



17 April 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am not sure if you came across the article in the Straits Times on 12 April (*Saints lose match but win kudos for sportsmanship*) but the article reminded me of two important lessons that I hope that our gentlemen will learn in the course of their time in ACS (Barker Road).

First, the need for the integrity to do the right thing even when, and especially when, no one is looking. There were no outright infringements of the rules of the game but what the Saints team did, on the basis of sportsmanship and fair play, reminds me that sporting competitions are much more than just winning and playing by the rules. It is also the arena for our gentlemen to learn about playing it right – right by themselves and by their opponents. It is about honouring themselves and their opponents. It reminds me of the role of the village – teachers, coaches and parents – to inculcate the right values for our gentlemen in all that they do for their chosen sport or field of involvement.

The second lesson that I drew was the courage of the leader. The captain of the team, Sean See, saw what happened, processed what took place and decided that it was not the right thing to do and showed leadership to rally his team, sought permission from his coach and approached the referee to disallow the goal. Leadership is also about doing the right thing even if it results in failure. The team lost in the end. We are not guaranteed a good result just because we do the right thing. The question that weighs heavily on me is whether our gentlemen will still do the right thing regardless of the results.

How then do we encourage and nurture such integrity and courage in our gentlemen? I am reminded that as with all values, integrity and courage require practice. Practice in the little tasks that they do each day. Encourage them to show integrity and courage in the small tasks – homework, APs, assignments, training drills, chores at home. How? Remind them not to cheat themselves or their team mates by giving half-hearted effort because that is not showing respect and honour for their team mates or classmates or teacher. Encourage them to admit they didn't do their best to their teacher or parents and resolve to do better. Values are forged in the decisions and choices made in the smallest and most mundane of everyday tasks.

### Update on CCA Achievements

We are proud of the achievements of our students at the National Schools Games and competitions.

CCA	Achievement	Acknowledgement
Badminton	C Division – 3 <sup>rd</sup> at Zone; Top 8 at Nationals B Division – 4 <sup>th</sup> at Zone; Top 16 at Nationals	Both our 'B' and 'C' Divisions did their best in the Nationals. While the teams did not emerge Top 4, they displayed tenacity in overcoming their opposition and gained a belief that they can challenge for a place in the top 4 next year.
Basketball	B Division – South Zone Champions; Top 16 at Nationals	The team played well for most of their matches in the Nationals and gave a good account of themselves, narrowly missing the opportunity to qualify for the semi-finals.
Fencing	C Division – Epee (Joint 3 <sup>rd</sup> ); Foil (8 <sup>th</sup> )	Elliot Teo (C Div) and Jovan Tay (B Div) did well in their respective divisions overcoming challenges and injuries.

60 Barker Road Singapore 309919 Tel: 6256 1633 Fax: 6256 1366

	B Division – Epee (5 <sup>th</sup> )	
Football	B Division – Top 12 Nationals	The team played with great spirit and teamwork and clinched several sportsmanship awards.
Golf	B Division – Team 2 <sup>nd</sup> and Individual 8 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> at Nationals	Austin Tan and Darryl Tan did well to clinch the 2 <sup>nd</sup> placing as a team overcoming disappointments in their individual events.
Rugby	B Division – 3 <sup>rd</sup> at Nationals	The team played well throughout the competition, often exceeding their own expectations.
Table-Tennis	C Division – 3 <sup>rd</sup> at Zone	This is the first time that ACS(BR) has achieved a top 4 placing in the zonal competition. Credit goes to the Sec 1 and Sec 2 gentlemen who represented the school even though table-tennis is not an official CCA.
Tennis	B Division – 3 <sup>rd</sup> at Nationals	The players worked hard and played well to defeat St Patrick's School in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> placing match.
Ten-Pin Bowling	B Division – 4 <sup>th</sup> at Nationals	Singles – 8 <sup>th</sup> and 21 <sup>st</sup> positions Doubles – 5 <sup>th</sup> position Quartet – 8 <sup>th</sup> position
Track & Field	B Division – 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Pole Vault	Elliot Wee came in 2 <sup>nd</sup> for Pole Vault at a height of 3.75m.
Waterpolo	B Division – 5 <sup>th</sup> at Nationals	The team worked hard despite challenges and setbacks this year. Their tenacity and teamwork were on full display at the final game against Hwa Chong Institution
Destination Imagination	Champions & 1 <sup>st</sup> Runner Up	Due to the unpredictable nature of the competition, our gentlemen's wit and creativity were put to the test, yet both our teams comprising of our Sec 1 Drama students, rose to the challenge.
Robotics	Robotics Challenge 2018 1 <sup>st</sup> place – Tracing Challenge Merit – Obstacle Challenge	We sent in a total of 4 teams and competed against schools like Bukit Panjang Govt High, Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Secondary, Anderson Secondary, Swiss Cottage Secondary, Compassvale Secondary, Chua Chu Kang Secondary, Meridien Secondary, North Vista Secondary.

### Update on construction of the Indoor Sports Hall

Since my last letter, the tender for the project has been awarded to HP Construction & Engineering Pte Ltd and work is scheduled to begin after the mid-year examinations. The first phase of work will be the installation of air-conditioners in the classrooms to ensure that there is a conducive environment for learning even when the construction is proceeding. As this is a provision for the project, the air-conditioners will be removed following its completion some time in December 2019.

Demolition works for the current futsal court will begin in the June holidays and piling works for the new building will take place in Term 3. Noise mitigation measures will be put in place by the construction company to ensure that learning can continue in the midst of the work. The school is in discussion with the company regarding safety measures and will be monitoring the work closely to ensure that learning is not disrupted during the construction.

### Recent MOE announcements

At the recent committee of supply (COS) debates, Minister of Education (Schools), Mr Ng Chee Meng and Minister of Education (Higher Education), Mr Ong Ye Kung, spoke about the need for Singapore to be future-ready. Indeed, the path ahead will not be easy, especially given the major shifts happening– a changing global economic landscape, the emergence of new technologies, and our Singapore's demographic transition. In

this context, the theme for MOE's COS 2018 is "Many Paths, New Possibilities – Ready for a New World Together".

To meet future challenges, MOE hopes to develop a generation of resilient, innovative and curious lifelong learners rooted in sound values and a shared Singapore identity. The announcements span the whole continuum of education from schools to higher education and lifelong learning. I have summarized three key ones that may affect your child/ward in the short term for your information but I encourage you to read about the other announcements that have the potential to shape the educational landscape for our students in the future.

#### Financial Support for Students

In terms of financial support, MOE will be enhancing the various financial assistance schemes in 2018 to benefit more Singaporean students in the primary, secondary and pre-university levels. For MOE FAS, the income criteria for the Gross Household Income per month will be raised from \$2,500 to \$2,750; as well as the per capita household income per month from \$625 to \$690. MOE will provide three additional meals per school week, bringing the total number of meals to 10, for secondary school students under the School Meals Programme. The income ceiling for Edusave Merit Bursary (EMB) will also be raised. These schemes are being reviewed regularly to ensure that they stay relevant to the needs of Singaporean students, and provide support to families in managing costs.

#### Increase in Edusave Contribution

To empower our students in accessing opportunities to broaden their learning experiences, the annual Edusave contribution rates will be raised for all primary and secondary school students, starting from 2019.

- By 15% at the primary level from \$200- \$230
- By 20% at the secondary level from \$240-\$290

This will benefit our students, by allowing them to use the increase for school-based enrichment programmes to discover strengths and interests, and develop their aspirations.

#### Expanding Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP)

The Polytechnic Foundation Programme (PFP) was introduced as a through-train programme for the top 10% of the students in the S4N(A) course who wish to pursue a specific diploma programme in one of the polytechnics, instead of progressing to Secondary 5.

The first graduating cohort of PFP has done very well. The average academic performance achieved by the PFP cohort was found to be better than their peer groups in the polytechnics. Over 35% of PFP students scored a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 and above, an achievement which is usually attained by only 25% of each polytechnic cohort. Hence, to benefit more students, MOE will expand PFP to target the top 15% of the Sec 4N(A) cohort, a 5%-point increase from the original top 10%.

To do this, they are broadening the eligibility threshold from an aggregate score of 11 to 12 points, starting from the 2019 PFP intake. This is an aggregate score of 5 subjects, comprising English, Mathematics and 3 best subjects. To qualify for PFP, students must still meet other minimum entry criteria for English and Math. With this change, the number of students accepted every year will increase from 1,200 to 1,500.

#### Common Entry Programmes and Streamlining of Poly Courses

Today, Polytechnic-bound students choose from a range of about 230 diploma courses offered by the 5 polytechnics. Given the wide range of choices available, there is a need to provide more Education and Career Guidance (ECG) support for students to make informed decisions about specific courses. The Common Entry Programmes (CEPs) at the polytechnics serve to achieve that. Polytechnics currently offer CEPs in the Engineering domain to allow students to be exposed to a range of specialisations, before choosing their specific diploma.

Starting 2019, CEPs will be introduced in the Business and Information & Digital Technologies domains. CEPs are expected to account for 30% of the intake in each of the three clusters (engineering, business, information & digital technologies). To avoid over-specificity to better prepare students to be more versatile in the face of fast-changing sectoral needs, the polytechnics will also concurrently review and streamline their course offerings.

#### Aptitude-based Admissions in ITE

Given the more hands-on and vocational nature of ITE courses, ITE conducts aptitude testing as part of the Joint Intake Exercise (JIE) for selected Nitec courses such as design, aviation and culinary art. ITE will expand aptitude testing to more courses, where possible, to also include suitable courses in the Business, Hospitality and ICT-related fields. This will be implemented in stages from 2019.

The ITE Early Admissions Exercise (EAE) was introduced in 2017. It allows students to be considered for conditional admission to Nitec and Higher Nitec courses on the basis of their aptitude and interests. Students will only have to meet course-specific Minimum Entry Requirements and will not need to compete for admissions based on their academic grades.

Currently, the ITE EAE is open to students in the N-, O-level courses and Nitec students in their final year, as well as past school leavers who are Singaporean Citizens or Permanent Residents with N-, O-level or ITE qualifications. The current course-level caps of 30-50% will be lifted. This will provide greater flexibility for ITE to accept students with clear interests and strengths. However, the overall proportion of students that can be admitted to ITE in each academic year through EAE will remain at 15%.

Yours sincerely,

Loo Ming Yaw  
Principal