



THIS WEEK'S NEWS

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CALENDAR UPDATE

18 December - Last day of school - 1:30pm dismissal
21 December to 8 January - School holiday
11 January 2016 - Semester 2 commences

CALENDAR CHANGE

Please note that due to GWA hosting a teacher training conference for up to 700 educators in February, a pupil-free day has been declared for **Friday 26th February, 2016**.

Congratulations to all students and staff involved in our 'Animal Rumble Grumble' PY musical held at GWA last night. It was a great display of the talent we have at our school.

Message from Head of School

It was a great pleasure on Wednesday to spend time with GWA parents to outline, discuss and clarify the strategic direction of the school. During the hour long session, we explored the key pillars of our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, reinforcing the commitment of the entire organisation to deliver on our promise of providing outstanding learning opportunities across the school community. It was also the chance to see the four GWA core values live in the aspirations for the school.

This past week, the leadership and HR teams have been busy with extensive interviews for key education leadership positions for next school year. For the Primary Years Deputy Principal position, our four internal candidates went through separate three hour sessions, which involved an initial hour of discussion, a one hour block of project time in which the candidates had to respond to two specific tasks, and a final hour in which they presented their outcomes and pitched an action plan for the school. This extensive process highlighted the strength of our internal candidates, whom we now review against the four external finalists. We will officially announce the awardee for the position next week.

December is a wonderful time to reflect on our recent past. For students, the semester has been a challenging, exciting time in their life. They are surrounded by highly engaged teachers who constantly innovate, seeking new ways of developing the knowledge, skills and passion for learning of your children. We have a school facility which enables us to really provide extensive opportunities. On Wednesday, we were one of a handful of schools selected to undergo Google Expedition, and on Thursday our Primary Years students performed in the first GWA PY Musical.

In the final week of the first semester, we encourage all students, parents and staff to take a moment to reflect. Why do we enjoy being a part of GWA so much? How can we ensure that as we continue to grow, the wonderful foundation we have, forms a solid DNA for the school? What programmes will each and every member of the school community personally engage in during the second semester, to assist GWA to develop into an inspirational school for exploring education?

David Edwards
 Head of Education
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Message from Deputy Principal

All Grade 11 and 12 students will be required to complete a Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) programme as part of their overall IB Diploma programme. CAS involves students in a range of activities that take place alongside their academic studies. CAS comprises of three strands, often interwoven with particular activities, and are characterised as follows:

- Creativity - exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance. This may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, and crafts.
- Activity - physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle. Pursuits may include individual and team sports, dance, outdoor recreation, fitness training, and any other form of physical exertion that purposefully contributes to a healthy lifestyle.
- Service - collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development as well as their social and civic development. CAS activities should provide:

- real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- personal challenge - tasks must extend the student and be achievable in scope
- thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, and reporting
- reflection on outcomes and personal learning

A good CAS programme should be both challenging and enjoyable, a personal journey for the student of self-discovery. For many students, CAS activities include experiences that are profound and life-changing.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Arnelle Grundhoefer- Deputy Principal
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ECA and Sport Update

Twenty-four members of the GWA Swim Team took part in an invitational swim meet at the Canadian International School last Saturday.

All swimmers performed extremely well with a high percentage of students recording new personal best times. Arnav Divaker was the standout for the Jaguars taking home three gold medals in the 15-Over Boys division. Alicia Soosai led the way for the girls earning one gold and two silver medals in the 11-12 Girls group. Emma Middleditch chimed in collecting a silver and a bronze medal in the 13-14 Girls.

Our 11U boys football were eager to get on the field again after having their games rained out the previous week. However, the boys did not come out firing in their first game. While the Jaguars did manage to escape with a 1-1 result against Avondale, they were clearly disappointed. They had previously defeated Avondale 4 - 0 and were hoping for a similar result this time around.

In their next game against the Canadian School, GWA started to show glimpses of their earlier season form. However, they were still not back to their best form and again could only manage a 1 - 1 result. The final game of the day was against Nexus, a team that had beaten GWA on their two previous outings. This time the boys came out determined not to go down to Nexus again. While it wasn't always pretty the Jaguars did manage to get their nose in front at the final whistle, winning the game 1 - 0.

Two days later our 14U girls hit the park for the first time this season taking on National Public School on home turf. The girls began strongly and, courtesy of some brilliant play by Charlotte Jaeger, went two goals up. National Public School fought back strongly and managed to draw even 2 - 2 late in the second half. However, the Jaguars were not finished and after a scurry, Emma Middleditch scored the winning goal with limited time remaining.

The girls will be keen maintain their momentum leading in to the break when they take on Canadian International School on Monday. For all you fanatic Jaguar fans the game will kick off at 4:30pm.

Tony McMullen
Activities Coordinator
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EY/PY Curriculum Update

On Wednesday this week your child may have come home to tell you that they had been on an expedition to the Grand Canyon, a barrier reef, the Amazon or to the Moon. What they are referring to was an event that our school was selected to participate in. Google Expeditions is in Singapore to promote their Google Expedition programme. Expeditions is a virtual reality platform built for the classroom. Google has worked with teachers and partners from around the world to create more than 100 engaging journeys - making it easy to immerse students in entirely new experiences. Expeditions are guided tours of places schools buses can't go.

They are comprised of virtual reality panoramas and are led by a guide or teacher. Teachers guide their class and point out highlights or elements that will allow students to further deepen their understanding of a particular concept. These expeditions have allowed our students to virtually visit areas that will broaden the context of their units of inquiry.

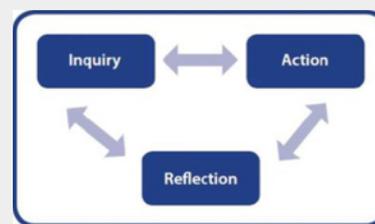
Students were utilising the Google Cardboard app and Google Cardboard viewer to experience their virtual tour. Google Cardboard viewer allows you to use your smart phone as a virtual reality tool. This tool is another example of how we can utilise technology to help enrich the learning experiences for our children. The ability to visit otherwise unreachable places to explore a topic or concept is invaluable. We are extremely fortunate to have been selected from other schools around Singapore to participate in this programme. Mr. Cline and Ms. O'Rourke were instrumental in helping to assist us in this experience.

For more information about Google Expeditions please visit: <https://www.google.com.sg/edu/expeditions/>

Olivia Burke - PYP Coordinator
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SY Curriculum Update

Teaching and learning in the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) celebrates the many ways people work together to construct meaning and make sense of the world. Through the interplay of asking, doing and thinking students construct understanding and meaning. An IB education empowers young people for a lifetime of learning, independently and in collaboration with others and it prepares a community of learners to engage with global challenges through inquiry, action and reflection.



This approach is evident within the MYP classroom and it also reaches beyond this environment

with Service in Action (SA). Throughout Semester One, students have been involved in a variety of SA activities in which they have supported communities both within and outside of the school. These activities have ranged from active involvement in school-based initiatives such as performances and awareness campaigns, to working with local hospitals and social groups and some students have even been involved in supporting community projects outside of Singapore. Students are currently working on recording and reflecting upon their involvement with these activities, and it is fantastic to see their level of engagement.

If you would like to know more about Service in Action in the MYP then do not hesitate to contact me.

Mark Gardner - MYP / IGCSE Curriculum Coordinator
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