



# Weekly School Newsletter

## Message from the Head of School

Earlier this week the 'Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study' for 2015 was published. Conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), every four years the study reviews progress of 600,000 Year 4 and Year 8 students from across 60 countries. Singapore again rated highly, topping the science and math results in this sampling. They were followed closely by Hong Kong, Korea, Chinese Taipei and Japan.

The goal of the TIMSS is to provide global benchmarking in two core subjects, fundamentally universal as mandatory requirements for primary and secondary school education around the world. The results again highlighted the strength of Asian countries, as well as significant movement of nations who have invested considerable money and focus on quality teaching and teacher training. Countries such as Kazakhstan, Czech Republic, Lithuania and Hungary have surpassed more recognised national education programmes. Lagging behind many countries is the United Kingdom, Australia and the US.

The findings make for interesting reading, raising further the power of education and educators in Asia, and proposes ongoing concerns regarding the relative weakness of traditional countries who have been better recognised for education standards. As an IB school, utilising the standards and practices prescribed by the International Baccalaureate Organisation, we have continued to strengthen our programmes by looking to other countries. In Grades 9 and 10 we utilise the IGCSE for additional structure and content, however we have spent time looking at countries such as Korea, Singapore and Japan. The findings from the TIMSS 2015 study confirm that our approach of looking beyond the IB, UK, US and Australia is well-founded.

The 2015 results may be found via the following link: <http://www.iea.nl/timss-2015-results>. Useful on this web page, are short videos on the various elements of the findings, as well as some simple infographics regarding the TIMSS findings from the past 20 years.

The press release and summary statements may be found via this link: <http://www.iea.nl/sites/default/files/studies/TIMSS2015%20-%20Press%20Release%20IEA.pdf>

We encourage you to take the time to look at these findings and attend our ongoing curriculum events in early 2017, to further understand the international research which underpins the IB curriculum at GWA (Singapore).



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Head of School  
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### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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### Parent Event



#### Fullerton Heritage Guided

**Tour:** Learn about the humble origins of The Fullerton Hotel building, which was formerly a General Post Office and a government building. Find out which of our prominent former and current Singapore leaders once worked in this historic building and hear tales about her role during World War II as a place of refuge

**Date:** 8 December (Thursday)

**Time:** 11am

**Meeting Point:** The Fullerton Hotel Concierge

**Address:** 1 Fullerton Square, Singapore 049178



### Important bus service notice

GEMS World Academy (Singapore) announces the implementation of an innovative &

unique software system called **busRUN** to efficiently manage the school bus operations.

[www.busrun.net](http://www.busrun.net)

## Message from the Early/Primary Years Deputy Principal

As we rapidly approach the end of the first academic semester, it is important for us to pause and reflect on the wonderful things that are taking place in and around our classrooms.

As educators we are regularly encouraged by students and classes who convert their learning into meaningful action. Recently, we have witnessed many of our students across our divisions taking action to improve the lives of others within our GWA community and beyond. Taking action is at the heart of what we do as educators and these opportunities encourage us in the work that we do with your children. We are reminded at these times that as global citizens we have a responsibility to take action to positively impact our world.

As we near the end of this semester and enter the holiday season, I invite you to reflect on the many memorable things that are taking place throughout our community. We look forward to seeing further action being taken by our students, as they connect their learning with the world around them.



As always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me directly.

**Mike Gilmour**  
EY/PY Deputy Principal  
[m.gilmour@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:m.gilmour@gwa.edu.sg)

## Message from the Secondary Years Deputy Principal

Secondary Years students have been focused on semester examinations for the MYP and DP programs. Semester exams provide good practice and an authentic learning and assessment experience for our students. Semester exams allow students the opportunity to demonstrate important conceptual understanding and skills, as well as the ability to develop revision and exam taking skills suitable for future academic demands. Over the next few days, students will receive appropriate feedback on their performance in order to promote learning and facilitate improvement.

Thank you to the parents who attended our follow-up parent engagement session on the topic of "Understanding Social Media". We also hosted our second Coffee with SY Principal session on Monday, with an emphasis on MYP assessment. These parent engagement opportunities emphasise our commitment to providing ongoing information on your child's education.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.



**Arnelle Grundhoefer**  
SY Deputy Principal/DP Coordinator  
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Click [here](#) to view detailed Events Calendar

9 Dec 2016

**SPORTS  
DAY**

12 Dec 2016

**EY/PY PARENT  
TOWN HALL**

*Opportunity to meet with EY/PY  
leadership team to discuss  
matters related to the curriculum*

**Date:** 12 December 2016  
**Time:** 3.45pm - 4.30pm  
**Venue:** Auditorium Lobby

11 Jan 2017

**COFFEE  
MORNING  
(NEW PARENTS)**

16-20 Jan 2017

**ARTS WEEK**

## SPORT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

28 GWA students took part in the annual LFS Aquathlon at the French School on Saturday November 26. The swim/run competition included athletes from GWA, LFS, and SJII. The youngest athletes swam 200 meters and ran one kilometre, and distances increased by age up to a 600-meter swim and a 4K run. Our students did well and had fun. Kobe Gaytant won a bronze medal in the age 10 boys category, Mia Camara took third in the 15-older girls division, and Emma Middleditch finished first with a gold medal in the 14-year-old girls event. It was a great day and our athletes really enjoyed themselves.

Special mention this week goes to our 11U Girls Football team who scored two impressive wins against Dover Court 4-0, and then against UWC East 3-1 last week in the first round of games. This is a fantastic start to the season and we are looking forward to seeing how these young ladies progress over the remainder of their games. The 11U Boys Football Team had some narrow loses and a draw in their games played last Thursday, but show signs of having the potential to be successful during the season.



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

### GEMS Arts Week - January 16-20, 2017

GWAPA is supporting this amazing school event by helping to promote creative arts. Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January will see our school lobby transformed into a gallery of arts. We need your help! Calling all creatives, artists, hobbyists, anyone who is willing to set up a gallery display or conduct simple art demonstrations for students throughout the day. If you are interested in showcasing some of your creations (or know someone who is) then we would love to hear from you. We would welcome people who are willing to show aspects of their creative work, including (but not limited to) painting, pottery, jewellery making, photography, dressmaking, origami, henna, music, weaving, sand art etc – We are also searching for creative people who are willing to conduct short student workshops during lunch breaks in the same week. Please get in touch with us to indicate your interest and tell us how you could support the event.

### Food Donation reminder

GWAPA would like to encourage parents and students to support Food Bank with food donations leading up to Christmas. From Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> November, you will find a Christmas tree in EY lobby area (1st level), under the tree will be a decorated box to collect non-perishable food items. Food Bank accepts all types of non-perishable food items that are unopened, unused and with at least 4 weeks of shelf life. Food that is in the greatest demand is: rice, beverages (UHT or powdered milk, Milo, Tea, Coffee), noodles (rice vermicelli, instant noodles, cup noodles, pasta), biscuits, canned food, cooking oil, sauces, seasonings, spreads. The food will be collected by Bank of Food in the second week of December.

### The First GWAPA Dad's Do - December 8

Adrian and Dries, GWAPA fathers, are organising the 'Dad's Do' - see their invitation below:

*The FIRST GWAPA Dad's Do! Calling all working and non-working GWA Dads - which should be everyone we hope. Isn't it about time we got together for a chance to meet/catch up? We'd like to invite you to join us in 'going local' for an informal drink and bite to eat at that most-Singaporean-style of venues... a Hawker Centre! Make your way to the Newton Food Circus on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> of December, from 6.30pm onwards. No RSVP needed. No dress code. Pay for your own stuff. Simple! The only requirement: PLEASE COME! It's only a 200m stroll from Newton MRT station. For details please contact Adrian - tel: 8350 3501.*



### Christmas Wreath Making Workshop - December 5

Come and enjoy a morning of seasonal inspiration to really get you in the Christmas spirit, and take home your own Christmas wreath! One of our parents, Stephanie, is organising the Christmas Wreath Making Workshop on Monday, December 5. If you are interested, please contact her [atelierwildflower@gmail.com](mailto:atelierwildflower@gmail.com)



**GWAPA Team**  
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