



THIS WEEK'S NEWS

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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**.

MESSAGE FROM GWAPA

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Happy holidays to everyone from GWAPA! This month, parents attended a potluck dinner, where we exchanged ideas and enjoyed some festive foods and beverages. A group of more than 50 parents and kids also took a chartered bus tour of the Christmas lights around the Orchard Road area, a successful event that will be organised each year by GWAPA.

Our first GWAPA meeting for second semester will be held **Wednesday January 13th**.

Thanks for all your participation during this Semester One. We look forward to seeing more of you in the new year!

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Message from Head of School

On Monday our internal panel finalised the appointment of the Primary Years Deputy Principal, a position which officially commences from 1st August, 2016. A short-list of 9 candidates, five of whom were external, were interviewed over the past six weeks. The strength of the internal candidates directed the panel to select from our current serving GWA staff, with the position conferment being shared with GWA staff on Wednesday. It gives us great pleasure to communicate across the GWA community, that Mr Mike Gilmour has been appointed to this important Education Leadership Team position. Mike will continue as classroom teacher, coach and High Performance Student Coordinator for the remainder of this academic year, whilst also assisting Neil White in the planning for the 2016-2017 school year.

The final week of Semester One has been a timely point in the year to reflect on success thus far and to look forward to three weeks of holidays. The Secondary Years Assembly was led by the Grade 8 students, who very ably delivered a series of messages surrounding the theme of 'Balance'.

The student leaders reviewed the importance of being engaged in sport, art and academic pursuits and in ensuring emotional well-being as a core facet of having a balanced life. I had the opportunity to address the students at the end of the assembly and used this chance to outline two pathways that lay ahead for them in second semester. Two stories were used to exemplify these pathways, one of which is to simply turn up to school, sit in class, then return home. It is a somewhat lifeless existence and one which misses out so many opportunities.

The second story was one of colour and life; one in which full engagement can bring with it increased joy, greater experiences and endless possibilities. The challenge to the assembled students was that they should use the weeks ahead to set goals on how they will have a fully involved, balanced life at GWA, to maximise their learning and to explore new areas.

On behalf of the GWA faculty and support staff, we wish you a wonderful festive period. We hope that the three weeks off campus provides time to reconnect with family, enables reflection, and provides the opportunity to set new challenges for 2016.

David Edwards
Head of Education
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Message from Principal

Semester One provided our students with many opportunities to showcase their talents and abilities. Our Uniting Nations event provided a wonderful experience for students, families and faculty. The school community came together to share their understanding of different cultures through both presentations and performances. On the sporting front, many of our teams and athletes have had success at different levels. We have also continued to develop our Extra Curricular Activities programme including offering students the opportunity to participate in our very first Primary Years musical which was enjoyed by all.

To conclude the first semester, academic reports will be sent home later today. This document is an important summation of student academic progress to date, with the comments provided by the class and homeroom teachers giving a clear gauge on student success, as well as indicating areas for further growth. The semester report is a significant item which, in conjunction with the ongoing assessment data communicated to families via the ManageBac academic portal, provides very clear and detailed information about the progress of each student. This information is invaluable for families and teachers, as they now look ahead to individual student study for semester two.

On behalf of the Education Team, I would like to wish all families a safe and enjoyable holiday and we look forward to seeing you again at the start of Semester Two on January 11, 2016.

Neil White- School Principal
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ECA and Sport Update

Our 14U boys and girls football teams played the Canadian International School (CIS) on Monday. The girls hosted their opponents on Jaguar turf, while the boys travelled to CIS Lakeside for their game.

While both the boys and girls from CIS presented formidable opponents for our teams, the outcomes were vastly different. Unfortunately, our girls were unable to contain the highly-skilled and well-drilled CIS team.

Within the first 15 minutes of the game the Jaguars found themselves down 4 - 0. To their credit, the girls fought on gamely for another 35 minutes and only conceded two more goals while slotting one of their own. Despite the scoreline the girls did GWA proudly by displaying a never say die attitude and a willingness to fight to the final whistle.

There was the potential for a similar storyline to play out over at CIS Lakeside with our 14U boys team. However, realising that they were outmanned early in the game, Coach Gilmour and his boys decided that defence was the best form of attack. The team defended tenaciously throughout the game. Despite only having one shot on goal, the team managed to come away with a hard fought 0 - 0 draw.

Both teams are looking forward to some rest and relaxation over the break in preparation for the back-end of their respective season when they return in January.

ECA Update

The current ECA block will have four more weeks to run after school resumes in January. The registration for the 3rd and final ECA block will begin the last week of January. The registration process for Primary Years Students will remain unchanged. However, our Senior Years Students will be given the autonomy to register for their selected activities in school.

Tony McMullen
Activities Coordinator
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Our delightful Early Years students entertained us with Christmas songs in assembly this week.



EY/PY Curriculum Update

As this semester and calendar year draws to an end it is time to look back over everything that has been achieved so far and to set some new goals for the new term.

On Friday, semester reports will go home. These reports will give a comprehensive overview of student achievement at this time. They will outline what students have been working towards, their successes and areas for development. This is the perfect time to celebrate all that has been achieved and to discuss what next steps your child should target next semester.

Encourage your child to read during the break and make connections between what they are reading, themselves and the world. Our students have had a long and busy semester. Use this holiday time as a opportunity for reflection and rejuvenation. When we return in January we will be welcoming new students.

We wish families who are relocating to other places and schools, all the very best for your new adventure. To all of our returning families, have a happy and safe break and we will see you in 2016.

Olivia Burke - PYP Coordinator
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SY Curriculum Update

The end of Semester One is a significant milestone in the academic year, giving an opportunity to evaluate, adjust and realign priorities. Through the semester our SY students have achieved a huge amount, both inside and outside of the classroom, nurturing curiosity and developing skills for inquiry and research and as they move into the future they will refine their approach to study and continue to evaluate and reflect upon their progress.

As we reach the end of term the Semester One Reports will be issued via Managebac. These reports are providing feedback on the progress students have made in all MYP subjects throughout the whole semester. The report for each individual subject gives the four criteria grades, each marked out of eight, along with an overall Middle Years Programme (MYP) subject grade, a mark from one to seven. In addition to the grades, the teacher comments give feedback of the content covered, the strengths of the student and also key areas to focus upon for future development.

These reports are one of the many tools we use to share information and open up dialogue as students progress through the MYP. Please use the information contained within them for discussion at home and do contact subject teachers to explore issues further.

Should you require any further information about the reporting process or the MYP please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mark Gardner - MYP / IGCSE Curriculum Coordinator
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