



Surat Thani International School

Creativity, Confidence, Commitment, Community

- Please tell us about the School and its inception story. Brief us about the mission/aim and goal of the School.

STIS began as a small home school which grew out of the desire to establish an engaging, well-rounded, and creative learning environment in southern Thailand. The aim of STIS is to provide a world class education for the children of Surat Thani. The mission of the school is to “Empower students to become happy, creative, critical thinkers, and problem solvers who will have a positive impact on their community and the world.” Our mission reveals how the school is set up to help students gain a sense of perspective regarding their local communities and the world. This also reflects the methods that STIS uses to achieve this; we expect our teachers to take a problem-solving and critical thinking approach to teaching. Our vision of having “Engaged learners who are prepared for a globalized world through mindfulness, academic excellence, and a supportive environment” points to the skills

and qualities we want to see in our students as they grow at STIS.

- Enlighten us on the Key Personality the School and take us down the road on the contributions he has made and is making for the School.

Peter C. Meltzer and his wife, Jaksanee Suteeisariyakun, founded the school in 2014. Peter serves as the school Principal/Director and also teaches. Together they have developed STIS from one western teacher to a team of sixteen western teachers and from an enrollment of 4 students to 211 students. The school continues to grow and expand.

- What is student life like? What strategies do you use to promote a vibrant and cohesive community at your school?

With 211 students, STIS feels like a large family. Starting in kindergarten, students regularly do collaborative work in order to learn how to

effectively cooperate. The older students frequently help younger ones by helping with art class, playing learning games with them, and reading to them. Classes often integrate for various topics in order to foster healthy social relationships and to expose students to different learning and teaching styles. Students also participate in Thai ethics classes, international days, spirit and fun weeks, student leadership clubs, and academic expos. These activities give a platform for students to congratulate each other’s accomplishments, hear each other’s voices, and learn from the knowledge of others throughout the year.

- What curriculum do you use? How is your curricular approach integrated into the classroom at different levels of education?

For English, Mathematics, and Science, the STIS curriculum is based on California’s Common Core Curriculum. We also bring in a mixture of curricula from Ontario, Ireland, and other places in North America for other subjects. We believe that bringing in standards and materials from multiple curricula will make our students more well-rounded. The curriculum is designed specifically for our students to build the global citizenship skills





necessary to be happy and successful problem solvers in the 21st century. We use instructional techniques that are engaging, diverse, and tailored to the individual. Having classes of no more than twenty students helps teachers employ leveled instructional techniques while still meeting the curriculum standards. We use tablets across subjects to allow for STIS students to develop research and computing skills while applying their knowledge attained in the classroom.

- **Kindly brief us about the distinct academic programs of the School.**

STIS is quite unique in the community that it strives to build and uphold. We are not just a place of rigorous schooling. We also seek to further educate our students by showing them how we believe unified communities should function. To further demonstrate this, we annually hold week-long celebrations such as “Fun Week,” “Spirit Week,” and “Teacher Appreciation Week.” These special weeks include school-wide activities where we celebrate our school, our teachers, and each other. The celebratory weeks help strengthen our school community and create lasting memories for all of our students.

- **What extracurricular activities do you offer? When and how often do these activities take place?**

STIS has morning and afternoon clubs which offer our students a wide variety of extracurricular options. Throughout the week, we have morning clubs for meditation, sports, reading, student leadership, public speaking, sign language, maker spaces, and gardening. Afternoon clubs are held throughout the week for activities such as cartoons, football, basketball, lego, chess, and dance. Our teachers hold these clubs and enjoy bringing their own interests and talents to share with the students.

- **How do you maintain student diversity on campus and encourage international students to be a part of the School?**

While our student body is mostly comprised of Thai students, we proudly have students from China, Taiwan, Pakistan, Sweden, Russia, India, and other countries. STIS

has a strict “English only” communication policy when students are talking or playing with each other. We enacted this is to make all of our students feel included, some of whom do not speak Thai. The only exceptions to this rule are when our students have Thai classes or when they are speaking to a Thai teacher or staff member.

We also host a variety of events that celebrate diversity in our community, such as International Day, when students, teachers, and parents share their knowledge about a country they have visited or lived in. STIS has a small, but vibrant, Swedish community. When it is a Swedish holiday, the students celebrate that holiday with their classmates. It is a great way for all of our students to learn about another culture and an opportunity for our Swedish students to feel at home and share their customs.

- **What kind of financial aid and scholarship do you provide to the students?**

STIS is one of the least expensive international schools in Thailand. We purposefully keep the tuition relatively low so that students from many socioeconomic backgrounds can study with us. Additionally, we provide full scholarships to students from the local orphanage. We also provide full scholarships for the children of our teachers.

- **How is your school operated and governed? What Are the Main Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance at Your Educational Institution?**

STIS is operated and governed by the founders of the school. STIS is a member of the International School Association of Thailand and currently holds the status of “Candidate for Accreditation” with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). STIS works closely with WASC to work towards full accreditation.

Earned Credibility

“I am a parent of two students at STIS. Choosing STIS was an easy decision. My sons enjoy going to school and settled quickly with this caring environment. Rather than comparing students with one another, teachers focus on the progress of each child. According to my sons, learning is fun!”

We appreciate the love that all teachers and staff have for our sons.”

Yam Choopong, parent of Grade 1 and Grade Pre-K students

“I’m a parent of a student at STIS. I’ve been here since the beginning of the school. I could say that STIS helps improve my little girls’ English skills a lot. After almost 4 years, she can communicate in English like a young native one. The most important thing is that my kid always wants to go to school. “It’s fun to be in school!” That’s what she always says to me!”

**Nim,
Parent of Grade 4 student**

“STIS is easily the best and truly the only good option for international students living in Surat Thani. STIS provides high-quality education following the California curriculum. The school has proven capable of elevating second language learners to near native speakers’ fluency. If you want your child to excel in English language skills, not only speaking and listening but also reading and writing, then STIS is the only school you should consider.”

**Daniel Kunkel,
parent of grade 5 student**