

**Hello Washington! Volume 5
Special Edition Halloween
2025**



2025-2026 Halloween at WA!

This year, WA kicked off the Halloween season the week of Monday, October 20th with a series of thrilling events that captivated students of all ages. Most of these are traditional activities. However, this year our festivities had a magical twist!



Class of 2026's Halloween Fair 🎃

The annual Halloween Fair, skillfully organized by the future Class of 2026 and their families on Friday Oct. 31st, was a success, transforming the school into the Harry Potter's Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

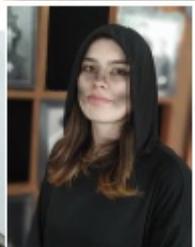
Decorations and props referenced the famous saga, with our halls covered in haunted portraits, spiderwebs, and many iconic settings of the beloved books. The truly imaginative décor included enormous inflatable dragons and a London phone booth, adding the perfect touch.

This exciting event, held from 10 am to 2 pm for students in Grades 2 through 11, served as a crucial fundraiser to support the Seniors' upcoming graduation expenses.

Attendees enjoyed exclusive merchandise and specially themed refreshments.

Thrilling Attractions:

- A chilling Haunted House
- The Wet Zone: Splash and Slide
- A Jack O' Lantern competition
- A Game Zone skillfully run by MiGuarimba counselors, offering classic fun like Cup Stacking, Water Balloon Toss, and Gaga Ball.

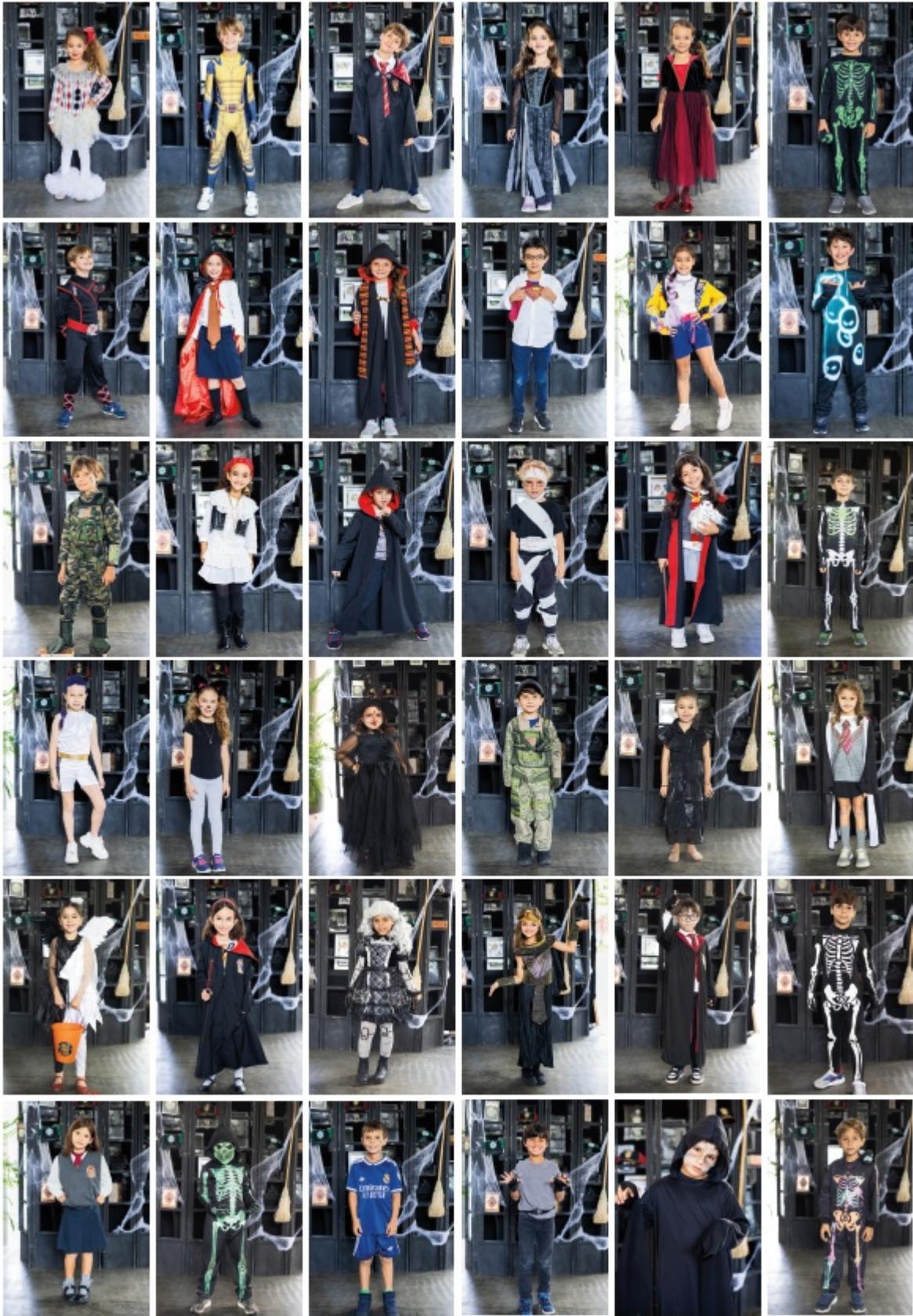


Even the prizes from the Game Zone were thematic!



The Jack O' Lantern competition was small this year, but what lacked in numbers it made up in creativity. With original takes like a Starbucks coffee mug, and a fabulous disco ball inspired by this year's Gaitas Group theme: Mamma Mia!, the contestants certainly knew how to break the mold. Scary props and clever call backs to popular movies were also among the proposals. We're in awe of our families' imagination!







An exciting day, full of candy and incredible costumes! Everyone, students, teachers, parents and staff joined to make this spooky celebration one to remember for ages!



Preschool Science & Art Fun

Preschool students kicked off their festivities early with several engaging activities:

Thursday, October 24th: Preschoolers had a super fun and organized science center rotation:

- **Structure Building:** Students created stable structures from popsicle sticks and laundry pins, designed to hold six self-made play dough pumpkins.
- **Pumpkin Dissection & Prediction:** They separated a whole pumpkin's seeds, fibrous strands, crust, and pulp, then predicted and tested whether each component would float or sink in a water container, annotating their results and creating a drawing.
- **Culinary Science:** Students measured and combined ingredients to create waffle pumpkins topped with whipped cream.
- **Sensory Observation:** Using their five senses and magnifying glasses, they observed and described a pumpkin or squash, noting their observations on worksheets.
- **Art Center:** They colored pumpkins, cut and pasted eye, nose, and mouth designs to decorate their creations. They also decorated pumpkins using markers and stickers.

In the preceding weeks, Kinder students drew Frankensteins and ghosts, completed broomstick math exercises, and wrote about and colored black cats while listening to festive Halloween songs. Teachers also decorated bulletin boards and hallways.



Elementary Scientific Method in Action

Lower Elementary students explored the scientific method through fun Halloween experiments, organized by this school years' Science teacher, Sandiswa Tokwe:

2nd Grade (October 28th): Students followed the steps of the scientific method to create super fun slime in Halloween colors.

3rd Grade (October 30th): They made a bubble solution and blew it through a cut bottle top covered with a tissue holding food coloring, resulting in an amazing rainbow foam with Halloween colors.



The Beloved Jack-O'-Lantern Tradition

On Thursday, October 30th, all preschool students, faculty, and staff gathered around Gina, our Preschool coordinator, to sing previously learned Halloween songs. Gina expertly carved a Jack-O'-Lantern from scratch right in front of everyone. This beloved tradition is a cherished memory for our students and a highlight little ones look forward to.



🎃 Trick-or-Treat Parade and Party

Friday, October 31st was the school-wide costume day! All students, teachers, and staff arrived in their most creative Halloween costumes.







Around 9:00 am, all Preschool students formed a line, led by Gina and guarded by teachers, teacher assistants, and volunteer Room Mothers.

They paraded through the Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and High School hallways, where students from all grade levels were eagerly waiting with lots of candy for their baskets.



Following the parade, students enjoyed a wonderful party featuring beautiful decorations, delicious adorned food with a special corner for healthy snacks, and super fun activities. Activities included "mummyfying" a volunteer mom with toilet paper, picking spiders with tweezers from jello, and picking "creatures" from liquid, among others.

Preschool students enjoyed an early dismissal at 11:00 am.



This year's Halloween celebration was truly unforgettable. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our seniors, parents, coordinators, teachers, and staff, we created a magical experience that will be cherished for years to come.

Hello Washington! Volume 5 / Issue # 1



A New School Year, A Special Anniversary!



Welcome to the first issue of the Washington Academy (WA) newsletter for the 2025-2026 school year! Months have passed since our halls filled with students, but we wanted to share a quick, heartfelt introduction to the exciting year ahead, especially as we celebrate a significant milestone: our school's 60th anniversary!

We're delighted to welcome back our vibrant community—students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and friends. At WA, we are committed to providing a nurturing environment where learning flourishes, giving our students the tools and support they need to reach their highest capability.

We deeply value the strong partnership we share with our parents. This alliance among all stakeholders makes a profound difference in the quality of education our students receive. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and look forward to a productive year working alongside you.



Looking Ahead to Beloved WA Traditions

This year, we are excited to continue many of our cherished events, which provide wonderful opportunities for new families to experience the unique spirit of WA and connect with our community. Be sure to check your calendar for:

- The Christmas Fair, which now combines our traditional Patinata and Bazaar into one grand event!
- Our now famous WA Gaitas Group is back!

Following the major success of our inaugural group last year, the WA Gaitas Group has returned for the 2025-2026 school year, embracing the spirited motto, "Here we go again!"

- Our Special 60th Anniversary Spirit Week picnic and other exciting activities.

Let's make this 60th anniversary school year truly unforgettable, filled with laughter, growth, and heartwarming memories. Together, we can create an inspiring learning environment where every student feels valued and empowered.

What part of this special year are you most looking forward to?

A Heartfelt Celebration: Welcome New Families!

Starting a new school year is a big event, bringing with it a natural mix of excitement and apprehension for both students and parents. We at WA want all our new families to know that as you settle into your new routine, you are absolutely not alone in this journey. Our entire school community is here to offer support, connection, and guidance every step of the way.

To officially usher in this new chapter, WA hosted its annual New Families Toast on October 9th—a cherished tradition held on our school grounds. This event was a wonderful demonstration of warmth and community spirit. It was our chance to celebrate and formally welcome you, following your introduction to our administration at the earlier New Parents Meeting.

Building Connections at the Toast

With open arms, the WA Foundation Board of Directors, the SPRAW Board of Directors, and many dedicated faculty and staff members welcomed our newest members. Key figures—including our Principal, Preschool Coordinator, SPRAW President—addressed the gathering. They shared inspiring words and offered reassurance, emphasizing the strength of the WA community and the invaluable support system we provide.

The gathering allowed new families to:

- Connect with fellow parents: Begin forming friendships and expanding their network within the community.
- Meet key faculty and staff: Establish relationships with the individuals who will be supporting their child's academic and social progress.
- Understand WA's culture: Gain insight into the school's unique identity, values, and traditions.
- Get answers to questions: Seek advice and clarity about the school year ahead.





Our Commitment to Your Smooth Transition

The first weeks are often busy for everyone. The best way to ease any anxious feelings is to connect, and our staff is committed to facilitating this.

Our faculty and staff are planning a series of fun and informative events specifically designed to help you integrate into our school and community. Building these relationships will make your transition smoother and more enjoyable.

We are particularly proud to see our alumni choosing WA for their children—a powerful confirmation of the positive experience and lasting impact our school has.

We look forward to an excellent first trimester and a wonderful year ahead, filled with learning, growth, and countless opportunities. Welcome once again to the WA family!

We're thrilled to extend a heartfelt welcome to our newest WA families:

- Aponte De Jesús
- Bersani Castro
- Casique Romero
- Cen Wu
- Courtois Fleitas
- De Egiarte Rubera
- Díaz Calles
- Domínguez Veloz (alumni)
- Fernández Mancín
- Fernández Piccinoni
- Freyre Villegas
- Gómez Blanco
- González Pérez
- González Rangel (alumni)
- Gugliotta Carabaño
- He Chen
- Henríquez Kasabdjí
- Ibrahim Fernández
- López Fernández
- Mastrotonardo Guerra
- Mazzone Torres
- Najjar Sosa
- Nunes Contreras
- Pérez Uzcátegui
- Prypchan Correa
- Remmers Egui
- Velandia Lenis
- Vergara Guzmán
- Yammine Najjar (alumni)
- Yi Villasmil



Building Community: Welcome Back to Our Faculty and Staff!



While students didn't begin their classes until September 15th, our dedicated faculty and staff were already hard at work, with many arriving as early as September 4th to ensure all preparations were complete for the academic launch.



The entire team gathered for the very first time on Monday, September 8th, at 8:30 am for our annual Welcome Back Breakfast, held in the school's main entrance hallway. This cherished tradition serves as the official, unified launch of the new academic year.

A Special Welcome for a Special Year

The morning began with a vibrant atmosphere, as educators and staff members reconnected and shared their excitement for the upcoming year. The school provided a delicious array of treats, including traditional arepas, fresh juices, and other yummy morning fare, creating a warm, collegiate moment before the hard work began.



The assembled staff was addressed by several key leaders who offered heartfelt welcomes and inspiring words. Speakers included Principal María Elena Abreu, Academic Principal Miranda Di Silvestri, Preschool Coordinator Gina Salas de Gonzalez. The central theme was the exceptional nature of the year ahead: the celebration of Washington Academy's 60th Anniversary! Their speeches energized the room, setting a high standard and a shared purpose for this milestone academic cycle.

The Value of Togetherness

Events like the Welcome Back Breakfast are not merely a formality; they are crucial to the school's success and directly impact the student experience.



Bringing all faculty and staff together creates an immediate sense of community and unity. It ensures everyone, from classroom teachers to administrative support, is aligned with the same vision and goals from day one. When leadership speaks directly to the team, it reinforces the school's values and sets a positive, high-energy momentum that carries through the year. This feeling of being valued and prepared is the foundational element of a strong institution.



A faculty that feels appreciated, connected, and energized is better equipped to foster an excellent learning environment. When teachers and staff are unified, it translates to greater consistency in the classroom, a stronger network of support for students, and a more nurturing and engaged atmosphere. The shared enthusiasm and collaborative spirit established at the breakfast ultimately benefit every student by providing them with a highly motivated and cooperative team of educators dedicated to helping them flourish academically and personally.



This gathering truly set the stage for what promises to be an extraordinary year of learning, celebration, and achievement at WA.



New staff joins the Washington Family

We're thrilled to introduce several new members to our school community! These talented educators have joined our team and are already making a positive impact.

Returning:

- **Javier Fernández** has been enriching our school since last school year, but was not formally introduced as he started mid school year. Javier is our Preschool - Elementary music teacher.
- **Iraida Casique** is returning after some years absent as our new IB DP Spanish Language & Literature Teacher.

New Faces:

- **Nancy Rojas** is our new IB DP English Language & Literature Teacher.
- **Federica Derlon** a former student, joined us as the new IB MYP Language Acquisition Teacher.



Javier Fernández



Iraida Casique



Nancy Rojas



Federica Derlon

Please join us in welcoming this dynamic group of educators to WA. We're excited to have them contributing to our school's success and look forward to the positive impact they will make on our students and community. Let's make them feel at home and ensure they have a wonderful experience at WA!

A Thoughtful Kick-Off to the 2025-2026 School Year: A Week of Warm Welcomes and New Journeys

The 2025-2026 school year is officially underway, thanks to a carefully planned, staggered start designed to give our students the best possible transition. From the emotional "last first day" for our Seniors to the exciting step up for our Second Graders, the beginning of the year was marked by special events and thoughtful preparation for every grade level.

A Grand Beginning for the Class of 2026 (Promo 36)

On Monday, September 15th, we celebrated the return of our future Class of 2026, or Promo 36, on what was their final first day of school. This special group of 36 students will graduate on our school's 60th Anniversary, adding extra significance to their year.

The day was filled with unique traditions:

- **A Warm Reception:** The Seniors, joined by some of their parents, were greeted by a beautifully decorated entrance and encouraging words from Principal María Elena Abreu. Faculty and staff sported the Promo 36 colors (black, red, and gold), which the students also wore on specially designed shirts featuring their dragon logo.
- **Building Community:** Students participated in a group development activity coordinated by PE Head of Department Sergio Rodríguez, followed by a special breakfast with juices, arepas, and cake.
- **Mentor Selection:** In a beloved WA tradition, the Seniors selected their mentors: High School Spanish Department Head Ana María Lopez as their Godmother, Math teacher Jose Ornelas as their Godfather, and Lower Elementary Spanish teacher Edith Yopez as their Promo "Mom." It was a deeply moving moment that demonstrated their enduring affection for Ms. Yopez from their early years.
- **The Mark They'll Leave:** The students were received in the Lower Elementary hallway with music and party favors, where they signed a cool poster with their fingerprints, symbolizing the legacy they will leave in WA's collective memory.
- **Guidance for the Future:** Academic Principal Miranda Di Silvestri discussed the IB Diploma Program and its alignment with our school's mission. She was joined by alumna Daniela Court ('05/Promo XV), now a WA parent, who offered a very motivating speech on how her IB preparation benefited her successful academic and professional journey.
- **A Parent Surprise:** The day concluded with a wonderful surprise initiative from the parents in the covered court. Parents, sometimes with grandparents, gifted their children a special bag containing a Promo jacket, a hoodie, stickers, and a pencil—a tangible show of support for their final year.







A Focused Transition for Our Students

We believe that providing **individualized attention** and a smoother adjustment is crucial, especially for groups facing a big transition. This is why other grade levels returned over the following days:

- **September 16th:** Our Juniors (11th Grade) began their academic year.
- **September 18th:** Our Preschoolers (Pre-K to 1st Grade) started. Most of our newest families are in Pre-K, and we value their initial experience. They settled right into their classrooms with their parents to meet teachers and assistants.
- **September 19th:** The Second Graders made their exciting and sometimes anxious leap from the highly structured Preschool system to the different dynamics of Lower Elementary (2nd–4th Grade).

Senior-Second Grade Connection

A special highlight on September 19th was the powerful interaction between our oldest and those just moving into the Elementary level. After the national anthem, our Seniors welcomed the Second Graders with heartfelt team-building activities, coordinated by Lower Elementary Coordinator. The Seniors used a large PE parachute and offered hugs and Promo 36 logo stickers, helping the younger students feel supported as they moved from one classroom and teacher to the new system of lockers, different subject classrooms, and higher academic expectations.

Preparing the Second Grade Parents

The day before, Thursday October 18th, Second Grade parents attended an essential meeting in the Multipurpose Room to learn about the new expectations. After dropping off school supplies, they were introduced to the Lower Elementary Team, including Coordinator Luisa De Zabala, Counselor Nora Souki, and all Heads of Department and teachers. The session covered everything from the IB Learner Profile to new expectations for uniforms, schedules, and protocols. Parents then had the opportunity to line up in the Central Yard and take a tour of the Lower Elementary hallway and classrooms, setting up their child's locker with a surprise decoration and a personal note—a sweet send-off into their new academic chapter.

The Full WA Family is Back!

With the start of the remaining students (3rd through 10th Grade) on Monday, September 22nd, we can now proudly declare that the official 2025-2026 school year has fully begun! This thoughtful, staggered approach reflects our dedication to ensuring every student, particularly those undergoing significant developmental steps, gets the support and attention they need for a successful year.





Not just following the IB's curricular guidelines. A very strong implementation of the MYP and DP.

At WA, our vision and mission are completely interwoven with the International Baccalaureate (IB) philosophy. We are thrilled to share an update on recent events and student successes that demonstrate WA is not just following the IB's curricular guidelines, but truly mastering the effective implementation of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP).



A Testament to Rigorous IB Implementation: Recent Results

Our students' outstanding results underscore the quality and dedication embedded in our curriculum and teaching, proving the success of our comprehensive approach.



High-Caliber Results for the Class of 2025 IB Diploma (Published June 2025)

The graduating Class of 2025 once again demonstrated exceptional academic strength in the rigorous, two-year IB Diploma Programme (DP). This culmination of years of hard work yielded impressive outcomes.

- Our Diploma pass rate of 88% significantly surpassed the 81% international average.
- Furthermore, our average IB score of 30.75 points was slightly above the global average of 30.58 points.
- An impressive 75% of our seniors scored 30 points or more out of a possible 45, and the highest final diploma score achieved by a WA student was 39/45 points.



Notably, our students' achievements in Language A at the Higher Level in both English and Spanish were particularly strong, with mean scores above global benchmarks.



Sofia Ferreira



Daniela Mamán

Exceptional MYP Personal Project Results (Published September 2025)

The results for the Personal Project completed by last year's 10th Grade class (the now-current 11th graders) were exceptional and serve as powerful evidence of our teachers' expertise in MYP evaluation. Crucially, the final marks awarded by the IB perfectly matched the grades submitted by our school, which strongly affirms the **high quality and accuracy of our internal evaluation process**—a hallmark of successful MYP implementation. Six students, Matthias Chieffo, Sofia Ferreira, Andrés de Sousa, Isabela Abilahoud, Daniela Mamán, and Aiskel Salazar, secured the maximum possible score (6-7) in Personal Project.



Aiskel Salazar



Isabela Abilahoud



Andrés De Sousa



Matthias Chieffo

Grade 10 Starts Their MYP Personal Project Journey (September 18th, 2025)

Even before officially starting classes for the 2025-2026 academic year, our new 10th Grade students received a preparatory MYP Personal Project Workshop on September 18th. This initiative set them off on an ambitious, long-term endeavor that is a cornerstone of the MYP, formally evaluating their development of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. Students engage in sustained, self-directed inquiry, culminating in a product and a reflective report. This experience is a profound learning opportunity that cultivates the mindset of a lifelong learner, preparing them for the DP and beyond.



IB Teacher Community Connections (October 2nd, 2025)

Earlier in the school year, a group of our IB teachers, along with our Principal, Academic Principal, and IBDP Coordinator, attended the IB Wine and Cheese Event at Escuela Campo Alegre on Thursday, October 2nd. This was an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues, exchange experiences, and strengthen the educational community across IB schools in our area.



Understanding Student Success: A Deep View into WA's Assessment Philosophy (October 2025)

WA recently hosted a series of highly informative and engaging workshops designed to help parents fully grasp our rigorous student assessment and evaluation process within the MYP. These sessions took place for Grades 6 and 7 parents on October 22nd, and for Grades 8, 9, and 10 parents on October 29th.

A central theme was a detailed explanation of the MYP's criterion-based assessment. The workshops stressed a critical concept: at WA, students are assessed against a clear, objective rubric, not against each other, which fosters a growth mindset. To bring this philosophy to life, parents participated in a compelling hands-on exercise, using an actual MYP rubric to evaluate samples of student work. The sessions also covered educational theories like Bloom's Taxonomy and Metacognition (thinking about thinking), which helps students become self-regulated learners, offering a great way for parents to better understand our school's assessment philosophy.



MYP Awards Ceremony (November 4th, 2025)

On Tuesday, November 4th, we held our MYP Awards Ceremony to celebrate student achievements in the programme, recognizing the hard work and dedication of our students in both their subjects and core components. 11th Grade students and their families were invited. The following students who achieved an average of 17-20 points (band 7-8) throughout the MYP received special recognition for their outstanding results: Matthias Chieffo, Sofia Ferreira, and Andrés de Sousa.





Remembering Our Purpose: Vision, Mission, Values, and IB Learner Profile



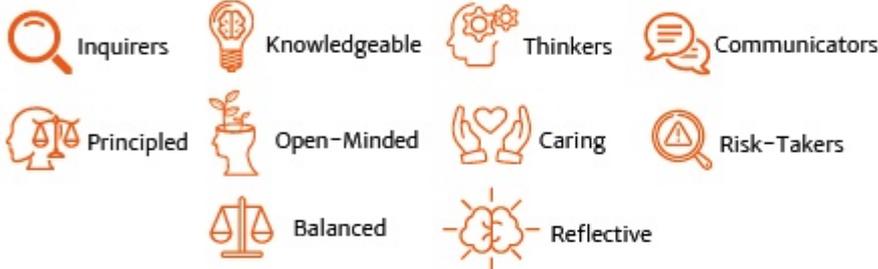
As a WA family, we have a unique opportunity to make a positive impact on each other and the world beyond. Let's remember the importance of our school's values and strive to live them out every day.

Vision *Aiming for Excellence*

Mission *Give Students the tools to cope with life*

Values *Respect, Honesty, Responsibility, Justice, and Loyalty*

Community Profile: **All our WA family members strive to be...**



Instagram

We want to invite all of you to follow us at [@washingtonacademy.ccs](https://www.instagram.com/washingtonacademy.ccs) and discover more about what our school has to offer.

If you have any news or images you want to share with us about school events, please send the information and/or the images, via email, to the following address: comunicaciones@aw.edu.ve

Also, if you would like to include an event, remember to include answers to the following questions:



- ✔ What did the event consist of? Add the title of the event.
- ✔ Who organized or coordinated the event? Who participated? Who competed? Who won?
- ✔ When did the event take place (date, times)?
- ✔ Where did the event take place?
- ✔ Why was the event planned?
- ✔ How was it supposed to go? How did it turn out? Include any funny or curious details.

Athlete Information Form

- ✔ Athlete's Name:
- ✔ Grade Level:
- ✔ Competing Discipline:
- ✔ Name of Tournament or Competition:
- ✔ Dates the Tournament or Competition Occurred:
- ✔ Location of the Tournament or Competition:
- ✔ Category Name(s):
- ✔ Results:
- ✔ Please send HD photos via WhatsApp to this number: (0424) 291 72 82 or to comunicaciones@aw.edu.ve

Fieldtrips

WA Seniors Conquer the Andes: A Week of High-Altitude Growth!

WA's Senior Class recently returned from an unforgettable seven-day trip to the spectacular Venezuelan Andes, where they participated in a rigorous and rewarding mountain school experience at *Sagarmatha Refugio and Escuela de Montaña*.

From Wednesday, September 24th, through Tuesday, September 30th, our students immersed themselves in a challenging program designed for group cohesion, developing fortitude, learning essential life skills, and creating lasting memories—all while assisting those in the surrounding community. This incredible journey is a valued tradition for our senior class.

The Highest Camp in Venezuela

The Sagarmatha facility, situated in the "Desecho" sector of Apartaderos, Mérida state, holds the distinction of being the highest mountain refuge in Venezuela at an elevation of 3,550 meters (11,647 feet). Modeled after the highest standards of European Alpine refuges, the facility provided a cozy and warm environment amidst the cold mountain air. The camp's owner and director is Marcus Tobía, a famous explorer who was one of the first Venezuelans to successfully ascend Mount Everest.

The camp offers a unique concept focused on the values experienced in high-altitude environments, emphasizing group living, conscious freedom, respect, and tolerance. All activities were overseen by an experienced team of guides and a permanently present paramedical specialist in high-altitude rescue, ensuring the highest safety protocols.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The students participated in a wide array of activities, putting their acquired knowledge and group support to the test:

- **Mountain Ascent:** A major achievement was the demanding ascent of Pico Gavilán, a mountain exceeding 4,000 meters (4,250 m). This included practicing basic rock climbing techniques beforehand at the on-site practice rock, "La Babosa."
- **Acclimatization Hike:** The trip began with a 7 km trek to the beautiful Mucubají Lagoon to help students adjust to the high elevation.
- **Geographic Orientation:** Students gained practical knowledge in interpreting topographic maps and utilizing various orientation equipment.
- **Group Challenge (Rally):** To reinforce their learning in a spirited way, the Seniors participated in a group rally that required them to apply their newly learned skills and knowledge.
- **Community Integration:** The class spent time with students and teachers from a local area school in a meaningful social activity.
- **Environmental Action:** A key focus was a discussion and activity on the urgent need for environmental protection and minimizing our environmental impact, with the goal of bringing these concepts back to the WA community.
- **Thermal Springs & Camping:** The group visited the geothermal Musui thermal waters and established a mountain camp at 3,000 meters with impressive views of the Sierra Nevada.
- **Stargazing:** They also had the opportunity to visit the fascinating Llano del Hato Astrophysical Observatory (CIDA).



