



حياتنا Hayatona Our Life

From Our Head of School



'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has'.

As we commence the school year, these words of American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, are in the forefront of my mind. I draw parallels to education and the differences we make in our schools, due to our collective efforts to initiate change. The communities we create are the incubators for our children to develop into influencers, leaders and change makers. In doing so we have an opportunity to change the world.

It is critical to keep in mind our individual and collective responsibility in shaping the community we are part of. The opportunity we are afforded to contribute to making our school a better place to be. The requirement for us to be role models in our students lives.

I would ask that we all continue to model the attributes of the IB Learner Profile for our students. As community members, this requires us to be knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, courageous, inquirers, open-minded, balanced, reflective and caring.

GIS is clearly already an extremely caring community. This is evident in the welcoming nature of our school, the warm smiles on the faces of our students and the wonderful relationships between parents and staff.

It is my hope that we continue to work harmoniously towards the shared goal of providing exceptional quality education for all our students. I have every confidence, working together, this small group of thoughtful committed citizens will indeed change the world for our students here at GIS.

Yours in Education,
Glen Radojkovich
Head of School/CEO

Cathy Hayes Deputy Head of School



A warm welcome back to all of our returning families and a special welcome to each of our new 271 students. From all indications, starting the academic year with a short week seemed to work very well, allowing parents, students and teachers get psychologically prepared and ease into the full week schedule.

As GIS continues to grow, both in terms of student numbers and programs offered, our priority is to ensure that we continue to build on our successes and develop and embrace our community. Between staff and students, we represent almost 100 nationalities and our school should feel like a place where we feel

welcome, where we belong to something bigger than ourselves and it is our collective responsibility to work together to achieve this.

As many of you are aware, Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing is used at GIS. We chose to utilize this tool for assessment as it is aligned to our curriculum and measures not just attainment, but the progress students make over the course of the year. It is an adaptive test that allows us to access real time reports for each individual student and analyze their strengths and areas of development, thus allowing us to personalize the learning experiences for all.

MAP workshops will be provided for parents in the coming weeks to help you understand your child's report.

Last year saw the beginning of a new partnership between the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), the organization that developed



'Providing An Exceptional Quality Education'

**QUICK
UPDATES
GIS**



WHOLE SCHOOL



**Coffee with the
Head of School**

**A Coffee Morning with
Glen Radojkovich**

Wednesday 20th Sept,
9:00-10:00am.

3rd floor, Secondary Building

MAPS Assessments Cont.

11 – 17th Sept.

School Photos at GIS

School photos on
17 – 20th Sept.



**Extra Curricular Activities
Internal**

Online Registration 17th Sept.
Commences 24th Sept

**Extra Curricular Activities
External**

Online & Face to Face
Registration 24th Sept.
Commences 1st Oct

**Hijri Day
School Holiday
21st September**

**Expanding Languages at
GEMS International School**

We are pleased to announce that we are expanding our language offerings and we respect your feedback you haven't already our survey, take a moment and fill it in
>>> Click Here



and created MAP testing. It is now a requirement for all IB schools in Dubai to assess students three times per year in English (reading and language usage), Mathematics and Science.

The KHDA mandate the testing windows that we must adhere to. The sooner we can access your children's data, the more ably equipped we are to support them on their learning journey. The 'Fall' assessments are currently underway and these will run into next week with the majority being complete by Thursday 21st September. At this time, we are waiting for the 'Winter' dates to be published and what this means for us is that we may need to adjust our MAP testing dates as published in the whole school calendar (available on the website).

I am thoroughly proud of GIS and our journey so far, and I look forward



to working with you in the coming year. Please see below for some information, updates and reminders.

Angelika Kuster

Curriculum Coordinator K-12



This academic year marks our final step in the direction of global accreditation. 2016-17 saw some major milestones for GIS, with both the MYP and the DP becoming fully authorized programs as well as a successful preparation visit from the Council of International Schools (CIS). CIS is a global, non-profit membership organization committed to high quality international education.

The quality and rigor of CIS accreditation is recognized by Ministries and Departments of Education around the world as the demonstration of a school's commitment to continually improve and keep up with leading education standards.

Undertaking the CIS accreditation process involves the entire school community. We are now approaching the final and most important part in our accreditation journey, the self-study. As part of the self-study, we are expected to complete a set of community surveys and conversations, we will need your help in completing these in the near future. Please watch out for an email communication regarding the survey which can be completed online at home or in our foyer.

Student IDs

We would like to remind parents to upload their student picture to OASIS.



GIS School Photos

GIS school photographs are scheduled to take place from September 17th - 20th. Specific details relating to your child will be shared with you via Homeroom teacher or Grade Level Leader.

The photo sessions will take place during the day and are planned to cause the least disruption to your child's day.

The Stu Williamson online ordering system has been developed to make it easier and more flexible for you. A few days after your child has their photograph taken they will bring home a password card. This has a unique login code and URL details for you to be able to view and purchase your child's photographs. Please register your details on the Stu Williamson site (www.sw-schools.com) and when the photographs are live you will receive an email. The images will be available to purchase after the school has approved all the photographs.

You are under no obligation to purchase the photos, however taking a photo is mandatory. We need a photo of every student for our database and other school-related events.

If you have any queries contact Stu Williamson Photography on 04 388 3382 or email schools@sw-schools.com.



Whole School Announcements

School times

Every morning the UAE National Anthem is played at 8:15 AM. It is expected that students are in class for the National Anthem and prepared for the day ahead. Attendance will be taken at 8:15 daily by the teachers. If children are not in class by this time, they are required to sign in at the main reception and get a late slip.

8:15 AM – 3:20 PM Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

8:15 AM – 1:45 PM Tuesday

Uniforms

We have received a great deal of feedback regarding the uniforms, the appearance, the quality and the service from Threads. Generally the feedback has been positive, however there have been some customer service issues which we are working to address directly. Please continue to share your feedback with us.

Nut Free School

GIS is a nut free school. We have students and staff with severe nut allergies, so we ask you to be mindful of this. If a student has nuts or nut products, they will be asked to put it back in their bags to take home. We appreciate your cooperation with this.



Leigh Girven Head of Primary

Welcome back to all our GIS families! I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the GIS community to our new primary students and their families. We hope your transition to Dubai is a smooth one and we are so very pleased to have you with us. What an exciting year we have ahead, we are so pleased to have you on the journey with us.

As always, it has been a very busy start to the new academic year. We have 17 fabulous new teachers join our primary team this year, us from the UK, New Zealand, Canada, US, Egypt, Syria, Ireland, South Africa and Greece. They bring with them knowledge and experience from all over the world! This is one of the wonderful aspects of an IB school – we have an opportunity to bring together best practices from so many countries and by working together we can build a truly international curriculum.

Teachers have spent the first two weeks of the year getting to know their new classes and engaging students in activities, to help them build relationships with their peers and explore their hopes and dreams for the year ahead. I am always amazed how easily children adapt to new environments and how quickly they make new friends. Teachers and students have been working together to establish essential agreements within each of their classes so that the year ahead is a positive and productive one. For students who may require support through their transition our counselors, ELL team and of course their teachers are available.

At the first upper primary assembly of 2017/18, we were excited to be joined by our new Head of School, Mr. Radojkovich, who spoke about always doing your best and never giving up even when you are faced with challenges. The students enjoyed watching two videos, one which stressed the importance of perseverance and another which showcased 'everyday heroes' doing extraordinary things. My challenge to the

students was to think about their year ahead and to set three goals for themselves: 'An academic challenge' or learning area they wanted to improve; A 'sport or wellbeing goal' such as to try a new activity or be selected in a school sports team; 'An individual goal based on challenge they would like to take up or make progress in. It will be great to revisit these goals at the end of the semester to see if they have achieved them!

Thank you to the parents who joined us on Tuesday for Back to School Night. There was a lovely positive vibe with parents reconnecting with each other and starting to build a relationship with their child's teacher. I cannot stress enough how important it is for parents to maintain positive and regular contact with their child's homeroom teacher. Teachers are always happy to answer questions or give feedback, either during drop off/pick up or via email if you are not able to see the teacher in person. We know that there is a lot of new information for parents, especially those new to GIS, so please do not hesitate to ask if you need clarification. We will also be holding a number of parent workshops throughout the year to help you gain a better understanding of the GIS approach to learning and the IB curriculum.

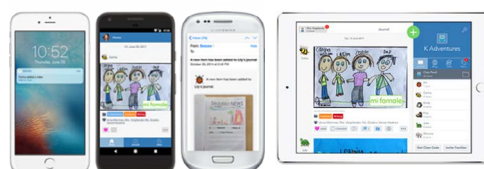
Have a fantastic weekend and remember to please visit My Learning for your child's grade level Weekly Update.



Seesaw The Learning Journal

This year in the Primary school we will be introducing a new digital platform, Seesaw, to share student learning help parents gain a better understanding of what their children are doing in class. Seesaw has a number of benefits for students, parents and teachers and we are very excited to be using it with the students. Seesaw empowers students to independently document their learning with built-in creative tools, and provides an authentic audience for their work. Seesaw gives families an immediate and personalized window into their child's school day and allows teachers to formatively assess easily and a safe place to teach 21st century skills. By now parents should have received their Seesaw login details and can look forward seeing new Seesaw posts on a regular basis. Please

make sure you give your child digital feedback as this will help with their motivation and commitment....and they love getting their parents comments! Enjoy Seesawing!



QUICK UPDATES PRIMARY



PRIMARY

Extra Curricular Activities Internal

Online Registration 17th Sept.
Commences 24th Sept

Parent Session

G3 Ecoventure parents presentation 2:00 - 3:00 pm
18th Sept

Extra Curricular Activities External

Online & Face to Face
Registration 24th Sept.
Commences 1st Oct



PRIMARY

Parent Workshop

What is inquiry learning and how does it look in the classroom?
4th Oct 8:30 am - 2:00 pm





Lee Hole

Head of Secondary

Welcome to another school year. I have been back in the building for approximately 4 weeks now but it's only now that I finally feel comfortable because the students are back with us; a school really is a lonely place without them here. The atmosphere around the Secondary School is wonderful with a real sense of excitement amongst everyone and I can see that there are some great friendships already being formed throughout the school. I visited homerooms last week and enjoyed seeing the students interacting, taking part in team building activities, laughing joking and creating that family feel that is synonymous with GEMS International School.

There is a real sense of ambition and dedication amongst the study body, which is a great sign for the year to come and was also something that I addressed in our opening Secondary School assembly last week. The teachers have gone through a process of goal setting with the students in their first lessons so please have a conversation with your child about the goals that they have set for their school year. You will receive an email from your child's homeroom teaching in the coming weeks to give you a briefing on how your child has settled into school and their classes. Please make use of the homeroom teachers and contact them if you have any questions etc.

The turn-out of Secondary School families for our

orientation day was incredible and a real sign of the journey that we are on as a community. You will hopefully have seen that we have a Secondary School information evening this week and we look forward to hosting you in the school that night. Our programme coordinators and key members of our faculty will be on hand to offer information, answer questions and give advice for the year ahead.



Finally, I'm sure you are all well aware of this but our first cohort of DP students began their Grade 11 studies this year and everyone that has spent time with them has commented on the maturity and level of focus that they have started the year with; long may it continue. Our DP coordinator will be offering sessions during the upcoming Secondary School information evening and whilst this may be geared towards our current cohort, I encourage our Grade 10 and Grade 9 families to consider attending any DP information sessions as we will be spending time with the students in those grade levels this year as they move closer and closer to their own DP years.

Once again, welcome back and I look forward to seeing you all around the school throughout the year.



Managebac

Most students have now been added to Managebac. We are still waiting on a few students to create an email and inform back so they can be added. Parents, if you have not logged on to Managebac, or, did not receive an email from Managebac, or, have other Managebac questions, please send a detailed email to the MYP coordinator at d.zaharko_gis@gemsedu.com.

Secondary Parent Curriculum Evening

The MYP and DP coordinators welcome all parents to an informational evening gathering to be held in the 3rd floor lounge on Tuesday, September 19th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Topics for discussion will include: MYP education, homework load, Managebac, and, Reporting periods, DP overview and admission requirements for DP students for next year. This evening will provide information to enable you to better support your child in the MYP and DP years.

Any programme questions can be sent to d.zaharko_gis@gemsedu.com

Leaving School Unsupervised

As Secondary School students grow as IB learners and become more responsible young adults, parents may make the decision to allow their child to leave the school site at the end of the day unaccompanied.

If you would like to allow this for your child so that they can meet you or a driver etc. then please contact the Head of the Secondary School, Mr. Lee Hole at l.hole_gis@gemsedu.com and he can give your child a pass that is shown to the security team as they leave the school site.

To ensure student safety students will not be permitted to leave the school premises without a pass or an accompanying adult. The security team are following clear guidelines to ensure our students are safe at all times.

Primary school age child will be issued with a pass. If you have a child in Secondary and Primary and would like your Secondary age student to collect their sibling, please inform Mr. Hole when you request the pass but copy in your Primary class teacher and Grade Leader so they are informed.

QUICK UPDATES SECONDARY



SECONDARY

Parent Curriculum Evening

How to Help your child succeed in MYP and DP
19 Sept, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Extra Curricular Activities Internal

Online Registration 17th Sept.
Commences 24th Sept

Extra Curricular Activities External

Online & Face to Face
Registration 24th Sept.
Commences 1st Oct



SECONDARY

DAC Swim Gala

24th Oct - 2:00pm at MTS

Three Way Conference

30th - 31st Oct



GIS Hosts GEMS Global Leads



This week GIS played host the GEMS Education Leads global council, as they assembled to focus on the continued enhancement and quality of education across the GEMS network.

As many of you would know GEMS is the largest K-12 educational organization globally and we continue to expand. The benefits of belonging to this network for parents and educators are significant and enable us to draw resources from around the globe to benefit our students.

Present for the meeting were the following educational leaders; While some were absent for the picture, the council consists of the following members:

Tony Little - Group Chief Education Officer
Arun Chauhan - Chief Education Officer (India)
Bill Lytle – Chief Education Officer (Africa)
Rebecca Plaskitt - Director of Education (UK)

Alister Bartholomew – Chief Education Officer (Singapore)
Mary Beth Wilson – Chief learning Officer (America)
James MacDonald - Vice President Education (US & IB Curriculum Schools)
Michael Forbes Gibbs - Vice President – Education Solutions
Linda Rush - Senior Vice President - TELLAL
Maura McMahon - Director Teacher Training (Africa)
Amrita Vohra - Senior Manager Education (India)
Hywel Benbow - Head of Global Data Management
Tracy Moxley - Head of Global Citizens Connections – Schools
Kierstan Connors – Manager Career Counselling
Martin Pow - Chief Officer – Internal Audit, Risk Management & Compliance
Sir Christopher Stone - Chief Education Officer and Deputy Chairman Academic Council,
Robert Wilson – Consultant Higher Education Initiatives

GIS Students Welcome Leaders at the Arabic and Islamic Conference



On Wednesday, we were honored to host the GEMS Education Arabic and Islamic Studies Conference which welcomed 150 Arabic and Islamic Heads of Department, School Principals and Senior Leaders.

This event, which focused on supporting and uplifting the Arabic and Islamic provision across GEMS Schools, offered 4 interactive workshops for attendees including, an immersion into the Arabic culture and environment, development of school improvement plans focusing on Arabic and Islamic, observation of outstanding lessons, and teacher licensing.



We were also joined by a number of Arabic and Islamic resource vendors showcasing various platforms to support teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies, using engaging and interactive approaches.

Our students were hospitable and greeted our visitors as they arrived. Our very own Rashad Issa, Grade 8 and Nourhan Ibrahim, Grade 7 opened the event with a recitation of the Holy Qur'an. We are very proud of our students for their devotion and dedication to their belief, and for being courageous risk takers.



Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs)

The dynamic nature of our school community has resulted in the after school activity and sports programs adapting in many ways over the years. Again, it is time for us to evolve as we look toward our vision for the future of GIS. In order to align our after school program with our long term goals and the expected growth of the student body, the following changes will be made to the After School Activities (ASA) program. The first major change is the name. We will refer to the program as our 'Extra Curricular Activities' (ECAs) which will incorporate activities before school, after school and during lunchtime. [Details of all internal ECAs can be found here.](#) Online registration for internal registrations will open at 5pm on Sunday, 17th September. This link will be emailed to you on Sunday.

We continue to source external professional companies who can serve our children so that parents who wish for their children to be involved in activities additional to those outlined above can choose to do so. We work in conjunction with Academy Plus and E-sports to provide an extensive professional program. Details of all external providers will be shared with parents on Wednesday, 20th September. There will be a sign up morning held with the providers in the school cafeteria on Sunday, 24th September from 8am until 9:30am. We will also share the online registration with parents at the same time, should you not be able to attend.

The Jaguars coaching staff is very excited to introduce a number of changes to the way our sporting programs run, most notably, our partnership with AC Milan which is overseen by the impressive Graziano Mannari, who played in the Serie A. Our coaches will work alongside the AC Milan coaches to improve the standard of our coaching and to develop our football teams at school. With this in mind we will enter teams into the Dubai Affiliated School Sport Association (DASSA) leagues this year, which is the highest level of competitive sport in the region. During the past week we have had hundreds of students try out for our sports teams. We are excited about the prospect of all our squads this year. We would also like to encourage all parents to support and develop our sports program, therefore, if you have any queries or suggestions please don't hesitate to contact any of the coaches, or myself directly at g.passmore_gis@gemsedu.com.



GISPA Updates

Dear Parents,

Welcome back everyone! Hope you are ready for another exciting year. As a parent/guardian of a child at GIS you are all members of the GIS Parent Association (GISPA). On behalf of the board, I would like to welcome all our returning and new families to the 2017-2018 academic year. If you want to know how you can get involved, contact us. Hope you all have a great year at GIS.

Naira Bhutta

GISPA Chairperson



Communication

For question or comments: Gispa_gis@gemsedu.com

To follow our news or announcements:

Our space in the newsletter, our mini board in the parent's café area, in addition to our Facebook.

Facebook page: GISPA- GEMS International School Parent Association

Otherwise the classic way of talking. You are bound to find a GISPA board member around school every day, so just stop us for a chat. PS. Look out for the red lanyard.

Chair: Naira Bhutta

Vice-Chair: Gretha Oude Kotte

Treasurer: Maybe YOU

Secretary: Irene Lammerse

Communication: Toujan Al-Shurafa

Events: Maybe YOU

PYP Reps: Rachel Aanstoot & Maybe YOU

MYP Reps: Gillian Benson & Maybe YOU

DP Reps: Katrin Possnien & Maybe YOU

GISPA Meet and Greet

Wednesday September 20
8:15- 9:00 @ Parents Café.

Just drop in for a casual meet up- even if it's for a quick hello.



Get involved with The Box Appeal a charitable initiative for the less fortunate.

Starting Soon.

