

“Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers.”

Voltaire



Dear Chatsworth East Community,

A long weekend to start the first week of May and another one coming up during the last week - it is going to feel like a short month!

As you are all well aware, there has been an increase in the number of cases of the Influenza A H1N1 virus (also known as 'swine flu') throughout the world, though as of the writing of this newsletter we have not had any confirmed cases in Singapore. The Singapore Ministry of Health is handling these cases seriously and has been providing both local and international schools with updates and precautionary measures to take. While we do not want to overreact, we do at the same time want to remain vigilant in our policy of keeping children, as well as staff, who are ill at home until they are well. If requirements from the MOH change or new requirements come out based on the global situation, parents will be immediately informed through the school.

I had the pleasure of attending the Apple Education Summit in Hong Kong at the end of April. Over 500 teachers and administrators from 21 countries and 220 different schools were in attendance to talk about shaping education for a new generation of students. Think back about 10 years ago and we would never have fathomed the impact of the Internet on the global sharing of information and the vast audience we can reach just by hitting the 'return' key on our keyboards. My how things have changed! Clearly, in another 10 years the landscape will be different again and the environment in which our students, your children, live, work and learn is difficult for us to predict. It was an excellent weekend, to say the least, and I had the chance to speak to some wonderful people on the cutting edge in different areas of education.

Ms Fink and Ms Fitch did a wonderful job organizing events for Earth Week here at Chatsworth East last month and the students worked in a number of different areas to help enhance and strengthen their understanding of global environmental issues. I am constantly and pleasantly reminded how open and understanding our international students are of the world around them.

Ms Fink has been working hard on our Garden Project and we now have a company chosen to do the landscape work. This work will begin in August in preparation for the return of our students as we do not want the garden to grow over with weeds while everyone is on summer break. Our friends at APSN will be doing us a huge favour by removing the top layer of soil, free of charge, before our landscape artists get involved, and we thank them in advance.

I would like to remind parents and guardians to please close the front wooden gate by the Library when they go through it, as well as the side wooden gate by the girls' toilet and parking lot. It would also be very much appreciated if you could inform your helpers of the same as I know that some of them pick up and drop off the children. It only takes a moment to close the gate and it helps us to keep all of the students safe during busy traffic times of the day. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Due to the limited availability of teaching staff over the summer break, our East Summer School will not be going ahead this year. The Orchard Campus is still running their programme however, and if you are interested you can view the information on the school website or give them a call. It can be a long break for families remaining in Singapore and the Summer School sessions are a nice way to break things up. The programme is designed to be fun and non-academic.

The CPSG has received some feedback from parents regarding our school canteen and after meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Kee, we will begin seeing changes soon. Once we have the new menu sorted we will be seeing more fresh fruit, 100% juices and yoghurts in the fridges throughout the day, less of the sugary and fizzy drinks, and more vegetables on the lunch plates. As with any change in menu, it takes time to get it the way we want it but this is certainly a step in the right direction. The Kees are very happy to serve up whatever the parents are looking for and seek only to produce appropriate meals.

Our Chatsworth East Sports Day, being organized by Ms Smith, will be coming up on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May (just before the long weekend holiday). Parents are invited on this afternoon to watch their children enjoy themselves in some fun activities though it is not mandatory that you attend. We will be utilizing the field across from the school again this year and we hope for dry weather. Ms Smith will be sending a letter home to parents and guardians.

The school calendar, which has been attached at the end of the past few newsletters, is now up on the school website. Please note that we are still waiting for confirmation of Chinese New Year and Vesak Day for 2010. Once we have those confirmed on the Ministry website, we will update the online calendar. I would also encourage parents to have a look at a more detailed, 'daily' calendar of school events, located on my Principal's Site (attached to the school website). Here you will find information on field trips and school events. I am 'having a go' at using my Google calendar for this so that I can update it immediately without having to go into my site. We'll be monitoring how effective this is over the next while.

As we come closer to the end of another academic year, we will be saying goodbye to some of our students and families, as well as some of our staff – unfortunately such is the nature of an international school. In July we will be saying goodbye to the following staff members: Ms Gomez, who is returning to Australia with her family, Ms Byle, who is heading to another school in Singapore, Ms Smith, also heading back to Australia, Mrs. Joyce Taylor (ESL), who is headed off to Dubai, Mr. Hynes, who is headed off to Hong Kong, and Mr. Hutchins, who will be joining his wife at another school in Singapore. We wish them all the best in their continued work in education and we thank them for all of their contributions to our wonderful school through the time that they have been with us. In the coming newsletters and on my Principal's Website (link can be found on the school site) I will introduce some of our newly hired staff to you.

We will also be saying goodbye to Centre Stage as our Drama provider this year. We have enjoyed having Andy, Glyn and Becky on our campus and the students have thoroughly enjoyed attending their Drama lessons. Centre Stage will continue to offer Drama as a CCA for those students who are interested. We will be hiring a new, Chatsworth East Drama teacher for the coming school year. This makes sense for us, as a school, for the following reasons: the school will have ownership and control over the planning so that we can integrate with our Units of Inquiry, we will be able to work towards class productions and will have a Drama specialist to work with students for the Christmas concert and other events, our own Drama specialist can make links with our Music teacher to further enhance these areas, and there will be no clashes with different holiday periods.

As many parents have noted, we will be in need of a couple of additional classrooms over the next two years as our school expands. We have two Year 4 classes currently and they will need to move up into two Year 5 classes (of which we currently have 1), and then two Year 6 classes. We have been waiting for approval from the SLA and finally received it this week. The two new classrooms will be built in part of the area where the early years currently have their playground. The remaining early years playground area will be covered with safety, EPDM flooring (the same as we have for our sand and water play area) and some new play equipment will be purchased. These two new classrooms will be used for Year 1 so that we have all of the early years together in one area of the school. We are currently receiving quotations from contractors and we will need to move into the beginning stages of construction soon in order to be finished for the new school year. Most of the work will be done after school to limit noise and disruption and all work will be safely sectioned off from the students. As we are in the early stages of development, I will send home more information as it becomes available.

The next, and final for the year, Chatsworth Parent Support Group (CPSG) meeting will be held on the Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> of May, in Tembusu Hall at 9:15am. All are always welcome and the CPSG encourages new parents to the school to come out and get involved in any way they can. Please note that the information display board for the CPSG is located near the canteen and you can find more information here regarding the meetings and upcoming events. You can also place your coffee order from Starbucks.

**Important Upcoming Events for your calendar:**

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| May 9 <sup>th</sup>                      | Vesak Day   |
| May 21 <sup>st</sup>                     | Sports Day at Chatsworth East (field across from the school)                                      |
| May 22 <sup>nd</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>   | School Holiday  |
| May 27 <sup>th</sup>                     | CPSG meeting, 9:15 in the Hall  |
| June 10 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> | Year 6 Exhibition   |
| June 11 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> | Year 3 overnight trip to Underwater World   |
| June 26 <sup>th</sup>                    | Reports sent home   |
| June 29 <sup>th</sup>                    | Skills Week at Chatsworth East (end of year activities - more info to be sent home in due course) |
| July 3 <sup>rd</sup>                     | Final day of academic year  |
| August 31 <sup>st</sup>                  | First day of new academic school year   |

A more complete Calendar for this year and next can be found on the school website.

As always, should you ever have any questions or concerns, please do stop by my office, find me on the field in the morning, or drop me an email. I value and encourage the opportunity for discussion.

Sincerely,



Tyler Sherwood  
Principal