Fran Carroll announced Interim Executive Director

First Day of School
August 8, 2022

Pollinator Day Census
August 19, 2022

Charlotte Flores, Htwe Htwe, & Alyson Barrera present at WIDA conference

Scripps Spelling Bee competition at ICS

$40,000 raised on #GivingTuesday

Holiday Toy Market

100th Day of School
January 26, 2023

Science Olympiad won 8 medals!

Visit with ICS founders Bill Moon, Mary Moon, & Barbara Thompson

YMCA Garden Workday

Aspiring Teachers television debut!
20th Annual UN Day Parade and Celebration! October 28, 2022

Happy Adoption Day, Scorch!

UC Day Photoshoot with CreativeSoul

Fall in Love with Reading February 14, 2023

8th Grade IB Exhibition May 4, 2023

Field Day!

ICS Arts Fest March 10, 2023

Black History Month Wax Museum February 2023

Career Week

Health Fair & Vaccination Clinic

Last Day of School May 24, 2023

5th Grade IB Exhibition May 4, 2023

2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR
Dear Beloved Community,

Each week, I watch Abbott Elementary, a sitcom that has the amazing ability to capture both the heartwarming moments and the natural comedy that exists while working in a school. A recent episode featured first-year teacher Gregory, played by Tyler James Williams, being honored as Teacher of the Year. He feels uncomfortable with the attention and undeserving of the honor. So in his acceptance speech, he says, “This profession isn’t about being the best, it’s about doing your best. Being a constant for your students on the good days, the bad, the terrible. It’s the showing up that counts.”

The staff, parents, and supporters of International Community School have shown up this year each and every day to uplift our incredible students. And our students have shown up, too! It’s not always easy to give your best at school, especially if school is in a second language or culture from your own. But our community has been Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges all year long, and we are celebrating their successes!

In this Impact Report, you’ll read about our innovative Aspiring Teachers Program. We’ve been blown away by the attention this initiative has received. But most importantly, we’re grateful for the inspiring educators it has brought to our community. You’ll also meet one of our Americorps volunteers, who—believe it or not—is a former ICS student! This report includes a note from our champion Board Chair Chanika Perry. Finally, you’ll see reports about our academics, fundraising, and impact.

The 2022-23 school year has flown by, but I cherish every moment a student understood a new concept, a parent got involved, and a teacher-led with enthusiasm. We’re showing up every day, and the work we’re doing counts so much. As I look ahead to next year, I am delighted to accept the Executive Director position which I head this year as interim. I know ICS has a bright future, and I am eager to continue investing in every child’s growth and success.

Thank you for being a part of our 2022-23 impact!

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**About ICS**

**MISSION**
The International Community School is an International Baccalaureate World School that educates refugees, immigrants, and local children. ICS provides a rigorous and holistic education in an intentionally diverse community of mutual learners.

**VISION**
The International Community School seeks staff and families who are committed to our vision of creating a supportive community of students, staff and parents, learning from each other and celebrating diversity among us.

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**450 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADES K-5TH**

**85% FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

**30+ LANGUAGES SPOKEN WITHIN ICS**

**69% QUALIFY FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH**

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**2002**
ICS opens as one of the first public charter schools in Georgia

**2006**
ICS opens a second campus for 5th and 6th graders

**2012**
ICS merges campuses and moves to its current building in Medlock Park

**2020**
COVID-19 causes the school to operate virtually, then hybrid, for 18 months

**2022-23**
ICS celebrates its 20th "emerald" anniversary!
“I have friends from Mexico, from Africa, Nigeria, Afghanistan, and America, also teachers who speak French. You learn their languages too—my class is really fun!”

AYAT, 3RD GRADE AFGHANISTAN

Photo courtesy of CreativeSoul Photography
Summer Bridge Program
In 2022, ICS collaborated with Vibha for the second year in a row to offer Summer Bridge, a 4-week intensive program that aims to help students meet their reading goals and start the new school year strong.

50 Students met in small class sizes of no more than 10 students. Not only did students get individualized literacy instruction, but they also explored science projects that fit the under-the-sea theme. They mined fossils, tested buoyancy, crafted a swarm of jellyfish, and more!

To celebrate that 60% of students grew at least one reading level during the program, we took a field trip to the Georgia Aquarium!

Summer Bridge 2022
READING LEVEL GROWTH

- 61% Increased 1 or more reading levels
- 29% Maintained reading level
- 10% Testing results unavailable
- 25 out of 41 students tested increased at least one level over 4 weeks of Summer Bridge
At ICS we believe that our students’ value and achievements go beyond standardized testing scores. We use aggregate data to inform instructional needs. This year, we attribute our strong gains in scores to several academic changes including fine-tuning our MTSS program, hiring additional TAs within our ESOL team, and focusing on small-group instruction for reading and math.

**Georgia Milestones**

- **72%** of ICS 5th graders scored "Developing Learner* or above in Math and in Reading

  - Compared to DeKalb County as a whole:
    - 52% in Math
    - 66% in Reading
  - Compared to Jolly Elementary:
    - 35% in Math
    - 43% in Reading

*Jolly Elementary School is used here for comparison purposes given the similar demographics of ELL students

**MAP Growth**

- **60%** of students met Math Growth Goals
- **57%** of students met Reading Growth Goals

MAP is an adaptive, district-wide assessment that students take every winter and spring to measure growth and create individualized learning goals.

**WIDA**

- **83%** of ESOL students made at least 1 level of band growth
  - Up from 40% in Spring 2022
- **57%** of ESOL students met multiple levels of band growth
  - Up from 18% in Spring 2022

ACCESS Testing is given annually to our ESOL students to measure English Language Proficiency. This data is from Spring 2023.
ABOUT OUR CURRICULUM

ICS operates under the guiding principles of global citizenship.

The ICS curriculum follows Georgia educational standards taught within the framework of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme, enabling students to employ an investigative, inquiry-based approach to learning. Our teachers undergo IB-specific professional development trainings as well as ESOL endorsements to serve our unique student body with excellence.

Every week at ICS, students are exposed to core ELA and math instruction, intervention blocks, social and emotional learning, French, art, music, physical education, and “Discovery Fridays.”

This year, for the first time since the pandemic, students also got out of the classroom to learn! ICS facilitated 20 field trips to places like the Georgia Capitol, Agnes Scott’s Bradley Observatory, the High Museum of Art, and MLK Historic Sites at Sweet Auburn Avenue!
“We dream of having an education for our children here, but they still miss family members in Burma,” said Sawdaniel’s mom. “The situation is too dangerous to visit.”

SAWDANIEL
3RD GRADE, BURMA

Photo courtesy of CreativeSoul Photography
**Food Co-Op Expansion**

In October 2022, ICS was honored as a recipient of the Chopstix for Charity™ grant from the National Association of Asian American Professionals (NAAAP) Atlanta to **double the capacity of our bi-weekly food co-op**.

The ICS Community Resource Center (CRC) partners with Urban Recipe. We host the co-op meetings at school, and members meet every other Wednesday after dismissal to equitably distribute pallets of produce, frozen meals, and pantry staples.

Thanks to the generosity of NAAAP, our ICS co-op has been able to expand to 45 families in the 2022-23 school year! This year, **we passed the mark of 100,000 lbs. of food distributed!**

- **114,189** pounds of food distributed through Urban Recipe Food Co-Ops to date
- **132** hours spent working to equitably divide food at meetings
- **209** household members fed every other week, including 99 children
AWARDS & RECOGNITION

This year, ICS continued to gain recognition as a model of what a full service, multicultural education could be.

**WIDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE PANELIST**

**LOUISVILLE, KY**

Charlotte Flores, Htwe Htwe, and Alyson Barrera present “Multilingual Family Engagement that Empowers, Builds Community, and Informs Practice.” They have since been invited to speak at the upcoming Global IB conference in Toronto as well!

**GCSA AWARD FINALIST: “BEST COLLABORATION”**

**ATLANTA, GA**

ICS was recognized for its collaboration with Refugee Womens Network, for starting a teacher pipeline program (see p. 13). Our partnership also extends to our health services! ICS and RWN put on the first COVID vaccine clinic held in a school, a model that has been replicated in schools across DeKalb County!

**BUILDING HOPE IMPACT AWARD**

**MIAMI, FL**

We were honored to be awarded $10,000 as a model charter school for community engagement at the Building Hope Impact Summit. They noted how our school has truly become “a hub for its local population with translation services and a food co-op.”
ONE SCHOOL, 66 NATIONS

TOP LANGUAGES AT ICS

- Burmese
- Arabic
- Hindi
- English
- Farsi/Dari
- Amharic
- Somali
- Nepali
- Spanish
“To me, generosity could be respecting people in some ways despite their skin color, hair, or anything else on them that is different.”

MOHAMED, 3RD GRADE
YEMEN

Photo courtesy of CreativeSoul Photography
Aspiring Teacher Pipeline

Shakila Amiaq, Sima Niroula, and Saadiyah Alani are three incredible refugee women rebuilding their lives in Atlanta.

After arriving in the U.S., all three highly-educated women faced a realization. They would need to start a new career path.

ICS, in partnership with Refugee Women’s Network, recognized a unique opportunity. Many refugee women have work experience and higher education in their home countries. Their qualifications are situated to address the teacher shortage faced in Georgia, but often there’s a barrier to transferring their credentials over to be recognized in the United States. Together, we created the Aspiring Teachers Program. This free program empowers refugee women to navigate the path to a career in education.

Through this program, Amiaq, Niroula, and Alani have the opportunity to work as teaching assistants at ICS while they complete their American certification coursework. By next school year, they will be co-teachers. Within two years, they will be ready to lead their own classrooms.

Additionally, the teachers have become trusted advocates for their students, coming from the same countries and speaking the same languages as many of our students' families.

Fran Carroll, ICS Executive Director, hopes to expand the program's reach to more refugees and more schools across the state. “We are confident this program can be replicated so other school districts and other charter schools can take this same model and take another group of women and help them become certified teachers,” Carroll said.

As seen on....
INNOVATIVE RETENTION INITIATIVES

Teacher pay that is commensurate with DeKalb County

Extended focus on teacher well-being through “6 weeks of self-care” and Teacher Appreciation Week

Tuition reimbursement and other professional development initiatives

Additional teacher planning that includes duty-free lunch and recess.

2022-23 STAFF RETENTION

ICS currently has a staff retention rate of 92% of teachers who scored at Proficient or Above on their TKES Summative Assessments.

2022-23 STUDENT RETENTION

This year, ICS saw a 13% increase in student retention from the previous enrollment cycle.

“"When I first arrived at ICS, I didn't realize how my life would suddenly become enriched by a class of young learners, who continue to persevere beyond circumstance. They are committed to their journey on becoming lifelong learners and global citizens. Each day, I get the opportunity to do the work. ICS is a magical place like no other.”

DIONE SMITH, 5TH YEAR EMPLOYEE, TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2021-22

""These last six years have been a unique experience, glorious and challenging in all the exact right ways. We chose ICS specifically because we wanted our daughter to grow up and have her formative years in an environment where she was surrounded by children distinctly unlike herself, with different faces and voices, and languages and cultures.

ALI MILLS, ICS PARENT FROM KINDERGARTEN TO 5TH GRADE
"MY LIFE HAS COME FULL CIRCLE"

ICS STAFF MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: DILBAR HAJIESSA

Twenty years after ICS first opened its doors as one of Georgia’s earliest start-up public charter schools, few people still remember those early days.

Dilbar Hajiessa does. She attended ICS through the sixth grade. Now, years later, she has returned through Americorps as the Community Resource Coordinator.

“Being back at ICS is amazing! I love telling the students my story. They can’t believe I was once a student here and that Mr. Bellemy in the Media Center taught me in the fourth grade. My life has come full circle. I know what it’s like to be in their shoes because I have experienced a lot of what the students are going through. I love that I get the opportunity to pass along the things I learned at ICS.”

Dilbar’s family emigrated from Iraq when she was six months old. It was important to her parents that she attend a culturally diverse school. “When my parents found out about ICS opening as a new charter school they were really happy and wanted me to go there.

“It was very important to them that I attend an international school where our culture was represented as well as other cultures. ICS ended up being a great fit for my family. It is a school we have always recommended to everybody.”

Dilbar fondly remembers those early years and how ICS felt like her second home. Her teachers were all very kind and caring, but Ms. Mary Ellen and Ms. Hamilton stand out. They invested in her academic growth and her life outside the classroom. Ms. Hamilton would visit Dilbar and her family almost every weekend. She would help Dilbar with schoolwork and make sure Dilbar’s mom had everything she needed.

Dilbar knows how challenging it can be for families starting over in a new country. She also knows how vital a supportive welcoming community like ICS can be. This special school community impacted Dilbar and her family. Now as an adult, she is honored to have the opportunity to provide that support for the current students.

“The thing I loved most as a student was the beloved community, and it is still present today. That connection has been the thread throughout all 20 years, and I want to continue to be a part of it. I hope to be a full-time teacher at ICS someday. I know I can make a difference and continue that beloved community I grew up with at ICS.”
ICS is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit. As a public charter school, we receive an allotment of public tax dollars from DeKalb County. However, there is still a huge funding gap. ICS relies on the generosity of private foundations, corporations, and individuals to supplement public funds in order to provide the programs and services that are unique to our school and to fulfill our organizational mission.

*Full reports are publicly available and posted monthly under Board Documents on our website*

### INDIVIDUAL GIVING
- Giving Tuesday/Holiday: $43,600
- Recurring Donors: $6600
- One Time Donations: $3500

### EVENT SPONSORS
- United Nations Day: $16,850
- Arts Fest: $4500 from sponsor
- $2700 Art Sales
- $2800 Food Sales

### PROGRAM GRANTS
- NAAAP: Food Co-Op $10,000
- Vibha: Summer Bridge $35,000
- Tedra Cannella: Playground $20,000
- Building Hope Award $10,000

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**A note from Dr. Chanika R. Perry, ICS Board Chair**

Here’s the truth: our students are more than test scores and points on a graph. Every child, teacher, parent, or staff who walks the halls of International Community School has a story, a family, and a history they bring to our collective. It is my honor to serve as Board Chair of an organization made up of these amazing individuals.

This Impact Report highlights some of the incredible accomplishments of our students and staff. It is a community effort, and we have so much to celebrate! Some highlights I’m particularly proud to honor:

- ICS’s relentless focus on student achievement and well-being. They have leveraged quantitative and qualitative measurements to make sure our students are gaining knowledge and growth!
- The ways this Leadership Team has set a clear vision. The IB PYP has been the academic north star, and the vision has stayed the course.
- The high-quality staff who choose to work at ICS. These amazing individuals are committed to the school’s mission, vision, and values. They’re not about lip service! Each and every day, they ensure that the ideals of the school are alive and well.
- Our Executive Director Fran Carroll. She has worked tirelessly to secure the stability of the ICS community with the direct support of a spectacular principal, Dr. Alastair Pullen, and a powerhouse Director of Community & Culture, Ms. Charlotte Flores.

From its beginnings until now, ICS demonstrates what’s possible for multicultural students, families, and community members when they come together to build bridges and break barriers.

The renowned poet, writer, and activist Maya Angelou once said, “It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.” The young people at ICS are learning about this beauty and strength each and every day. What a joy to celebrate the impact of this community in the 2022-23 school year.
It's all thanks to our

2022-23 DONORS

STAY CONNECTED:

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