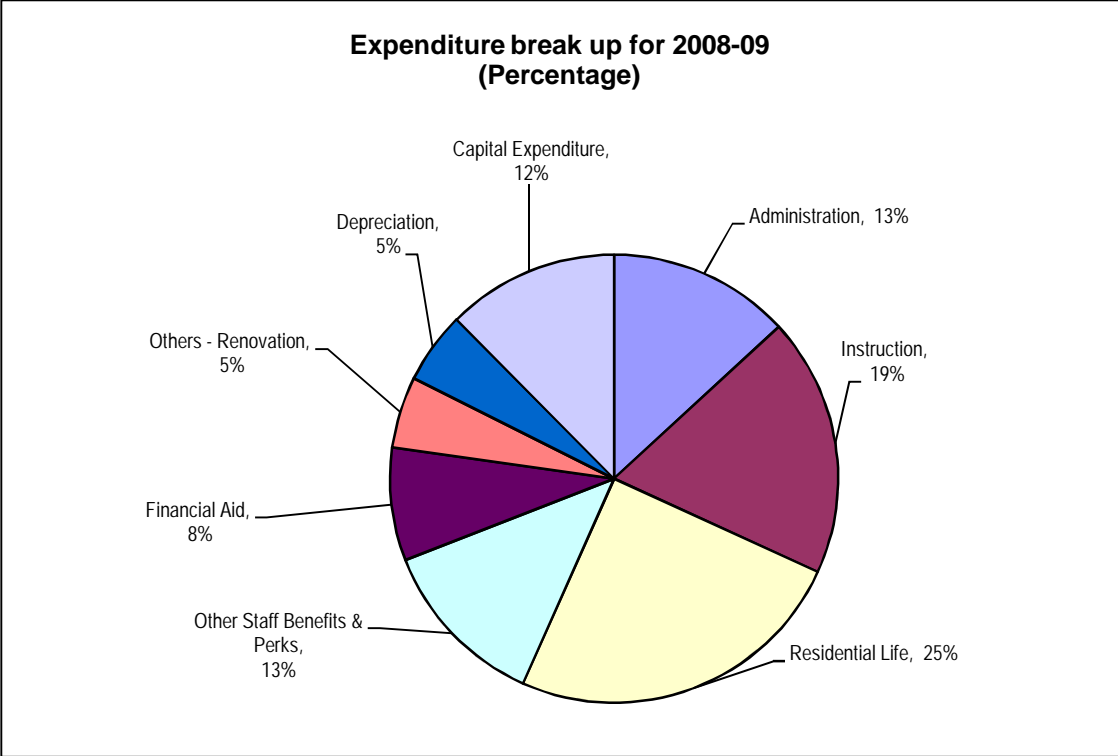
## Expenditure

We have been able to control our expenditure and the increase in expenditure was 22% when compared to the previous year. Increase in teaching and general staff, additional allowances and salary increase meant that the staff expenses increased by 10%. Operating and administrative expenses increased by about 33%. Financial Aid is maintained at about 8% of the fee income.

The break up of the expenditure in the different areas is as follows:

	Percentage to total
Administration	13
Instruction	19
Residential Life	25
Other Staff Benefits & Perks	13
Financial Aid	8
Others - Renovations	5
Depreciation	5
Capital Expenditure	12
Total Expenditure including depreciation	<hr/> 100 <hr/> <hr/>

The major part of expenditure budget is towards residential life and instruction as shown in the pie chart below:



The staff salaries and staff benefits including housing continues to be our major expense and accounts for 53% of the recurring expenditure.

As a not for profit organisation KIS enjoys tax exemption under the Indian tax laws. To enjoy this exemption KIS is required to spend at least 85% of its total receipts. Our total expenditure for 2008-09 has been well above the minimum requirements. It may also be noted that as a private company, KIS is not required to publish its accounts under Indian law.

Dr Samraj Ganga Christus  
Finance Director

## Dean of Students report

All the scheduled activities for the academic year 2008-09 so far into the semester have been completed and are on schedule. The new kitchen and the KG-8 over at the Ganga compound have been completed and have assisted both the academic and residential life. The separation has catered to the needs of the MYP program more effectively, with Mataji Sharma and Graham Lambert heading the program. Similarly Brian Nelson has also worked into collaborating and instituting a well structured framework to work within.

The Hiking and Camping program has been in full swing, with the ardent hikers taking on the challenges with each ensuing hike and the class camps have also been a time for all the students and advisors to get a break from the hectic expectations from school work when the peers of each class are able to get to know each other better and also have an outdoor experience.

Social Experience field trips required extensive planning from the department and all the other concerned leaders played a vital role with the planning and logistics. The overall feel of all those who went on the variety of trips have been affirmative of the educational value and cultural experience. The disciplinary action following some of the incidents that occurred during some of these field trips required immediate suspension or dorm pounding. Matthew Joseph and his colleagues did a fine job to pull off the elaborate program.

Care week and the writers' workshops have all been areas that were well planned and executed engaging the students to pro-actively contribute and gain tips on valuable life skills! The effort taken by the organizers has indicated towards a structured and systematic flow so that all academic programs were left undisturbed and the students still got to have the experiences promised to them by the workshops.

Thus far, the girls volleyball and track and field as well as the boys soccer and track and field events, as well as the basketball inter school competitions in Ooty continue to challenge our students. The basketball tournament hosted by KIS was also well attended and schools from in and around Dindigul district, MCHM school Chennai and schools from Ooty participated, increasing the standard and competition was stiff. The winners were MCHM Chennai for the year 2009-10. The annual gymnastic show participants, with the guidance of Sither and Beth did a fantastic job.

Hats off to the Music department for coordinating well and getting all the RSM students to prepare thoroughly and then have a feel for the exams by having concerts that were a run up to ease the nerves of the students and also give them a chance to have an audience. The results have been impressive and the students and teachers are highly commended. Another point to be noted is that the behavior of the students at these concerts and other weekend activities has been improving considerably, with the assistance and insistence of the different staff chaperones.

A few of the dorms have been renovated and the upkeep of all the dorm facilities is a continuous process. However, it is mandatory to ensure that all of the school properties are maintained and kept in the highest possible standards as the school has always been in the forefront in being a premier institution. With timely supervision and immediate action and follow up on different requests this high level can be maintained. This is also a concern several parents bring up when they visit their wards. Some dorms needed to have a new set of modular furniture which was provided to improve the ambience of the dorm.

The long weekend was looked forward to by one and all. However, the work that goes into the fine details of parents approval and invitations and all other specifics was laborious. Similarly, assuring that all the travel went according to plan because of the coordinated effort of the travel department and the concerned parent and all the dorm parents, the logistics were worked without any glitches. The staff and students who stayed back had a lot of activities lined up for them to

keep them occupied. The High School students were able to catch up with work and turn in other assignments as well.

Similarly the High School and Middle School formals have been completed and the students have taken part with enthusiasm and the events turned out to be well attended. Students have started adhering to the tightened set of dress code expectations though there are the usual lot who tend to resist and they too are being addressed.

The Youth Rise program was a novel event and that was accepted well and there were several students who took part in the event.

The involvement of staff and students alike during the selection process of the new Principal was one of keen interest and anxiety as it goes without saying that everyone wants the most apt person for this post as it makes a world of difference in the life of the institution. It was keenly followed by the KIS community as the significant decision was made step by step and its with great expectation that Mr. Adrian Moody will be made Principal. Personally, I look forward to work with him as I worked with Geoff and jointly work towards achieving the targets of the school as a whole.

The recent scare of the AH1N1 epidemic forced our school to put into place timely extensive precautionary measures that were directed by Prof Mathan, which alleviated any chance of any of our students or staff getting the virus. I want to really thank and commend the students who worked with us and not against us in each of the dreaded rules that were put into place as it was something new and dire. The student body cooperated well with the lockout time during the swine flu scare situation.

STUDCO proposed the plan of installing solar water heaters for the dorms as well as solar lights for which the Council of Directors appreciated and approved for the same. We hope to be able to see growth in this direction so that this plan materializes and it will be an exemplary project to different sectors of the school and the Kodai community.

At this point of the semester a few remaining weekend activities will include several different members of the staff and student body's participation. Similarly, the semester exams and other end of term procedures will have everyone busy before the Christmas vacation. My wife and I will be visiting our son in Buenos Aires, Argentina during this time. We would like to wish all the members of the Board a very blessed Christmas season.

Sam Balachander  
Dean

## Chaplain's report

It is a great experience to be part KIS. It is a wonderful community that contributes to individual and collective growth in many different ways. The whole year was abuzz with school and spiritual activities. It is good to take some time to think and reflect upon those activities at the year end. This report will summarize the various spiritual activities from July 2008 to May 2009.

### Worship life

Sunday worship at KIS Chapel was vibrant and active filled with students of all ages, staff and wider Kodai community members. In the past year we experimented with various worship patterns which will help students to worship meaningfully. Part of the change is the introduction of vibrant music. Students were eager to have a role in the worship through reading scripture, leading prayers for the church, singing in the choir, playing music instruments and offering testimonies. We strive to keep our worship services student centered so that they understand what they do. Typical Sunday morning services had between 125-175 people attending. Chaplains and KIS community members shared in the preaching of God's word.

Special services were held during Lenten season, Passion Week and the entire community celebrated the Easter festival. A teenage son of one of our staff was baptized and four other Christian children received confirmation on Easter morning. Sunday school and adult bible class were the places of fun and Christian nurture.

### Worship life of children of other faiths

More than half of our students come different faith backgrounds. They have their own personal worship and prayer times. Festival times like Diwali, Holi and Id were celebrated as a community. Muslim students who fast during the month of Ramadan were specially taken care and special meals served at the end of day's fast. On request students were taken to the temple and mosque for prayers.

### Religious education

Religious education is designed in a way to create awareness concerning various religions and to introduce students to the Life and Teachings of Christ. Lower classes study world religions in general, and do projects studying different religious perspectives. Higher classes study Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam in detail. For many of our students these courses are a path to self discovery, gaining a better understanding of their own religion and learning to appreciate other religious faiths. Those who want to pursue in depth understanding of Christian faith study "Advance Christianity". Apart from this, the students studied Ethics and Modern Religious Thought as electives.

In an age of increasing religious hatred and animosity these courses teach our student respect and tolerance.

### Spiritual development

To nurture Christian children in Christian understanding and faith we have several programs. They are Christian Endeavor (for grades 9-12), Teen Dimensions (for grades 7-8 graders), Friday prayer breakfasts (a time of prayer and fellowship) and dorm devotions (every Thursday). But this happened only in the first semester. In the second semester; CE only once a month and Friday prayer breakfast less frequently due to various organizational activities. So we conceived the idea of "Barnabas groups" in which willing children were put into small groups under Christian staff

where they can be nurtured and supported. Still it is our desire that Christian parents encourage their children to take part in these activities.

## Special events

Every year in the first week of February the school celebrates "Christian Emphasis Week". This time KIS hosted "Scripture Union" an organization dedicated for working among school children. They actively engaged the students in all grades by leading CE retreat, visiting the dorms, teaching RE classes, leading a worship service and just hanging out with students. Students were encouraged by their work.

The retreats for the operational staff and support staff were addressed by guest speakers in the first semester and Associate Chaplain in the second semester. In the second semester operational staff were blessed by a family counselor who spoke to the staff on family themes.

The professional staff retreat was addressed by Mr Emmanuel Babu, a former Council member in the first semester and by Rev Dr Mohan Chacko in the second semester. Staff were challenged to think about the role of faith in teaching moral education in a pluralistic context.

## Counseling

Above all these, counseling of staff and students was the most significant, demanding and rewarding part of the work. Both the Chaplains helped and counseled students from different faith backgrounds.

Over all it was a wonderful year of learning, serving and growing together in the knowledge of the Lord. I am thankful to the Lord for this opportunity to serve him through the school. Also I am thankful to my colleagues in the Senior Management Team from whom I learnt a lot and received much courage.

God bless!

In His Service  
Rev Raja Krishnamoorthy  
Chaplain.