

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

Shaping tomorrow's leaders, thinkers and doers.

## INFORMATION SUPPORT

Please be reminded that the **Homeroom teacher for your child/children is your main point of contact and support for day-to-day school matters.** Should further guidance be needed, the below staff should be contacted:

### Curriculum Information:

EY/PY: Olivia Burke

([o.burke@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:o.burke@gwa.edu.sg))

SY: Mark Gardner

([m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg))

### General School Matters:

Deputy Principal: Arnelle

Grundhoefer

([a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg))

### Significant Concerns:

School Principal: Neil White

([n.white@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:n.white@gwa.edu.sg))

## Message from Head of School

The two most important groups of people who impact student learning and development are parents and teachers. For the child, their first teachers are their parents, who help establish values, core understanding and an appreciation for inquiry. Teachers join the team as the formal experts, shaping student learning within the framework of international standards and subject-specific outcomes, deepening the inquiry process.

At GWA (Singapore), our goal is to ensure open communication between the student, parents and teachers. We do this through a range of parent engagement events, such as our monthly presentations on education and parent programmes, our many school events, and through ongoing school-home communication via emails and weekly newsletters. As a school in its' second year, we certainly do not claim to be perfect. However, we do work very hard in ensuring that a high level of transparency exists and that our overarching mission and vision remains at the heart of our developing school initiatives.

As a member school of the world leading GEMS Education group, we encourage the GEMS '3-A-Day' Approach. This simple daily strategy develops more engaged parenting and better understanding of what children are doing at school. These three easy steps are:

1. Talk about learning
2. Share learning
3. Encourage learning

By doing this every day, parents can ensure that there is an ongoing open dialogue with their children, and that opportunities for deeper discussions may occur. To learn more about the GEMS support of enhanced parenting, please visit this link: <http://www.gemseducation.com/parents>

As a school, GWA also strongly encourages high levels of engagement by students, parents and staff in the school community. The GWA Parent Association (GWAPA) has a core focus of supporting the various school initiatives, focusing in particular upon connecting parents-with-parents. They

have two key sub-committees, which concentrate on events and community service. The first sub-committee takes the lead in organising specific GWAPA parent activities. Examples may include such items as tours of Singapore and coffee mornings down town. The community service sub-committee is concerned with establishing parent community service opportunities.

As announced last week, GWAPA has recently selected their new Executive Committee, who have the responsibility of helping develop strong parent-to-parent engagement opportunities. The committee is an extension of the school, focusing upon support programmes. GWAPA is a strong advocate for the school and the new committee has commenced planning for many wonderful opportunities for parents in the months ahead.

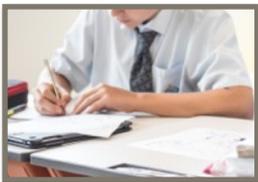
David Edwards - Head of Education

([d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg))

## Message from Deputy Principal

Grade 10 students recently attended an information session on the IB Diploma Programme. The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education that prepares students, aged 16 to 19, for success at the university level and beyond.

The programme encompasses an in-depth study of six major subjects: three subjects are studied at Higher Level and three at Standard Level, allowing students to pursue advanced work in subjects of particular interest.



In addition to the six required courses, candidates for the Diploma take a course in Theory of Knowledge, write a 4000-word

Extended Essay, and complete a CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) programme, which stresses experiential learning outside the classroom.

Over the next few months we will schedule parent meetings to describe the DP programme in more detail.

If you have any further questions about the IBDP programme, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Arnelle Grundhoefer** - Deputy Principal/DP Coordinator

[a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg)

### GWA SHUTTLE BUS UPDATE

Please do note that as of Monday 14 September the free shuttle bus service to Yishun MRT will operate at the following times:

- 3.40pm
- 4.10pm
- 5pm



## Sport Update

The ECA programme is under way!



There was a buzz of activity after school on Monday as students made their way to their respective ECAs. In particular, the Swimming and the Cross Country Teams had signup numbers in excess of 100 and 50 students respectively. Climbing also continues to draw maximum numbers. New activities such as Model United Nations have generated a great deal of interest.

The school is currently in negotiations with outside providers, which will enable us to offer more opportunities to students in the second ECA season.

Students who are representing GWA this year in sports teams are required to purchase their personal uniform from the school shop.

If you require any further information on the ECA's, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Tony McMullen**

Activities Coordinator

[t.mcmullen@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:t.mcmullen@gwa.edu.sg)



## EY/PY Curriculum Update

The PYP is a transdisciplinary programme. This means that students acquire skills in context, and explore content that is relevant to their lives. This allows students to make meaning of the world around them and deepen their understanding. Students inquire into, and learn about, globally significant issues in the context of units of inquiry (UOI), each of which addresses a central idea relevant to a particular transdisciplinary theme.

The six transdisciplinary themes are: who we are, where we are in place and time, how the world works, how we express ourselves, how we organise ourselves and sharing the planet. These themes have global significance for all students in all cultures.

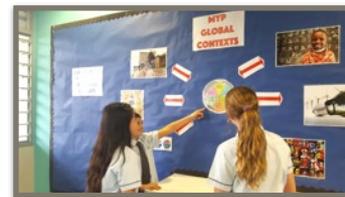
As students move through the Primary Years Programme they revisit the transdisciplinary themes, building new knowledge and understandings. The end result is immersion in broad-ranging, in-depth, articulated curriculum content. Where students have developed an understanding of themselves as a learner and also an appreciation for others around the world.

Please look out for your child's UOI newsletter, which is sent home via email in the beginning weeks of each unit. These outline the central idea, issues, knowledge, skills and concepts of what the unit will be. There is also information on how you can support your child at home.

**Olivia Burke** - PYP Coordinator  
[o.burke@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:o.burke@gwa.edu.sg)

## SY Curriculum Update

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) provides opportunity for our students to engage with teaching and learning in context. Students learn best when their learning experiences have context and are connected to their lives and the world around them.



As an integral part of the MYP at GWA (Singapore) our students use global contexts to develop an understanding of their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. These global contexts allow students to make connections in their learning and relate these to issues of personal, local, national or global importance.

Global contexts explore the areas of identities and relationships, personal and cultural identity, fairness and development, scientific and technical innovation, orientation in space and time, and globalisation and sustainability. Each of these areas give focus to the topics of study within the classroom across all eight subject groups of the MYP allowing students to gain deeper insight into their studies.

If you have any questions about the MYP please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Mark Gardner** - MYP / IGCSE Curriculum  
 Coordinator  
[m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:m.gardner@gwa.edu.sg)

### HAZE MONITORING AT GWA (SINGAPORE)

With the current haze enveloping Singapore, please do note the following school procedures:

- The Education Leadership Team conducts hourly reviews of the government PSI readings for the north of Singapore
- Should there be a clear trend of the PSI rising to 101 or above, all outdoor physical activities are brought indoors, as appropriate
- In the event that an activity cannot be brought indoors, it is cancelled and an alternative proposed, should it be suitable
- The above approach relates to all PE classes, morning and lunch break times, as well as after-school activities

Please rest assured that the health and well-being of students and staff remains at the heart of any action taken in response to the current haze issues in Singapore.