

SUNWAY CITY AUGUST 2021

SUN

New Campus & Grades 1 - 5 Launch in 2023





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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



PRINCIPAL Heath Kondro heathk@sunway.edu.my

Hello SIS Community. It is so nice to be writing this message to all of you and be back in my professional "home" in Sunway City. I consider it a privilege to have been able to work with our teachers, staff and families at our SIS campus in Sunway Iskandar, Johor for the past year and it has been very productive. The SIS Sunway Iskandar campus is well on its way to establishing itself as an IBMYP school once it gets through the candidacy phase in the upcoming term and is currently the only school in Johor offering IBCP in addition to its well-established IBDP.

I have been spending the past couple of weeks getting reconnected with staff, parents and the Administration Team here at SIS and it is so comforting knowing that the school was in such good hands while I was gone. I have thanked everyone for their hard work during the past year and I'll do it one final time. Thank you to the entire school and staff for everything over the past year.

As we return to classes, we face the burden of remaining online while many parts of the world, including Canada, start their return to normal with face-to-face gatherings and few restrictions. These continued lockdown restrictions are obviously taxing on all of us and as such, I have tried to start the semester with the tone and theme of "Sense of Belonging". This came up in a discussion with our Parent Council Executive recently and it really struck a chord with me, and a few days later in a discussion with some teachers regarding staff well-being. This theme seemed to resonate with many. With little/no ability to interact in a personal and meaningful way, re-establishing a sense of belonging for staff and students will be a priority this semester. I do not have all the answers or immediate solutions, but with continued work with our teachers and parent community, I hope that we can make a positive impact on everyone in the school.

I again want to say thank you for welcoming me back to SIS Sunway City and I look forward to getting reacquainted with everyone and having a great semester.





Michael Owen

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Gratitude, Perseverance, and Social-Emotional Learning

For this edition of SIS Matters, our school communities are moving into the fourth semester of teaching and learning impacted by COVID-19 and the MCOs. Since February 2020, SIS has been challenged to respond to the ever-growing need for ensuring the health and safety of our students, staff, and community. Thankfully, many have seen opportunities in these times to grow in new and unique ways between the SOPs outlined by the various Malaysian ministries and our own Sunway Education Group. That being said, the prolonged isolation, the increase in screen time, and the uncertainty of what the next day will bring has increased the need to be compassionate and understanding with everyone in our community. I'd like to share with you some of the new social-emotional learning initiatives that will be one of the focuses of the professional development and teaching and learning practices in SIS over the course of this semester and 2022.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) has been circulating the landscape of educational research, policy into practice, and government initiatives in Ontario and around the world for some time. SEL was growing prior to COVID but has truly grown exponentially since the pandemic hit. The premise of SEL is to help our communities better improve their mental health and develop positive mental health strategies in relation to their learning in a school environment. To clarify, mental health is not mental illness. These are two different concepts. Mental health is a positive concept, it relates to our ability to enjoy life, reach our goals, cope with stress, and our overall outlook towards opportunities and challenges. Everyone has mental health. Not everyone has mental illness which are conditions that affect our thinking, mood, and behaviours to degrees which severely and negatively affect how we function in our lives. Like mental health, mental illness can fluctuate over time.

Now it is important to recognize that someone can be free of mental illness but have poor mental health. Conversely, someone could have severe mental illness but at a particular point in time demonstrate particularly good mental health. So, it has become a key element of the newly released Math curriculum from Grades 6 to 9 and for the Physical Education curriculum in Grades 6 to 8 that our teachers will be promoting good mental health in their teaching and learning. Outside of these curriculums, SIS will be digging deeper into the research and practice of SEL and how we can anticipate the greater curriculum updates to come.

We also urge parents and community members to play a role in the SEL conversations with your children. School Mental Health Ontario has provided excellent resources for parents and families and I encourage you to explore them here: <u>https://smho-smso.ca/covid-19/parents-and-families</u>. While we continue to face the challenges that COVID-19 has brought to the world, I am confident that our communities will continue to be perseverant and kind to one another. I am proud of our strong community and will continue to aid in further empowering our teachers and students to take on SEL as a positive way to respond and grow in face of adversity and change.

Letters of Communication

As part of our commitment to ensure parents are aware of their children's academic achievement, please be advised that on 6 September initial intervention letters will be mailed out. The intention of these letters is to open communication about students who may be struggling with meeting provincial expectations. If you have recently changed your primary email account, please contact our office via email at <u>sisadmin@sunway.edu.my</u> to update your details.

Course Options Selection Night

On 9 September, SIS will be hosting our **Course Options Selection Night**. This event is intended for parents of children in Grades 9 to 11. Our administration and guidance department will present the course selection process and clarify course choices high school students will have when they begin selecting their courses for the upcoming January – June 2022 semester. This can be a valuable night for parents to better understand the pathways provided in the Ontario curriculum and to better participate in planning the next semester and beyond with their children. Official course selections will be announced in the near future.



COORDINATOR Sylvia Kwong sylviak@sunway.edu.my



Last semester we introduced weekly student-teacher conferences on Friday afternoons and the initiative was a great success. It will continue this semester, and we invite suggestions on how to make it even more useful for our IBDP students. We received a lot of valuable feedback from our students in the student satisfaction questionnaires that were sent out in June, and this coming semester we will reach out to parents for feedback on the school and the IB Diploma Programme. Keep an eye on your email.

Our Year 2 IBDP students will have mock exams in August in preparation for their final exams in November. In the second half of 2020 and the first half of 2021, Malaysia allowed students writing international exams to write those exams on campus, so we're optimistic that policy will still be in effect in November 2021. If our students are not allowed to write those exams, their mock exam results will contribute towards their final grade, so students should put their best effort into preparing for these mock exams.

The focus of our IBDP Year 1 students this semester should be researching and developing an outline for their Extended Essay and cotinuing to engage in CAS-related activity. They can meet with their Extended Essay advisor and Ms. Hanisah Zolkifli, our CAS Coordinator, during the Friday conferences to ask questions and seek guidance or arrange a meeting during any school day. Year 1 students will have mock exams in late November 2021, on every thing they've learned since January 2021.

Grade 10 students interested in joining our IB Diploma Programme in January should begin the application process soon. SIS will hold an online IB Exploration Day on 13 August, where we explain the advantages of IBDP, how it differs from Ontario Curriculum and answer any questions you have. We'll promote this event through our social media, so please subscribe.

Students and parents are always welcome to email me at <u>markm@sunway.edu.my</u> with any questions or concerns. I'm happy to answer all of your questions, and I always reply quickly.

NEW CAMPUS ENROLMENT BEGINS FOR 2023 INTAKE

On 30 July, Sunway Education Group (SEG) held an exclusive preview for the new seven-acre GreenRE Platinum-certified Sunway International School (SIS) Sunway City KL campus which can accommodate up to 3,000 students.

The preview also marks the commencement of enrolments for when our school opens in January 2023. Our new campus will conduct programmes for Primary School (Grades 1-5), Middle School (Grades 6-8), High School (Grades 9-11) according to the Canadian (Ontario) curriculum and Pre-University (Grades 11 & 12) according to International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).

In celebration of our inaugural intake, SEG will also be presenting RM 15,000 bursaries for enrolments of Primary School by June 2022 and RM 10,000 bursaries by December 2022. Middle School, High School and Pre-University enrolments by December 2022 will enjoy RM 3,000 bursaries.

Our new campus' facilities include 74 classrooms, a drama & theatre room, three art rooms, two music rooms, seven science labs, a technology lab fitted with the latest equipment, a language lab, one cafeteria for the primary school and one for secondary school. There will also be a playground over 400 square metres in size, an 8-lane 25 metres length swimming pool and a library with a capacity for 600 students at one time.

Lastly, a standard-sized football field and a multipurpose hall with a capacity of up to 2,000 students are ready for students' activities and events. Our campus will also be equipped with a sickbay which will be manned by trained healthcare professionals during school hours. Campus security is reinforced by Sunway City Kuala Lumpur's very own auxiliary police team who are trained by the Royal Malaysian Police.





Highlights

Malaysia's first GreenRE Platinum

The SIS Sunway City new campus will be Malaysia's first GreenRE Platinum-certified school to optimise student performance and well-being. According to the World Green Building Council, studies have proven that well-ventilated buildings with good indoor air quality, acoustics and enhanced levels of thermal comfort, lead to better cognitive performance, sleep quality, and a host of other health and tangible productivity benefits that improve student outcomes.







5th Gold for SIS

We are proud to announce that Sunway International Schools has once again won the Reader's Digest Trusted Brand 2021 Award (Gold) for the Private/International School category!

This is our fifth year to have won the award. As a school striving to be the international school of choice for parents in Malaysia, we are grateful that you, the consumers, have voted for us.

Thank you for your trust!

Kudos to the SIS Green Team for driving donations in conjunction with Earth Day amidst a challenging time! Even with fewer students in the school as some of them opt for online classes, our awesome Green Team still managed to raise a whopping RM 1, 050 under three days!

For A Better Tomorrow





Introducing our newly appointed Academic Coordinator, Ms Sylvia Kwong. As Academic Coordinator, Ms Kwong oversees all academic matters for SIS. Ms Kwong graduated from Queen's University, Canada with a Bachelor of Science (Honours) and a Bachelor of Education.

She also holds an MSc degree from Royal Holloway, the University of London where she specialized in the study of paleoclimatology. Ms. Kwong's teachable subjects include Geography, Biology, and Intermediate Mathematics. Prior to joining SIS in 2018, she taught at international schools in China and Canada for 3 years. Ms Kwong teaches Biology for the OSSD and IBDP at SIS.

Ms Kwong - SIS New Academic Coordinator

Parent Info Session

As the first and only Canadian and IB School in Malaysia, it is not at all uncommon for us to get all sorts of questions from new families looking to join our SIS Community. For most families, their questions revolve around teaching and learning at SIS, and to answer some of their questions, we had our Parent Info Session on 25 June 2021.

Mr Nicholas Vidotto, Mr Michael Owen and Mr Mark Milberg each gave an overview of the teaching and learning in Middle School, High School and IBDP respectively. Safe to say, many families found the session insightful. If anyone still has queries, feel free to reach out to us at <u>infosis@sunway.edu.my</u>



Age? Distance? A pandemic? None of these things stopped our SIS Interact Club students from raising money for a good cause. The club's objective was to support the foundation's goal of providing quality education to refugee children and those in the B40 group.

Led by Caitlyn Lee and Edward Liew, both in Grade 10, our students raised a whopping RM25,281 for Dignity for Children by organising a virtual run. The money will be used to underwrite education fees, healthcare and hygiene needs, nutritious meals as well as sports and physical development for these students.



RUN FOR THE FUTURE

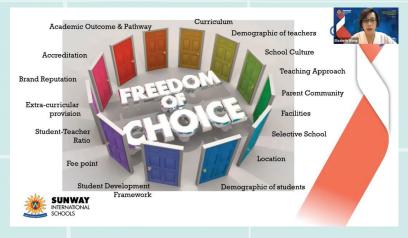


🔹 Dillon Choo 🖣



Why International Schools Remain the Choice of Many Parents





Amidst the disruptions to education caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, studies show that international schools remain the choice of many parents searching for valuable education for their children. Even in the last couple of years, new international schools continue to pop up despite the trying times.

Without the demand, there won't be any supply, which was why our esteemed panel of speakers dove deeper into this and discussed 'Why International Schools Remain the Choice of Many Parents'.

In the second episode of the *SIS Coffee Talk Series*, we took a closer look at what parents look for in terms of their children's education and what international education will look like in the post-pandemic era.

Joining us, we had Mr Guy Perring, Regional Director, SE Asia at i-graduate; Ms Elizabeth Wong, Founder of Malaysia International Schools Parent Support Group (MISPSG); and Dr Cheng Mien Wee, Executive Director, Sunway International Schools & Director of Pre-University Studies, Sunway College.

During the session, our very own principal, Mr Heath Kondro moderated the session as our speakers peeled back the various layers of the international school industry. They gave their input from their varying positions as an industry expert, parent and school representative respectively. The session was no doubt an insightful and engaging one!

With more Coffee Talks coming up, follow us on our social media channels @SunwaySchools for updates!

e-Orientation Day

The first week of school has been absolutely exciting. We at SIS are committed to providing new students and their families with a virtual orientation experience that delivers the important messages associated with joining the SIS community. Thank you to our Student Council and Parent Council Executives for helping us welcome the new members of our SIS Community!





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ENG3U - LEE WAI XIN

- JEONG SEOYOON SPH3U - KOK EU HSIN

TGJ3M - JUDITH LIM - SAMANTHA THO

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As part of our commitment to a truly well-rounded education that is beyond academics, we are pleased to introduce to a new series of school subsidised co-curricular activities (CCAs) known as **SIS LEADS**. These CCAs complement the existing extra-curricular activities (ECAs) which will continue as usual.

SIS LEADS focuses on developing the student as a 'whole person', building their personal effectiveness and leadership skill, and equipping them with the relevant skills and knowledge of the real world in the 21st century. SIS will incorporate these CCAs into the curriculum, forming an integral part of their SIS education experience as they get ready for the fast-changing world.

There will be four pillars for the SIS LEADS which will be delivered in collaboration with selected providers. These CCAs will be subsidised and supported by the school as we develop students in four key areas:

- 1. Financial Literacy
- 2. Digital Literacy
- 3. Environmental Sustainability & Stewardship
- 4. Youth Leadership

As we roll out the SIS LEADS in phases, we are excited to bring you the first phase – Financial Literacy. Given the current situation, this CCA will be conducted via online sessions this semester. In the event we are able to return to school, we will review the possibility of face-to-face sessions, subject to the situation with the pandemic. Nevertheless, learning doesn't stop, and students can look forward to online sessions, in-mobile-app practical sessions and week-to-week tasks in this programme.



THE SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

What's Happening?



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