



Thursday 17th June 2021

RE: Secondary Update

Dear Parents / Carers

I hope you are safe and well.

SENDCO Staffing Change

At the end of this academic year, we farewell Mrs Leanne Cox, our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (Secondary SENDCO), who with her family is returning to the UK. Mrs. Cox, while only having been with us for two years has made an enormous contribution to the development and systems in her department, supporting students, families and staff alike. We thank her for everything she has achieved and the impact she has had on many. It is my pleasure to share with you that the new Secondary SENDCO for September 2021 will be Mr Ronell Rochester. Mr Rochester is currently one of our Inclusion Support Teachers so will make the transition to his new role, easily. For families who are involved with the Inclusion Support Team, further information will be shared with you in due course.

Year 13 Graduation – Amy Cooper

We were delighted to welcome back on to site our Year 13 students. With approval from the KHDA we were able to celebrate the successes of our Graduating Class of 2021. Maintaining the strictest of Health and Safety regulations we were able to deliver speeches of recognition and provide our students the chance to showcase their university destinations or future plans.

Your children looked amazing in their blue and gold caps and gowns. When asked to throw their caps, their smiles were beaming. Standing watching this 'age old' tradition signified a true release of pressure. COVID has certainly played a key role in building deep resilience and determination amongst this cohort. We know they will go on and deal with new challenges with relative ease and confidence.

We were so glad to offer this opportunity for merriment and closure. Our thanks for your patience, support and understanding. *Please refer to WSO*

As this celebration closes, we wish all our IB students the **best of luck** for their upcoming examination results on the 6th July. These will be followed slightly after by the A-Level results on the 10th August

EXPO Opportunity – Sinead McElhone

On 8th June, 10 year 5 students and 4 secondary mentors were invited to an exciting opportunity – an early viewing of the EXPO 2020 site as part of our Emirati Engage programme. All students were able to support in the preparation of the 'Greatest Show on Earth' and were able to engage in their Heritage, their Future, their World and their Leadership.



Secondary Emirati students had to complete a short application outlining their suitability for the mentor role. The successful students chosen were, **Rakan Al Dhaheri, Shamma Hamad Bin Jarsh, Zayed Hamad Binjarsh and Nahayan Nasser Alawar**

All students visited the EXPO site in the morning and guided the primary students to ensure that they captured the relevant materials and information about the site. In the afternoon, the mentors supported with the creation of videos to showcase their knowledge. It was a fantastic experience and the students were a credit to the school and their parents.

We hope to incorporate trips to EXPO next academic year with all secondary students, with these students playing a key role.



Parent Survey

Thank you to the families who have completed the survey – nearly a third of all families at time of writing. We believe the survey may close within the next few days so encourage you to complete it and have your say. We take your responses seriously and will use that information to help create a plan for 2021-2022.

Food for Thought

[*Striving or Thriving? Steps to Help Kids Find Balance and Purpose*](#) – Deborah Farmer Kris (through @MindShiftKQED on Twitter)

I felt this article was relevant on a few fronts as we head into the summer break.

While there is much talk of stress and anxiety amongst our youth, I was attracted to this article as a practical way to support parents to be aware of what we can do to alleviate this, in some small way. This article attends to parent attitude and action to support our children to 'thrive'. I see links to the importance of WSO's Enrichment Programme which can provide new experiences for our students - and it is 'food for thought' as you consider summer / holiday activities.

There is suggestion that parents 'observe' their children – notice what ignites their enthusiasm, "shelve our expectations" of what we think they should be doing and give them the "freedom to pursue"

Activities and conversations that support the development of any or all of the following traits – will be beneficial. According to the article, these traits help young people thrive throughout their lives - *empathy, curiosity, self-confidence, self-control, integrity, perseverance and optimism*. You only need to consider your own situation to see the sense this.



Please reach out if you and/or your child require assistance – we will always do our best for you.

As always, I welcome your feedback a.kaifong_wso@gemsedu.com

Sincerely

Andy Kai Fong
Secondary Principal

