

# Weekly School Newsletter

## Message from the Head of School

On behalf of the entire team at GWA (Singapore), we warmly welcome all new families to our school community. We hope that the first week at GWA for your children has been a positive experience and that the weekend ahead provides a great time for reflection and rejuvenation.

On Monday, we welcomed 78 new students, with more joining us over the coming two weeks prior to Chinese New Year. Additionally, 13 new educators were orientated to the school and commenced classes with your children. These great teachers have been introduced to families directly concerned and look forward to strong home-school communication.

Whilst many of us enjoyed holidays during the festive period, a significant number of staff remained on site, working on key projects for the school. Special mention must go to our wonderful Admissions Advisors and School Registrars. Their constant availability and eagerness to support families has led to a very smooth start to the second semester and a happy commencement for those new to the school.

Our operations team undertook a number of projects during the three week break. Significant work has been completed thus far for our Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center. The internal work for the new maker space and STEM areas is nearing completion, and the balcony works for the entrepreneurship space is well-in-hand. All work will be completed by the end of January, ready for use by a varied group of stakeholders, from the start of February.

The cafeteria extension is also progressing well and is on track for an end of January completion. As shared previously, this extension triples our serving capacity, as well as providing an internal, air-conditioned area for us, as and when needed. Many thanks to Emran, Sukhi and their teams for the many hours spent on site guiding contractors.

One of the key points of difference with GWA is our commitment to ensure that any external partners we work with meet our standards of service and educational focus. For many months, we have been in meetings with almost all of the swim school providers in Singapore, with a view of expanding the offerings of this activity to not just our students, but those in the larger community.

Today we happily announce our partnership with X Lab, whose CEO Mark Chay is the current President of the Singapore Swim Coaches Association, has served as Chief de Mission for the Singapore Team at the Youth Olympics, as well as having represented Singapore at the Olympics. His team are committed to working with us in delivering a comprehensive programme, covering learn-to-swim, competitive training groups, and a high performance team. A letter covering this partnership is attached with this newsletter.

The swim programme delivered by X Lab greatly expands our offerings to families, beyond the training already on offer by Coach Betts. They are one part of a growing number of providers whom we are seeking to form long-term partnerships with, to enhance the opportunities provided to children in Singapore. These partnerships take time to get right and to ensure that beyond service quality, the values, mission and vision aligns to the significant aspirations we have. We aim for our programmes to be significant, not just another weak offering in crowded service areas.

In coming weeks we look forward to outlining further partnerships as they are locked down contractually, covering many wonderful programmes across the Sports, Arts and Academics.



**David Edwards**  
Head of School  
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### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

**Reception:** +65 6808 7321

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**Bus Enquiries:**

HDT Service Line: 9777 4838

[gwa.transport@hdt.com.sg](mailto:gwa.transport@hdt.com.sg)

### Parent Event

*Chinatown Dim Sum  
and Tour*



**Date:** 17 Jan 2017 @  
10.30am

**Venue:** Yum Cha Chinatown  
Restaurant

**Address:** 20 Trengganu St,  
#02-01 Chinatown, Singapore  
058479

*Join us for a Chinese Dim  
Sum breakfast in the heart of  
Chinatown, followed by a  
Chinese New Year Festive  
bazaar tour in the streets of  
Chinatown.*

**RSVP :** [j.lee@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.lee@gwa.edu.sg)

*Welcome back to*  
**SCHOOL**

## Message from the Early/Primary Years Principal

I would like to wish all of our families a Happy New Year and welcome back to the start of the new semester. I trust that everyone has had a relaxing and enjoyable break. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to all of our new students, families and staff to GWA (Singapore). We are excited to welcome you to our growing school community.

As I've walked around school asking the students about their break and if they are glad to be back the same key word comes up in our conversations and that is 'friends'. It's a testament to the culture that has been developed in our EY/PY division that firm friendships have been made and that the children are eager to see and share experiences with their peers. New students have been welcomed through the assignment of buddies who can familiarise them with new routines and surroundings and I am proud that so many of our students have proved to be caring and empathetic to the needs of their new peers.

Over the past week Dave and I have been in Bangkok actively recruiting staff for the next academic year 2017-18. Our expectations are high and we have made offers to candidates who we feel best fit our community and aspirations for the future development of our division.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.



**Neil White** - EY/PY Principal  
[n.white@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:n.white@gwa.edu.sg)

## Message from the Secondary Years Principal

Welcome back and happy 2017 to all! I trust everyone had a relaxing and safe break. Semester 2 promises to offer our students both academic challenges as well as learning through other experiences. We have just had a successful information session on the upcoming Week-Without-Walls as part of our Experiential Learning Program (ELP). Mark Petterson, SY Counsellor and ELP Coordinator, went over the grade-specific opportunities, which allow our students to develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting.

These experiences matter: they have clear links to IB education and GEMS core values, and there is growing research into skills and competencies which contribute to success beyond school education. In one study published in [Harvard Business Review](#), the author studied 195 leaders in 15 countries over 30 global organisations. Participants were asked to choose the 15 most important leadership competencies, then grouped into five major themes. When looking at the results, we can see very similar concepts to the IB Learner profile and GEMS core values; these then translate to learning skills and teaching approaches we find in our classrooms, and are strengthened by the Experiential Learning Programme experiences. The study's top competency of 'high ethics and moral standards' matches academic honesty and our school-wide behaviour expectations; 'clear communication and being open to new ideas and approaches' match the 'communication' and 'open-mindedness' of the IB learner profile. Finally, the study's 'ongoing training competency' is directly reflected in GEMS's value of pursuing excellence as a never-ending journey.



We look forward to Semester 2 and the learning and growing opportunities it will bring.

**Jan Stipek** - SY Principal  
[j.stipek@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.stipek@gwa.edu.sg)

Click [here](#) to view detailed Events Calendar

16-20 Jan 2017

It's here....Arts  
Week 2017!

Check out the website  
to find out more:  
[http://  
crimmer9.wixsite.com/  
artsweekgwa2017](http://crimmer9.wixsite.com/artsweekgwa2017)

25 Jan 2017

PARENT ENGAGEMENT  
WORKSHOP

GWA Auditorium Lobby  
@ 9:00am

GWAPA:  
[gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg)  
Judy (PRE):  
[j.lee@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.lee@gwa.edu.sg)

30 Jan - 3 Feb  
2017

CHINESE NEW  
YEAR SCHOOL  
HOLIDAYS



20 -24 Feb 2017

BOOK  
WEEK



## SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



After a three week break, our school sports teams have started semester two with a bang! The 12U Girls and 16U Boys Basketball teams continue their strong seasons maintaining their 100% winning records. The 14U Boys Football team recorded a significant 5 - 2 win against UWC East to go with the loss and draw they have recorded so far. With three weeks of competitive fixtures remaining this season we could have as many as five GWA teams involved in the finals during the first week of February.



The current Sports and ECA season will conclude on Friday 10th February. Within the coming weeks information for Season 3 of Sports and ECAs will be forwarded to all families. Please take note of the relevant dates for returning information so that we can ensure that the process of finalising teams and groups is as efficient as possible.

If you have any questions regarding the sports or ECA programme at GWA, please don't hesitate to contact me



**Danny Tauroa**  
Activities Coordinator  
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## MESSAGE FROM GWA PARENT ASSOCIATION (GWAPA)

Happy new year and welcome back to school for the second semester! We hope you all had a great holiday. A warm welcome to all our new GWA families and welcome to our GWA Parent Association. It was lovely to meet some of you this week during the coffee morning. Please connect with us and stay updated via our GWAPA Facebook page and if you have any questions, please email us [gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg)



If you want to take a closer look at the endless possibilities when it comes to creativity, don't miss the Arts Week next week, from Monday to Friday, Jan 16-20. There are plenty of wonderful activities to choose from. **On Wednesday, Jan 18th, you can enjoy the Arts showcase presented by our talented parents in the main foyer. It's an all day event and we truly hope to see you there.** We also strongly encourage you to check out all lunchtime workshops available for children. Please bear in mind that for some of them, sign up is needed prior to the sessions. Details on the Arts Week website: <http://crimmer9.wixsite.com/artsweekgwa2017/schedule>

Don't miss an evening for Dads planned for TONIGHT at the Kranji racecourse. Enjoy an evening of horse racing, banter, cheap food (and beer). See more information about the Turf club here: [www.turfclub.com.sg](http://www.turfclub.com.sg) Meet at the ticket counter at 6.30pm or inside if you come later. For more information please contact **Adrian Illingworth** ([adrian@cambridgeenglishonline.com](mailto:adrian@cambridgeenglishonline.com)). Come along for a great Dad's night out!



**GWAPA Team**

### ARTS WEEK

GWAPA Arts showcase Wed Jan 18th all day event check for details on <http://crimmer9.wixsite.com/artsweekgwa2017/schedule>

### GWAPA DAD'S NIGHT

GWAPA Dad's Night at the Races! Turf Club in Kranji.  
6:30pm on Friday 13th, January 2017

### CONTACT GWAPA TEAM

[gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg)

Share your sports news with us, join our Facebook page