IMPORTANT DATES:
Aug - mid-Sept 2015

24-28 August: Parents Information Evenings (K/P)
24 August: Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) Open House
24 August: G1/N Coffee Morning 8.30am
31 August: G2/KI Coffee Morning 8.30am
31 August: CCA start (season 1)
31 August: Student Council Elections (M/H)
7th September: G3/K2 Coffee Morning 8.30am
14th September: G4 Coffee Morning
19th September: PSG school BBQ

Principal's Message

Hillside World Academy is open for business. We are a few days into our year, but I can report so far that the campus is a happy and peaceful space. Already the little red shirts and the big black shirts are interacting positively. It has been intriguing to watch the students find their way around the school, and new allegiances are forming. K1 visited my office today, as part of their Grand Campus Tour. The big hit was the spiral brick staircase.

Drop-off and pick-up have worked remarkably smoothly. Our population will grow a little in the second week, but the roundabout process is working well right now.

Do tune into the Co-Curricular Activity information, which will be coming out in the next few days. Monday’s Open Houses (8.15am for Primary and Kindergarten and 3.00pm for Middle and High) are not compulsory for parents; however, new families would benefit from talking to some of the outside providers before signing up.

Sign-ups are done through the Student Portal, which is now fully functional. Student IDs and passwords are required. New students will be advised of their Student IDs and Passwords via emails to parents. The deadline for CCA sign-ups will be Friday 28th at 3.00pm.
The buses are not yet all running to time, as drivers and families adjust to the challenges of the new routes. We expect that by next Monday we will have refined this process. The shuttle from and to Serangoon MRT is well supported and effective.

Every day brings us closer to a fully functional campus. The library, the town hall, the Kindergarten play area, the futsal and basketball courts are all scheduled to be finished within the next two weeks.

Our Nespresso coffee machine has arrived and it is ready to serve in the Village area. You are most welcome to stop by for a coffee if you are in the school.

This is the first of our monthly newsletters. We are building a new communication framework for HWA. The monthly newsletter will be distributed by email around the middle of the month.

Stephen Keegan, Principal

**Message from Primary and Kindergarten**

The new beginning is upon us, we are the Hillside World Academy now and not CNIS, we do carry forward much of our educational and cultural ethos, but right here is an opportunity to redefine ourselves in many other ways. To get us started here is some important information for the kindergarten and primary this school year:

While the school provides snacks and lunch to Kindergarten, **no snacks or lunches will be provided** in Primary school. Snacks and lunch can be purchased from the canteen. Food is being catered from external providers in the first two weeks of school. We do encourage families to pack healthy snacks and lunch if possible. When the Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) start we would highly recommend sending a second snack with your child.

We continue to be a **bilingual/dual language school**. While equal numbers of hours are spent in immersion with Chinese and English in the Kindergarten, the Primary school timetable will see the following number of periods per subject: English (6), Chinese (6), UOI (10, out of which 5 will be in Chinese), Mathematics (6, out of which 3 will be in Chinese), one English and one Chinese Drama period, two Visual Arts and two Music periods taught bilingually. PSPE, ICT, & Library each have 2 periods, bringing the total to 40 periods of 40 minute duration.

More information about the curriculum will be communicated to you through the Coffee Mornings, and letters from the Homeroom teachers. The homeroom teachers will provide timetables in the second week of school. At the beginning of every Unit of Inquiry you will receive a comprehensive letter informing you about the unit. Subsequently teachers will update you about experiences in the classroom and alert you to events in the calendar.
Children are requested to wear **uniforms** at all times. Red polo T-shirts, grey shorts or culottes, and black shoes constitute the uniform for Kindergarten and Primary. PE uniforms are round neck T-shirts of the same red colour. House colour T-shirts will be provided later. The Primary and Kindergarten back to school list has already been circulated. Please note that there is no text requirement for this academic year with the exception of Chinese. The Chinese teachers will contact you about the requirements for your child.

**Kindergarten and Primary Coffee Mornings**

Coffee mornings will be held on 24th August for Grade 1 and Nursery parents. One week later (31st August), we will host parents from G2/K1 classes. G3/K2 coffee mornings will be held on 7th September and G4 coffee mornings will take place on 14th September. All coffee mornings will take place at 8.30 in the home classrooms.

The sessions give class teachers an opportunity to share the thinking behind the next unit of inquiry and the academic aims and approaches involved in the teaching. Parents who attend the sessions will be better able to support their child's development and understanding of the unit of inquiry in the home setting. We encourage active participation in the coffee morning as part of the on-going communication between parents and the school.

I look forward to connecting with each of the families in our small community school in the days to come.

**Parents Information Evenings**

The Parents Information Evenings present an opportunity to get to know your child’s teacher on a one-on-one level. Schedules for the evenings will be send out by your child’s class teacher and appointments can be made for the week beginning 24th August. During the meeting, which will be held in your child’s home classroom, you will be able to discuss your child’s particular needs. We therefore suggest that you do not bring your child to the meeting. If you have no childcare arrangements in place, the children will be able to play outside during the meeting.

**Manju Nair**, Head of Primary Years Programme and Kindergarten and PYP Coordinator
Message from Middle School

The academic year 2015-2016 promises to be one of new beginnings for Hillside World Academy and for the MYP too. New premises, a new name for the school and a newly authorised IB MYP school to boot! But what’s past is also always prologue for us here at Hillside. We will continue to try to balance the strengths of what have sustained us for so long with new initiatives and a renewed vigour and commitment towards excellence both inside and outside the classroom.

I do not believe in indulging in only brochure ‘speak.’ That part is easy: after all, it only requires a commitment to words, not actions. But as we continue to shape the MYP in our own new image, occasionally we will have to campaign in verse and govern in prose, and at other times the task may almost seem Sisyphean. The Middle School team is ready for this new, exciting and challenging chapter, however, and invites you along this journey with us in our continued quest towards making the Middle School one where you would be proud to send your sons and daughters.

Milton reminds us in *Paradise Lost* that the path leading us to light may be long and hard. We suffer no delusions, of course, but we do still dream.

*Sakhar Nair*, Head of Middle School and IB MYP Coordinator

Message from High School

It is a great pleasure to address you as our High School community members in this special year. After nine years of operation we are on a new campus and under a new name. It would be without exaggeration to say that we can lift our expectations and achievement level even higher.

The IB DP has been implemented in the school since 2007 and we have never had such a broad range of subjects on offer. This includes subjects selected by our students for their Extended Essay research, the first major research work of High School students.

Following the strong tradition of teaching Chinese language to both native and non-native speakers, we offer Chinese language at all levels. With three social and three natural science subjects taught, our IB DP students have several subject combinations available to them. In mathematics too, the school aims to meet the learning needs of students with different skill levels and university plans.
At Hillside World Academy we are committed to the IB philosophy and practices in regards to mother tongue subjects. All of our DP students are able to learn their first language on a regular basis. The teaching of arts subjects has been strengthened and Visual Arts is now one of the most popular choices for students. In addition, for the first time IB DP music will be assessed this year. Enriched with these subjects, the whole programme is more diverse and colourful than ever.

At the beginning of the academic year, let’s look forward to the successful start and journey of a challenging and interesting programme. There may be some bumps on the road, but they will only serve to help our students acquire experience in dealing with problems, time-management and working with people from different countries and cultures.

Taught by a strong team of professionals, who represent a variety of cultures, languages, and qualifications, the student body of the Diploma Programme is strong, both in Grades 11 and 12. We hope to see the continuous improvement of our students’ achievements, laying the groundwork for high caliber university studies.

Our High School classes will host university and college representatives from all over the world. Supported by cultural, academic and sports events, High School teachers will guide our students in the shaping of their values, character, knowledge and skills, preparing them for further study and life.

On behalf of all High School teachers, I would like to assure you that your determination, enthusiasm and patience will be rewarded by the high-quality education you will receive at HWA.

Vahagn Vardanyan, Head of High School and IB Diploma Programme (DP) Coordinator

Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) Open House

On the 24th of August, students will be able to choose which co-curricular activities to join. It is mandatory to join at least one activity in the Middle and High School. This is a great opportunity to get involved in school life and to get to know students across all school years. We will offer self-defence, dance, swimming, soccer, etc. and outside providers will bring inline skating, clayworks, Lego robotics, movie making, ballet, and fun science.
Student Council Elections

Student Council elections for Middle and High School will be held on 31st August. Students from each class will be nominated and put forward for positions within the Student Council. This is an excellent opportunity for students to get more involved in the student life and culture. We want to see a proactive and energetic Student Council at Hillside, so please encourage your child to get involved. A position on the Student Council will help students to understand responsibility as well as build on their communication and negotiation skills. It also highlights the type of engagement that admissions officers look for when considering university applications.

Parents Support Group

The HWA Parent Support Group (PSG) welcomes back our returning families. To our new families, welcome to the HWA community! As parents we all support our children with their education. As the PSG, we work collaboratively to support the school through many events and volunteer opportunities. You are welcome and encouraged to attend all of our meetings.

With your support, we can continue to make HWA academically challenging and nurturing for our children. HWA has always been a strong community based on vibrant parent involvement and your contribution, whether it is your time, knowledge, or resources make a difference. We invite you to become an involved member at HWA.

You are all invited to a school BBQ in mid-September. This will be an opportunity for parents to mix and get to know one another as well as to celebrate the new campus. I hope you will all be able to make it.

If you wish to volunteer as a class parent or join the PSG group, please send me an email: ellen@novusasia.com.

HWA on Facebook and WeChat

We are joining the social media wave, so keep you eyes out for our Facebook and WeChat websites. Both sites will complement the monthly newsletter and give you important dates for the calendar, reminders of important deadlines and photos of your child’s life at Hillside World Academy. If you have a Facebook account, please go online, search for Hillside World Academy and have a look! If you ‘like’ the page we will spread the word about our new school. In addition, it will allow us to keep you up-to-date with photos, urgent announcements and school activities.