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Our Life

Volume 2 Issue 6

Providing An Exceptional Quality Education'

13 September 2018

From Our Head of School



A Year Celebrating "Moments That Matter".

We have kicked off the year at GIS with much success!! It was such a delight to welcome back the majority of our families from last year and have over 350 new students join us. In addition to the smiling faces of new students and parents we are

pleased to have 26 new faculty members, all of whom are in good spirits and are excited to be part of the GIS community. For me to have the benefit of not being new myself was a welcome bonus!

In reflecting on 2017/18 it was clear that our partnership of parents, students and staff working together, achieved a great deal. We enjoyed significant growth, stability as a community, success in national and international competitions, number one ranking in Dubai in numerous areas, large improvement of indicators in our KHDA review, accreditation by the Council of International School (with 17 Commendations) ... the list goes on.

When reflecting on our community; I can't help celebrating how fortunate I am to work with each of you (parents, students and staff). I also can't help but wonder what we will achieve this year. I am reminded of the words of Margret Mead – "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has". I have no doubt that our GIS community, of thoughtful, committed citizens, will indeed change the world for our students and continue making this community a special place to be.

As we look forward to this year, we will continue our focus on providing an exceptional quality education. Our priority is our students'

happiness and well-being at all times. I'd also like to highlight two exciting programs we have in place this year; 'MyHealth' which we launched last year, focuses on the well-being and health of our students, parents and faculty. Encouraging and providing opportunities for exercise, to promote well-being.

'InnAct' is an exciting new Innovation and Action program, that we have just launched. 'InnAct' enables our students to work with business mentors to develop innovative products and solutions, it combines service and innovation with the lens on making the world a better place. It is something we believe will provide valuable real-life learning opportunities for our students.

We usher in our first Grade 12 students this year and therefore our first graduate class, a milestone that gives us a sense of being complete. We look forward to seeing these young adults celebrate their IBDP results and move on to universities of their choosing. Grade 12s please know you have our full support and best wishes as you go through your final year and road to your Diploma Programme examinations and life beyond Secondary school.

For those of you that would like keep up with what we are doing at GIS this year, my Twitter handle is @GRadojkovich and our school's hashtag for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter is #WeRGIS.

We are looking forward to celebrating a year full of "Moments That Matter" with you and thank you for choosing GEMS International School for your family.

Shukran,

Yours in Education,
Glen Radojkovich
Head of School/CEO
 @GRadojkovich



At a Glance

**Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs)
Sign-up begin
Sunday 16 - Thursday 20 Sept**

**GISPA Parent Coffee Morning
8:15 - 9:30pm
DP Lounge
20 Sept**

**Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) Commence
Sunday 23 Sept**

**Ph7 Menu
Click here to view**

 @GIS_Gems




Cathy Hayes

Deputy Head of School



A very warm welcome back to school to both new and returning families. There is a wonderful air of excitement as we embark on another school year together where I am sure we will have even more successes to celebrate as we undertake new and exciting projects.

 @cathyhayesedu For most of you who are returning it will not be unusual to know and understand the standardized assessments that take place under the direction of KHDA in Dubai schools. This is not applicable to all students however, so please find below a helpful table to quickly reference the requirements we must meet. Please also note that this information is subject to change as per the KHDA guidelines and any changes will be communicated to you

as and when we receive it.

Other reminders:

New parents only, you are required to sign the KHDA developed parent school contract. This is a mandatory requirement for all students in Dubai school. Returning parents, the contract has been updated, however you no longer have to sign it annually as previously required.

Parent and student ID

These are still being printed and a large quantity will be available from reception early next week. If you have not done so already, please send a passport photo of you and your child/children to reception_gis@gemsedu.com.

Thank you and best wishes for a great year ahead.

Assessment	Grade Levels	Frequency
Measure of Academic Progress	Grades 1 to 10 English & Math Grades 3 to 10 Science	3 times per year
Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) 4	Grade 3, 4, 6 & 8 New students in Grades 5, 7 & 9	Annually or bi-annually
Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS)	Grade 4 and Grade 8	Every 4 years (March – June 2019)
Pupil Attitude to Self & School	Grades 3 to 10 *Grade 11 and 12 to be confirmed	Annually

Raquel Nahas

Assistant Head of Primary and Head of Arabic



 @raquelnahas

Narkom Saeed. To new families, welcome to GEMS International School, and to returning families, welcome back. I am delighted to

begin this school year and am excited for the progress we have ahead of us in Arabic. We have added two new members to our Arabic Leadership team, Magid Ibrahim, and Amina Mardawi, who I know with the department, will add value and achieve great results in Arabic this year. Please help me welcome them to our wonderful community as they share a special introduction with you.



Marhaba, my name is Magid Ibrahim and I have joined GIS as an Arabic teacher and Head of Primary Arabic this year. I was born in Egypt and graduated from Cairo University with a Bachelor of Education and Arabic Language.

I have been employed with GEMS Education for over 8 years, taking on various roles in different curricula, but the majority of my experience has been in an IB context. I am passionate about the IB and believe its framework for learning and teaching motivates students to become knowledgeable and successful members of society.

My main goal is to motivate students to do their best in order to extend their own personal limits, and encourage them to explore new and interesting possibilities. I strive to instill a love of learning, especially in Arabic, by making learning exciting and interesting.



secondary Arabic.

I graduated from Beirut Arab University with a Bachelors of Arts in Arabic Language and

Akhbarouna

Literature, and then moved to Jordan where I worked in the education sector. My experience has been in various curricula, but more predominately, within schools offering the IB. I have also had the pleasure in working with the International Baccalaureate Organization reviewing middle years school curricula. My passion is to develop a love of Arabic in students, and explore the beautiful language in meaningful ways. I believe in creating an interactive environment where students become confident and motivated to learn Arabic.

We also believe that community is important to foster the love and learning of Arabic and therefore, we invite you to join us for our morning Extra Curricular Activity called "The World Speaks Arabic". These sessions will teach you how to speak, read, and write Arabic, open to parents, teachers and students. We hope you register with us through the ECA sign up pathway and begin your own Arabic speaking journey.

We both look forward to working with students, staff and parents to continue to build a community that embraces the Arabic language and culture.



نهاركم سعيد. أودُّ أن أرحبَ بكلِّ من انضمَّ حديثاً إلى مدرسة جيمس الدولية، وعوداً حميداً لأفراد عائلتنا الكبيرة. في بدء هذا العام الدراسي تملؤني السعادة والحماس لما يتم إحرازه من تقدّم في قسم اللّغة العربيّة، ويحدوني الأمل في مزيد من الإنجازات الباهرة التي تصبّ في مصلحة أبنائنا الطّلبة.

و يسعدني إبلاغكم أنّنا قد أضفنا عُضوين جديدين لفريق قيادة اللّغة العربيّة، الأستاذ ماجد إبراهيم و الأستاذة أمينة مرداوي، وكلي ثقة بأنهما و فريق القسمين - الابتدائي والثانوي - سيعملون جنباً إلى جنب لتطوير آليّة العمل لتحقيق نتائج عظيمة. وهذه دعوة مّي لرحب بانضمام ماجد وأمينة لمجتمعنا الرائع ، وأتيح لهما المجال للتعريف بنفسيهما.

مرحباً، اسمي ماجد إبراهيم، وقد التحقت بمدرسة جيمس الدولية كمعلّم للغة العربية و رئيس قسم اللغة العربية للمرحلة الابتدائية.

وُلدتُ في مصر، وتخرجتُ في جامعة القاهرة وحصلتُ على بكالوريوس التربية قسم اللغة العربية. ولقد عملتُ في مؤسسة جيمس للتعليم لأكثر من ثماني سنوات، وتوليتُ مناصب عدّة في مناهج مختلفة، ولكن معظم خبرتي في منهج البكالوريا الدولية.

لديّ شغف كبير بتدريس هذا المنهاج، و أوْمُنُ أن إطاره التعليمي والتدريسي يحفز الطلاب ليصبحوا أفراداً ناجحين وأصحاب معرفة في المجتمع.

هدفي الأساسي هو تشجيع الطلاب على بذل أقصى جهدهم لتوسيع حدودهم الشخصية، وتشجيعهم على اكتشاف إمكانيات جديدة وممتعة.

أسعى لغرس حب التعلم في نفوس الطلاب وخاصةً اللغة العربية عن طريق جعل التعلم أكثر إثارةً وإمتاعاً.

السلام عليكم .. أوجّه تحيةً محبة لكم جميعاً مّي - أنا المعلمة أمينة المرداوي -. انضممت إلى مدرسة جيمس الدولية هذا العام معلمةً للغة العربية وكذلك رئيس قسم اللغة العربية للمرحلة الثانويّة.

تخرجت في جامعة بيروت العربية وحصلت على ليسانس الآداب، ثم عملت في قطاع التعليم في الأردن، ولي خبرة طويلة في تدريس مختلف المناهج الدراسيّة، وبخاصة برنامج البكالوريا الدولية. كما كان من دواعي سروري العمل مع منظمة البكالوريا الدولية في مجال تدقيق المناهج الدراسية لتعليم اللغات في السنوات المتوسطة (MYP Language Acquisition).

شغفي هو غرس حب اللغة العربية في نفوس الطلاب ، ومساعدتهم على استكشاف جماليات اللغة، وتطوير أساليب ووسائل تدريسها. أوْمُنُ بخلق بيئة تفاعلية حيث يصبح الطلاب واثقين ومتحمسين لتعلم اللغة العربية.

ولأننا نؤمن بأن المجتمع مهم لتعزيز تعلم اللغة العربية، فإننا ندعوك للانضمام إلى نادي "العالم يتكلم العربية" ، ستعقدُ جلسات تعليميّة تفاعليّة ، تتعلّم من خلالها كيف تتحدث ، تقرأ ، وتكتب العربية، وهي متاحة لأولياء الامور والمدرسين والطلاب. نأمل أن تشترك في هذا النشاط من خلال التسجيل في هذا النادي لتبدأ رحلتك معنا في تعلّم اللغة العربية.

نتطلع - كلانا - إلى العمل مع الطلاب بالتعاون مع الرّملاء وأولياء الأمور لبناء مجتمع يحتضن اللغة والثقافة العربية.

Leigh Girven
 Head of Primary



[@LeighGirven](#)

Welcome back to the new school year to all our returning families and a very special welcome to those students and families who have joined GIS for the first time – we are so pleased to have you join the GIS community.

We have had a super start to the 2018/19 academic school year with the school buzzing with excited students and teachers. I am thrilled with the caliber of new teachers joining GIS this year, all whom either have extensive IB, international or proven expert practice in their home countries. Already new staff have started forming positive relationships with their students and parents and we know they will all add their own stamp to the already amazing team we have in the primary school.

MAP testing has begun this week with students from G1-5 completing assessments in English and Math, and Science for (Grades 3-5) only. KG2 students will no longer complete MAP assessments and will instead complete externally benchmarked ongoing diagnostic assessments throughout the year. If KG2 parents have any questions regarding their child's academic progress, they should speak to their homeroom teacher or Ms. Sarah McLean, our Early Years Coordinator.

Thank you to those parents who have sent their children to school with the school cap to support our sun smart initiative. We will be operating a 'No hat, No play' policy this year so please ensure that all students come to school with their GIS or house cap each day.

Best of luck to all primary students trialing for sports squads this week. ECAs for non-competitive sports and other activities will begin in week four. As an IB school we encourage all of our students to be 'balanced' and hope that every student chooses at least one ECA that interests them. Bus students can take advantage of the late ECA bus on Monday and Wednesdays to encourage maximum participation. Please contact Mr. Geraint Passmore for more information regarding ECA's, squads and late minutes.

A reminder to parents of bus students that if your child is NOT travelling on a bus for any particular reason that you need to inform STS, the bus driver AND your child's teacher preferably 24hrs before the change or at the latest by 12:00pm on the day. We cannot guarantee that homeroom teachers will check their emails after 12:00pm due to teaching commitments.

Thank you to those parents who came to Back to School Night on Monday. We hope you found the sessions valuable and connected with other parents and GIS staff you may not have met previously. Enjoy your long weekend.



Primary upcoming events

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) Sign-up begin
 Sunday 16 - Thursday 20 Sept

GIS ConnectED
 Understanding the IB Written Curriculum
 Wednesday 26 September, 8:30am
 Conference Room

Grade 3 - Ecoventure Parent Info
 Wednesday 19 September,
 Grade 3 area
 2:00pm

GISPA Parent Coffee Morning
 8:30 - 10:00pm
 DP Lounge
 20 September

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) Commence
 Sunday 23 Sept

Lee Hole
 Head of Secondary



@LHole81

Welcome back to all of the families that I am yet to see in person and let me start by wishing everyone an outstanding school year filled with happiness, health and success.

I am thrilled to be starting my third year at the school and I could not be happier with the progress that I have been privileged to witness over those years. With the movement of students into Grade 12, our school now has students at every grade level and we are thrilled about this!

The students have made a wonderful start to the year and it has been lovely to see friendships reconnected, new ones forged and I am most proud of the way that the new students to our family have been welcomed and supported.

Thank you to all of the families that joined us on wednesday for the back to school night, I enjoyed my conversations and I am certain that the school to family partnerships this year will be as strong as ever and our young people will reap the rewards of this.

Over the next three weeks, our students will complete the relevant standardised testing in school as per their year group. This is critical testing for us as the data that is gathered from this testing helps us to personalise learning in some subjects as well as informing target setting for students. There is no preparation that you can have for these tests other than to be well rested and in school on time.

Once again, I wish you all a great school year and please keep all communication chains open, come and speak to us, drop an email to home-room teachers, grade leaders or subject teachers and make sure that you read the bi-weekly secondary update.



Secondary upcoming events

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) Sign-up begin
 Sunday 16 - Thursday 20 Sept

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs) Commence
 Sunday 23 Sept

Week Without Wall Parent Evening
 6:00 - 7:00pm
 17 October

MAP Testing
 Sunday 16 - Thursday 27
 September

GISPA Parent Coffee Morning
 8:30 - 10:00pm
 DP Lounge
 20 September

Extra Curricular Activities (ECAs)

Please visit the school website to find all the information regarding the the Extra Curricular Activities Provision at GIS. This includes sports, arts, academic and external activities. [GEMS International School](#). ECA sign ups will appear on the school website from Sunday, September 16 – Thursday, September 20.

Important Information	Dates
ECA sign ups	September 16th-20th
ECAs commence	September 23rd
ECAs finish	December 6th



MyHealth

We are excited to confirm that My Health will continue this academic year. This is a program that is integrated into the

curriculum through health and fitness testing and also included in our Extra Curricular Activities. We had such a fantastic reaction to the initiative last year that we are now ready to launch My Health parents. This short [video](#) will give you an insight into what you can expect at GIS. This year we are looking into some exciting ways for the GIS community to come together through health and fit-

ness activities. Please click [here](#) more details about the activities or contact Cristina Bento if you would like to take part c.bento_gis@gemsedu.com

External Providers (Mostly on Tuesday's from 2:00-3:00pm) We provide ECAs that are led by professional instructors that are hired by external providers that work under the GEMS standards.



DeltaLearning: Hip Hop Dance, Ballet, Nutty Scientist, Robotics, Coding, Game Development, Rainbow Reading, Russian, Mandarin, Spanish, Italian, Art Program.



ESM: AC Milan Academy, Budo Juku Karate, DuGym Gymnastics, Parkour, UAE Shaolin Kung Fu.



After ECA bus: We run an after ECA bus service on a Monday and Wednesday. It will leave GEMS Wellington School at

4:30pm and drop off at central locations. If you want to sign up for this service you will need to sign a form with STS. Primary students will meet in the canteen after the ECA and will be supervised to the bus. Secondary School Students will be allowed to walk unsupervised to the bus which will be situated in front of GEMS Wellington Academy (next door). Secondary School students are responsible to make sure they are on time for the bus.

Daily Mile



In line with the MyHealth Kids program, our students have participated in a series of fitness tests over the last two weeks. With Fitnessgram almost over it is now time to help our students develop each of the fitness components, while trying to reach their full potential. As such, the Daily Mile will begin on the September 23 at 7:45am every morning. This activity will take place inside the Sports Hall or on the main field (depending on the weather) and the goal is to encourage students to finish the mile as fast as they can. Parents are welcome to join and participate in the challenge. Hope to see you there!

Student & Parent ID Information

Please find below the correct procedure to follow for collecting your parent ID and student ID card.

Students

Students using the STS Bus services, ID cards will be delivered to the homeroom and given out by the teachers.

Students who are picked up from school by a parent/driver/guardian, ID cards can be collected from Reception. (The card will be ready the week after handing the photos into our reception)

Parents

Parents who collect their child from school can collect their ID cards from Reception after the 16th September.

GIS Teachers Supporting Those in Need in Kerala

We have a large number of community members in both our student population and support staff from Kerala. They mean a great deal to us so when this tragedy occurred decided that we had to assist. As a result, we have a large number of teachers that are traveling to Kerala, during their Mid-Term vacation to support. We commend these GIS staff members as they are doing so at their own cost, in their own time.

As an IB school, we focus often on service, as there is a requirement for our students to serve and demonstrate care for other. Mr Radojkovich reminded us that "we don't just expect that of students, it is a requirement of all in the community. As teachers and leaders, we need to role model behaviors for our students and this is one way we know can do so".

We are very pleased that a group of teachers volunteered their Oct vacation and are going to Kerala, Mr Radojkovich included, to offer support to those in need. As is the case with all in our community the teachers are from a huge range of countries and represent different religious groups. Just as Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum role models in the UAE, we are coming together, in a spirit of collaboration and partnership, with a shared vision to make a difference for others in need.



The teachers are under no illusions of going to Kerala to resolve all issues but know that every action we take as individuals matters and helps those in need. At GIS, we teach our students that if we all take action we can indeed change the world, one heart, one gesture at a time.

More information will come as to how you might be able to assist the group that is going in providing resources for those in need. Should you like to assist please email Tanya at t.kumar_gis@gemsedu.com

SOCIAL MORNING!!

Come join an informal meet and greet with GISPA at the TBC

Find out what GISPA is all about. Also, an opportunity to ask questions about your GIS community

8:30am - 10:00am | Sept 20, 2018

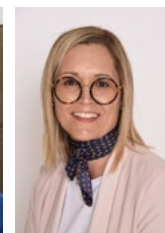
You are welcome to bring a plate of cookies to share!



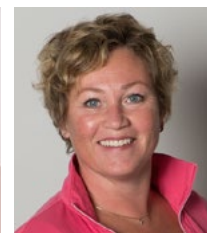
Meet our GISPA Members



Gretha Oude Kotte
Chairperson



Denice Erasmus
Secretary



Irene Lammerse
Secondary Representative



Hanna Deir
Vice Chairperson



Ivonne Perez
Primary Representative



Padma Jonnavithula
Treasurer & Primary Representative



Happy New
Hijri Year





Disney's BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

© Disney



Show Dates: 25th, 26th and 27th March 2019

AUDITIONS

Who can audition?

Students in Grades 4-9

When?

Main Roles: 7th - 11th October (lunch times and after school)

Dancers: 14th - 18th October (lunch times and after school)

Where?

Black Box Theater

When is the sign-up deadline?

Thursday 20th September 3pm

How do I sign up for an audition?

By completing: [Beauty and the Beast Jr. Audition sign-up sheet](https://sites.google.com/gemsisak.com/beautyandthebeastjr)
<https://sites.google.com/gemsisak.com/beautyandthebeastjr>

Website:

Key dates to remember:

- Audition sign-up deadline Thursday 20th Sept 3pm
- Audition notification by email by Thursday 27th Sept
- Auditions - main characters 7th - 11th Oct
- Auditions - dancers 14th - 18th Oct
- Cast announced - Sunday 28th October (after mid-term break)
- Rehearsals begin - Sunday 4th November (every Sunday)*

**Rehearsal schedule will become busier from Jan-March with rehearsals twice and three times a week. Full rehearsal schedule will be published in November*