

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

## Message from Head of School

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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This week I pause with looking into the future of education to celebrate the present. Last weekend we organised and hosted the ISTA Primary Years Drama Festival, the first of its kind held for this international organisation. The extraordinary array of activities and workshops, facilitated by recognised global experts in the field of drama, including members of the GWA parent and staff bodies, provided Primary students in Singapore with the opportunity to delve further into this performing art.

Saturday also had GWA organising and hosting a swimming carnival for three international schools in Singapore. Our team of more than fifty athletes represented the school with style, many achieving personal bests and winning their respective events. The sporting achievement continued with our U14 boys and girls basketball teams competing at SAS on Saturday morning, both in the hunt for gold medals in their season finals. Tony provides a wonderful report on these games in his article later in this newsletter.

Arts Week has been a core focus over the past five days. The array of activities on offer from our arts team and external experts has provided every student at the school with multiple opportunities to explore a variety of arts aspects. On Thursday, the PY students shared their learning with a large gathering of peers and families, supported by our artist-in-residence. Today has seen the SY students share their learning from the week.

The success of these many events can be largely attributed to the highly engaged people who constitute our school community. At every event students were encouraged, guided and cheered by peers, parents and staff. The weekend events saw many spending hours at the school ensuring that students from across the island were given ample support. During Arts week, many parents supported and led workshops covering an array of cultural themes.

The measure of a school is not the dollars spent on buildings nor how glitzy the brochures and marketing rhetoric may be. The difference between the good, the great and the outstanding international schools is the level of commitment and engagement of the people within the school community. Our students love coming to school and constantly astound us with their involvement in sports, arts and academics. Our parents are tireless in the support of their children and are highly connected to the many staff at GWA. Our educators are extraordinary. They are passionate about ensuring that every student and parent is supported, guided and extended through our many programmes.

We are fortunate to have you as a member of GWA (Singapore). Thank you for your support of the many events and programmes, as well as the continued sharing of your happiness amongst the various parent communities in Singapore.

**David Edwards** - Head of Education

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### CALENDAR UPDATE

**26 May** - Pop Concert

**26-27 May** - Grade 2 Camp

**30 May to 3 June** - SY Exams

**1 June to 2 June** - Grade 5 PYP exhibition

**8 June** - EY swim gala

**9 June** - PY/SY swim gala

**10 June** - GWA Awards Night, 6:30pm (compulsory for grades 3 and above)

### Upcoming Parent Social Events

**25 May** - Coffee Morning at Dutch Club, 10.30am (22 Camden Park, Singapore 299814)

**28 May** - Picnic at Botanic Gardens, 4-6pm (Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage)

**8 June** - Farewell Coffee Morning with Parents leaving GWA, 9.30am at School.

### ARTSWEEK 2016



## Message from School Principal

To what extent are IB Diploma students academically prepared for college?

A recent study conducted by the International Baccalaureate Organization examined three key areas needed for college readiness. Researchers tracked and compared academic success for IB and non IB graduates as they matriculated into college.

Specifically, researchers followed:

**Academic adjustment:** Time management, research skills, and organization

**Social adjustment:** A balance of school work and social activities

**Emotional adjustment:** Adapting to new challenges and increased self-reliance

Overall, the study found that IB Diploma students appreciate that learning promotes greater understanding and personal growth. Students reported a deeper understanding of the structure of knowledge, large concepts, and how content connects across disciplines. The study also showed that students had an appreciation for learning and higher-order thinking skills. (International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme: Examining College Readiness (2014)

The diversity of IB Diploma subject courses combined with the Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay (EE) and Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) components contextualised with international mindedness gives students an advantage for academic and non-academic success in college. GWA students are exposed across all three IB programmes to the inquiry and learning skills necessary to be successful both in school and at the university level.

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

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### GWA Swim Meet - 14 May 2016

50 GWA swimmers made waves last Saturday at the GWA Swimming Invitational with over 120 swimmers from different schools in attendance.

The GWA swimmers were led by our year-round swimming standouts Arnav Divaker, Alicia Soosai, and Scarlett Nichol who won their races by wide margins and demonstrated elite-level speed and technique. Some other remarkable swims were achieved by Femke Olde Bijvank, Aarush Bajaj, and Siena Biallas, and our 9-10 girls really stood out as a strong part of the GWA swim team.

Many thanks to the parents who helped out with timing and marshalling. It takes a group effort to conduct a good swim meet. We are looking forward to the end-of-year Swim Gala on Thursday June 9th for students in Grades 1-10, so plan for another exciting morning of swimming!

Steve Betts - Aquatics Coordinator/PE Teacher  
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## ECA and Sport Update

Last Saturday, the 14U girls basketball team secured their place in GWA history by becoming the first Jaguars sporting team to win ACSIS gold. The win capped off a perfect season for Jaguars, taking their win-loss record to 7 - 0.



It was a nervous start to the final for our girls. Despite the fact that they had good scoring opportunities, the baskets were not dropping. A timely long range three pointer on the buzzer was the spark the Jaguars needed.

From then on it was a different story. The Jaguars, led by Claire, Ava and Shiori, were tenacious in defence. Gabby and Samrudhi provided great support off the bench which allowed GWA to maintain their defensive pressure throughout the game. At the other end of the court, Weronika (15 points) and Charlotte (19 points) combined brilliantly to keep the scoreboard ticking over.

Leading by nine points at half time GWA were well on their way to a famous victory. When the final whistle sounded the Jaguars had extended the winning margin to 34 - 22 to down the previously undefeated Chatsworth International School. Congratulations girls!

Earlier in the day the 14U boys contested their final against Anglo Chinese School International. Full of confidence from their crushing semi final win the boys came out firing. The Jaguars got out to an early lead and were playing as a team both in offence and defence.

The lead would change numerous times throughout the game as both teams battled fiercely for the gold medal. Unfortunately, the Jaguars were behind at the final whistle and had to be content with a well deserved silver medal. Congratulations to Austin, Keishin, Federico, Diego, Joshua, Jeremy, Ace and Coach Ryan for a great year!

The third and final ECA block will conclude on May 26th. Please ensure your child is aware of altered travel arrangements, should this be necessary.

**Tony McMullen** - Activities Coordinator  
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## EY/PY Curriculum Update

*The arts are not mere diversions from the important business of education; they are essential resources.*  
Elliot W Eisner, "The Role of the Arts in Cognition and Curriculum" (2001)

The Arts are a powerful mode of communication through which students explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them. Arts provide students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to experiences and engage with historical, social and cultural perspectives. The students are stimulated to think and to articulate their thoughts in new ways, and through a variety of media and technologies.

All this week our students had the privilege of working with an artist in residence and dance instructors. They had an opportunity to discover the amazing creative talents of batik artists, a photographer, oil painter and jewellery designer. These many facets of the creative arts are crucial to the development of our children. Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in mathematics, literacy development, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skills. Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork. As our aim is to develop international mindedness in our students, the learner profile outlines the need for our students to be open-minded, to be thinkers; both creatively and critically. Also, to communicate by expressing ideas and information confidently and creatively. The arts, be it great literature (novels, poetry and short stories, plays), dance, visual arts, music and film, play a vital role in developing this understanding in our children.

The importance of arts education in the curriculum is in introducing students to another way of understanding themselves and the world. It allows them different ways of expressing thoughts, experiences and feelings that are not easily expressed in everyday symbols and signs. We are extremely lucky to have such amazing Arts teachers in the PYP. These teachers have worked tirelessly over the past few weeks to organise this amazing Arts week for our students. The confidence and enthusiasm in our children as they performed at the assembly on Thursday was wonderful to see.

**Olivia Burke** - PYP Coordinator  
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## SY Curriculum Update

Our Grade 8 into Grade 9 Transition Evening was held on Thursday, giving students and parents the opportunity to learn more about our Middle Years Programme (MYP) in Grades 9 and 10. During the evening a presentation was given to outline the MYP in these two grades, describe subject choices available to students and look at pathways for progression.

A key element of the evening was to explore the relationship between the MYP and the IGCSE qualifications which our students take at the end of Grade 10. The MYP provides the framework for teaching and learning, it is the 'how' we teach and 'how' we learn. The IGCSE provides the subject content in Grades 9 and 10, it is the 'what' we teach and 'what' we learn. These two elements are fully integrated to provide a programme which maintains the integrity and approach of the MYP whilst developing the knowledge, skills and abilities required to successfully undertake external examinations.

The evening also provided parents and students an opportunity to meet with subject teachers to explore the Grade 9 and 10 curriculum in more detail, finding out more about the content covered, methods of assessment and timelines through the two years. Students and parents are encouraged to continue discussions in order to make an informed choice regarding subject options, and to return their option form to the Homeroom teacher no later than Monday 30th May.

Should you have any questions about the MYP and IGCSEs please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

**Mark Gardner** - MYP/IGCSE Coordinator  
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ARTSWEEK 2016