

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

## Message from Head of School

### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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We live in a time of rapid development and change, a period in which traditional industries are undergoing significant disruption. In areas such as Finance, questions have been raised for some time as to whether the current retail banking model is the most efficient, client responsive and cost effective. The growing number of FinTech startups launching in traditional markets such as the UK and US, hints more at a future in which we will never have the need to enter a physical bank again.

The research and development into the very traditional automobile market has also been gathering significant press coverage. Investment by companies such as Google, Honda, Porsche and Tesla into the driverless car demonstrates how quickly change can occur when a significant commitment is made. It is increasingly likely that in only a matter of years (if even that long!) the reality of automated travel will be on our roads. Generations to come are going to marvel at how crazy we have been to be engaged in such a risky activity as driving, given what the near future holds.

Uber and AirBnB have proven that you can have a significant business without owning anything. They have changed how we access transport and book accommodation, using technology to connect people.

Where so many industries are beacons of innovation, Education sadly lags behind. I find this astounding. Education is the most important component of our lives; it is what drives development and change, yet as an industry, there has never been a time that Education has led innovation which has then permeated other business types.

For GEMS Education and most specifically GWA (Singapore), this reality is simply not acceptable. Our core value of 'leading through innovation' is at the heart of our DNA and as we move towards the end of our second academic year, we are preparing to launch the model of 'GWA: The future school'.

Over the past months, culminating in final meetings with partners and colleagues from around the world this week, we have been exploring with passion what the future of education will look like and how we can disrupt what is a very traditional industry. GWA has yesterday confirmed the development of a model of education at our school which will be the first of its kind in Singapore and the Asian region, and a model which will significantly enhance the quality of education on offer to your children.

Over the next two months, we will continue to write about what the future of education will look like, how GWA will be at the forefront of this disruption, and how your children will greatly benefit from a model which is for the real world, not the world of 100 years ago. Follow our articles in the coming weeks and join us in May for the launch to our school community.

GWA: The future school.

**David Edwards** - Head of Education

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

### CALENDAR UPDATE

**25-29 April** - SY: Week-

Without-Walls

**2 May** - Public Holiday:

May Day

**5 May** - G10-11

Transition Evening

(6:30pm in the

Auditorium)

**10 May** - G5-6

Transition Evening

(6:30pm in the

Auditorium)

**19 May** - G8-9

Transition Evening

(6:30pm in the

Auditorium)

**16 May to 20 May** -

Arts Week

## Message from the Deputy Principal

The IB's increased focus on the approaches to teaching and learning in the IB, aligns the DP with the Primary Years Programme and the Middle Years Programme.

Approaches to teaching and learning across the Diploma Programme refers to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes which permeate the teaching and learning environment.

The aims of approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme are to:

- empower teachers as teachers of learners as well as teachers of content
- empower teachers to create clearer strategies for facilitating learning experiences in which students are more meaningfully engaged in structured inquiry and greater critical and creative thinking
- promote both the aims of individual subjects (making them more than course aspirations) and linking previously isolated knowledge (concurrency of learning)
- encourage students to develop an explicit variety of skills that will equip them to continue to be actively engaged in learning after they leave school, and to help them not only obtain university admission through better grades but also prepare for success during tertiary education and beyond
- enhance further the coherence and relevance of the student's Diploma Programme experience
- allow schools to identify the distinctive nature of an IB Diploma Programme education, with its blend of idealism and practicality.

The five approaches to learning (developing thinking skills, social skills, communication skills, self-management skills and research skills) along with the six approaches to teaching (teaching that is inquiry-based, conceptually focused, contextualised, collaborative, differentiated and informed by assessment) encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy.

**Arnelle Grundhoefer** - Deputy Principal/DP Coordinator  
[a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:a.grundhoefer@gwa.edu.sg)

## ECA and Sport Update

The 14U Boys Basketball team were the lone sports representatives for the Jaguars this week. Buoyed by their performance last week, the team were eagerly awaiting the game against the Australian International School. The team was again at full strength and confident that they could reverse the first round result.

The Jaguars, led by Federico and Keishin offensively, began the game strongly. At the end of the first quarter they held a narrow one point lead. The Jaguars increased their defensive intensity in the second quarter while continuing to keep the scoreboard ticking over. By half time, the Jaguars had extended their lead to four points.

During the third and fourth quarter, AIS fought back strongly and the lead changed hands several times. Joshua held his nerve to sink two crucial free throws late in the fourth quarter to give the Jaguars a one point lead. However, for a second week in a row the Jaguars were down by two points at the final whistle.

**Tony McMullen**  
 Activities Coordinator  
[t.mcmullen@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:t.mcmullen@gwa.edu.sg)



On Wednesday, 20th April GWA (Singapore) hosted a group of seven Australian Universities as part of the inaugural 'Study in Australia - Future Unlimited' tour. The visit was organised by connect2oz and the Australian Trade Commission and is the first in what will be a series of visits to GWA (Singapore) by similar groups and individual universities from Australia. It was attended by Grade 9 and 10 students and parents, who took the opportunity to talk about the diverse and exciting educational opportunities offered by these colleges. Do keep checking emails and Naviance Family Connection for news on upcoming visits.

**Jonathan Cox** - Academic Advisor  
[j.cox@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.cox@gwa.edu.sg)



## EY/PY Curriculum Update

Thank you to all of the parents who participated in the Parent Teacher Conferences. This is a valuable time for you to again make contact with your child's teachers and to discuss the progress, successes and next steps for your child as a learner.

In a PYP school, it is very important that students have the opportunity to reflect and communicate on their learning and be honest about their progress development, strengths, challenges and next steps. Thinking about learning is crucial for future development and progress. This helps to give direction for the future and helps define everyone's role in the learning process.

The Harvard Family Research Project which is a branch of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, identifies that 'we all need praise and constructive criticism to grow. All parents are proud of their children and should hear about their strengths as well as their challenges from their child's teacher. This values the unique strengths of the child and establishes high expectations for their ability to succeed in school and in life.' ([www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org)) These conferences have been designed in collaboration with students. It has been a time of reflection as they look back over their learning and progress over the past months and set some goals to achieve as we move into the final quarter of the academic year.

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

### Parent Events

Great fun was had at the Chinese Calligraphy workshop on Tuesday. The next event is a tour and lunch at Gardens by the Bay. If you would like to join in, please contact our Parent Relations Executive, Judy ([j.lee@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:j.lee@gwa.edu.sg)) or go direct to the GWA-PA ([gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:gwapa.singapore@gwa.edu.sg))



## SY Curriculum Update

Next week all SY students will be taking part in experiential learning through our Week-Without-Walls programme. The programme is taking Grade 6 students to Australia and Grades 7-10 students to Northern Thailand to engage in a range of activities and community based work. For those students remaining within Singapore there is a programme of activities focussing on sustainability and a group of students are attending an externship programme with Keys Academy in which they will be working with MediaCorp and a Venture Capital group to carry out market research before putting together proposals to present to the company executives at the end of the week.

The experiential learning programmes educate through first-hand experience in which skills, knowledge and abilities are developed beyond the classroom through exposure to new experiences and ways of thinking and doing. Elements of each experience will focus upon aspects of curriculum content and service, with students identifying, implementing and reflecting upon the contributions they can make and the changes they can bring about in the world around them.

The programmes are designed to provide enjoyable, challenging and purposeful experiences for all students, giving them the opportunity to engage in personally meaningful ways. For further information about the Week-Without-Walls programme please don't hesitate to contact the ELP Coordinator, Mr. Paul Rimmer ([p.rimmer@gwa.edu.sg](mailto:p.rimmer@gwa.edu.sg))

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

### GR 7-10 WEEK-WITHOUT-WALLS DEPARTURE DETAILS (THAILAND)

**When:** Sunday, April 24th, 10.30am

**Where:** Terminal 2

**What:** Passports and NRIC cards, wearing Rustic Pathways t-shirts, luggage with Rustic Pathways label

### GR 6 WEEK-WITHOUT-WALLS DEPARTURE DETAILS (AUSTRALIA)

**When:** Sunday, April 24th, 6.30pm

**Where:** Terminal 3

**What:** Passports, NRIC cards, relevant Visa, luggage and wearing GWA PE shirts