

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

## Message from Head of School

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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**Bus Enquiries:**

Mr Tan (HDT): 9777 4838

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### CALENDAR UPDATE

**22 February-25 February** -

Book week

**25 February, 10:30am** -

Character parade in the Auditorium

**26 February** - Pupil-free day

**2 March** - Grade 4 camp

**7 March** - Grade 10 IGCSE

Mock examinations

**7,8 & 10 March** - Talent week

### METASPRINT SERIES SINGAPORE

The first race of the MetaSprint series is this Sunday the 21st of

February at Palawan beach, Sentosa. GWA will have a tent with some great activities for kids, so please do come down for some fun in the sun.

If you would like to sign up for any of the up-coming races click [here](#)

This week has been exciting for the Varkey Foundation, the philanthropic arm of GEMS Education, with Dr Stephen Hawking announcing the 10 finalists for the Global Teacher Prize. The Global Teacher Prize is in its second year, with the goal to provide "...an annual award to an exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession. It celebrates the best in teachers - those who inspire their students and their community around them".

The finalists come from nine different countries, backgrounds and education systems. What is a constant across the group, is their absolute commitment to ensuring that the education they provide has a profound impact on the lives of their students. Their personal stories are incredibly inspirational and a reminder that an individual can make a lasting positive impact on the lives of many. Aqua Asifi escaped the Taliban in Afghanistan and through her journey, has now had more than 1000 girls graduate from her schools. Mathematics teacher Colin Hearty has created over 1500 videos and made them freely available to students around the world via his YouTube channel, gathering more than 5 million views. Michael Soskil from the US, has encouraged his students to assist with projects around the world, including the provision of clean water to fight cholera in Kenya.

Our consistent theme at GEMS Education and more specifically at GWA (Singapore), is that teachers make the difference. Through your first-hand experience, you are interacting consistently with highly engaged teachers, whose focus remains to provide your children with outstanding learning opportunities. Often we are quick to reach-out when a problem arises, however rarely do we make contact just to pass along a positive comment. With the weekend now upon us, perhaps parents and students could reach out to their teachers, providing a short note of thanks for their efforts and commitment to providing pathways for your children now, next and later.

To learn more about the Global Teacher Prize, to listen to Dr Stephen Hawking announcing the finalists and/or to learn more about the ten extraordinary finalists, please utilise the below links:

- [Global Teacher Prize](#)
- [Dr Stephen Hawking Announcement](#)
- [The Ten Finalists](#)

**David Edwards** - Head of Education  
[d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:d.edwards@gwa.edu.sg)

## Message from the Deputy Principal

Grade 9 and 10 families are invited to a Grade 11 informational meeting covering topics related to the IB Diploma programme and IB Diploma readiness.

Our Grade 11 information session is scheduled for Thursday, February 25th, 2016. At this meeting we will cover a broad range of topics relevant to our IBDP students, such as the extended essays, CAS programme, assessment policy, IB diploma requirements, student work load, and academic expectations.

Following our general information session, Grade 10 parents and students will meet with our DP course teachers for one-to-one sessions to discuss course content and course specific assessments. This will be a wonderful opportunity to meet, discuss, and ultimately, support the students as they prepare for a rigorous academic programme.

Please come and join in to discuss the IB program and its inner workings:

**When:** 6:30 - 7:30 pm, Thursday 25 February 2016

**Where:** Auditorium lobby (4th floor)

**Who:** Grade 9 and 10 parents and students

If you have any questions about the IB Diploma 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 will be hosting the PYP talent show March **7th, 8th and 10th in the Auditorium**. We're excited about all the acts that have signed up and are holding auditions next week during break and lunch on the above dates. Acts should be no more than 3 minutes, appropriate to GWA conduct and standards, and students should be prepared for the audition.

We look forward to seeing all the talent! Should you have any questions, please contact Ms. Henning ([l.henning@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:l.henning@gwa.edu.sg)) or Mrs. Smith ([m.smith@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:m.smith@gwa.edu.sg)).

## ECA and Sport Update

Welcome back from the CNY break! I hope you found some time to relax and enjoy the company of your family and friends.

ECAs kicked off with a flurry on Monday and will run through until May 26th. All ECAs have healthy enrolment, with many of the activities being near capacity or already full. We were able to accommodate all students who submitted their registration before the deadline. Hopefully, your child was able to get his/her desired activities.

We also have sufficient student numbers to enter a number of teams in the ACSIS competition. This season GWA will be represented in 8U Football, 11U and 14U Track & Field as well as 14U Boys and Girls Basketball.

With the school continuing to grow, thought is being given to changes that will assist GWA further develop the ECA programme. Naturally, your opinion is important to us and the process will ensure that voices are heard.

If you have any questions regarding the ECA programme, 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

Reflection on actions, theories and practice is a crucial element of the PYP. We encourage our students to reflect on their work, attitudes and information they are presented with. As teachers, we are constantly reflecting on what we do, how we do it and why we do it. This reflective process is also adopted by the International Baccalaureate with its programmes.

In 2012 the IB embarked on the first comprehensive review of the PYP to examine every aspect of the programme, from its founding principles to implementation in the classroom, to ensure that it is relevant to learners of today and tomorrow.

Launched in 1997, the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is currently implemented in more than 100 countries. As the world and thinking in education is evolving, the PYP continues to enhance and develop with these changing times. This review offers an ideal opportunity for the IB to reflect upon, enhance and strengthen the PYP curriculum framework at a time of fast paced change, when international-mindedness and access to a high quality education continue to be as important as ever.

The review of the PYP will be a consultative and collaborative research-based process. Part of the review of the PYP is to look at areas where the continuity of experience for IB students ages 3-19 can be strengthened. The review will take into account the very latest research into child development, technology and best practice.

This process will be an ongoing process and more updates will be communicated to IBPYP schools and their communities over the coming months.

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

## SY Curriculum Update

One of the attributes of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) is that through each subject group our students are exposed to real-life skills and situations with the aim to prepare them for their future career. This approach refers to certain essential skills such as cooperation, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving that students need to thrive in today's world.

One real-life skill developed within our MYP is the ability to collaborate and is about encouraging students to work with each other to solve problems and share knowledge. This not only builds teamwork skills, it leads to deeper learning and understanding.

Collaborative learning is an approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of students working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. By working together in the classroom students are practicing a variety of skills, such as communication (listening to others, asking questions, sharing ideas, summarising information), research (asking questions, taking notes, assigning different roles to each member of the team) and social development (learning how to share, accepting responsibility and respecting others.)

If you would like further information about the MYP then please do not hesitate to contact me.

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

### GWAPA UPDATE

Next event :  
 Lunch at *Club Meatballs*  
 2 March, 11am-1pm  
 China Square Central  
 20 Cross Street #01-35  
 Singapore 048422  
 Contact our PRE (Judy) or GWAPA if you  
 would like more details.  
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