



18 March 2024

Principal's Letter to Parents

Term 2, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians

I am prayerfully grateful for the short March school holidays to rest, restore and rejuvenate. I trust you and your family found time to bond and rest as well.

This morning, we welcomed our PL-Lites back and reminded ourselves of our March Monthly Theme "Be Pure in Thoughts, Speech and Actions" with the following verses:

*Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.
Never say anything that isn't true. Have nothing to do with lies and misleading words.
Look straight ahead with honest confidence; don't hang your head in shame.*

Proverbs 4:23-25

We encouraged our girls to "think positive", an important starting point for positive living and learning. "Think positive" will help our girls find purpose and nurture personal drive to act. "Think positive" starts by first nixing the negatives. Only practice (of removing negatives and positive thinking) will allow us to enjoy the benefits of "think positive".

Please see my last Letter to Parents for **Highlights of Key Events in Term 2**: https://www.plmgss.moe.edu.sg/files/2024_Term_1_Thanksgiving_Principal_s_Letter_to_Parents.pdf. We look forward to the Homecoming of our 2023 cohort this Friday, 22 March, the Musical Montage (by our Performing Arts CCAs) in April, the ongoing National School Games, and our inaugural Combined PL Sports Day@Marina Barage in May!

1. MOE Committee of Supply (COS) 2024

- a. Below are some key initiatives that will have more direct impact on our PL-Lites, focusing on maximising the potential of every child during their schooling years as we prepare them to learn for life.

1. Developing our Students Holistically

Full Implementation of Full Subject-Based Banding (Full SBB) – Sec 1 PL-Lites to note

- New Singapore-Cambridge Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) from 2027, with all students taking their examinations in the same period. Written examinations for English Language and Mother Tongue Language (MTL) will be conducted about 1 month ahead of other subjects, with only one sitting for MTL.

- Change to Polytechnic Year 1 Admission Criteria: From 2028, one ‘Best’ [B] subject can be fulfilled at G2 or G3 as part of the aggregate score for admission. Correspondingly, net aggregate cut-off will be adjusted from 26 to 22 points.

Enhancements to Edusave Awards

- Enhanced EAGLES to recognise students who demonstrate 21st Century Competencies (21CC) in curricular and co-curricular activities.

2. Empowering Learners with Special Needs

- Reduction of Special Education (SPED) school fees for Singaporean Citizens (SC) by up to 60%. Maximum monthly fees will be reduced from \$150 to \$90.
- Enhanced affordability and quality of SPED; more funding to raise salaries and professional development of SPED teachers and teacher aides.
- Increase affordability of preschool. From Q4 2024, eligible families of Singaporean children enrolled in KCare at MOE Kindergartens will receive KCare Additional Subsidy on top of the \$150 Basic Subsidy currently provided.

3. Build Effective Partnerships and Enablers to Enrich Learning

- From 2024, Parent Support Groups (PSGs) across all schools can be part of PSG Support Circles that encourage connection, collaboration and resource sharing.
- Support for children and students from disadvantaged backgrounds through WOG efforts i.e. integration of UPLIFT Community Network (UCN) with MSF’s ComLink+ from 2023, to strengthen partnerships between schools and Social Service Offices (SSO), allowing students and their families receive holistic and customised support.
- Leverage new technologies and enhance development of students’ digital literacy and technological skills through “Transforming Education through Technology” Masterplan 2030 (EdTech Masterplan 2030).
- Enhance students’ arts and cultural appreciation with performing arts-based learning, where students will experience a live music performance that is specially produced and staged at a professional concert venue at least once in their lower secondary years.
- “Adopt a Block” initiative in polytechnics and ITE to promote sustainability in the community.

4. Supporting Singaporean to Learn Throughout Life

- From 2024, the ITE Progression Award (IPA) will support Singaporean ITE graduates enrolling in diplomas issued by polytechnics, ITE, NAFA and LASALLE at age 30 and below
 - Upon diploma enrolment → Receive top-up of \$5,000 to Post-Secondary Education Account
 - Upon diploma attainment → Receive top-up of \$10,000 to CPF Ordinary Account
- SkillsFuture Level-Up Programme (SFLP) for mid-career Singaporeans aged 40 and above to pursue a substantive skills reboot
 - SkillsFuture Credit (Mid-Career) top-up of \$4,000 from May 2024
 - Mid-Career Enhanced Subsidy (MCES) from AY 2025 for greater access to full-time Diplomas in polytechnics, ITE and the Arts Institutions.
 - SkillsFuture Mid-Career Training Allowance from early 2025 to partially address the loss of income when taking time-off for full-time training

b. For “MOE Committee of Supply Debate 2024 Highlights”, see <https://www.moe.gov.sg/microsites/cos2024/>.

2. Overview of Post- Secondary Education Institutes (PSEIs) and Aptitude-Based Admissions into PSEIs

- a. The post-secondary educational landscape has progressed significantly over the last few years to support the learn for life movement. There are a variety of PSEIs available for secondary school graduates. You can learn about the different types of PSEIs you can choose from, and how you can apply for them here: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/overview>
- b. The following are upcoming aptitude-based admissions exercises that allow students to apply for and receive conditional offers for admissions to JC/polytechnics/ITE prior to receiving their final national examination grades. The PSEIs will have flexibility to select and admit students based on their aptitudes and interests, apart from academic grades.
 - Direct School Admission (DSA)-JC
Please check the individual school websites for the application period and procedures as they can vary from school to school
(<https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/dsa>)
 - Early Admissions Exercise (EAE)-Polytechnics
Application starts end-Jun 2024
(<https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/poly-eae>)
 - EAE-ITE
Application starts end-May 2024
(<https://www.moe.gov.sg/post-secondary/admissions/ite-eae>)

3. Assessment is Learning

Learning for life is our purpose, and also our challenge. Not grades or marks, but purpose. Every classroom lesson must have clear learning objectives or purpose for effective learning to take place. If the teacher or student is unclear, one must seek clarity of the learning goal(s). Once the objective or purpose is met, one can then attain the sense of fulfilment and motivation to continue to learn. That said, why are there still assessments and examinations? There will be more high-stakes learning objectives or purpose as our girls progress in their schooling. But “what does the bible say about exams?”. I shared this article last year, and would like to share it again: <https://biblical-parenting.org/articles/what-does-the-bible-say-about-school-and-exams/>. One reason for assessment is to help our young ones discover and develop their talents, to give them purpose to learn and grow, and to pursue God’s calling for their lives.

Our challenge is change in mindset, habits and norms. Even as our society and system shift to better appreciate learning for life, and to move away from academic performance and competition, every stakeholder is at a different stage of this evolution in our country. My colleagues and I are learning and adapting. We encourage our girls to learn, learn how to learn, and learn from their mistakes. As parents, most of us are geared to be ‘protectors’, always ready to respond to our child’s every need or any possible harm; we fear seeing our child fail or hurt. On this note, I would like to share another recent article: <https://www.schoolbag.edu.sg/story/how-i-overcame-the-fear-of-seeing-my-child-fail>. It is difficult but a parents’ willingness to learn and re-learn could go a long way to nurture the Confident PL-Lite, the ‘woman of fine character who lives in favour of God and man’. I would like to invite all parents to join me on this learning journey about learning.

Please see <https://www.plmgss.moe.edu.sg/instructional-programmes/ip-overview/> for an overview of our instructional programmes, including assessment matters. Rather than focus on assessment weightings, I would like to highlight that “students [are to] discuss and review the [assessment]

feedback and learning in class with their teachers and parents/guardians.” Why? Assessment is about learning, and not just the marks and grades.

It takes a village to raise a child. I thank our Parents-School Support Group (PSSG) for working closely with the school all these years. As in previous years, our dedicated PSSG will be organising a family event on 11 May, Saturday. Do look forward to the exciting details, support and encourage these awesome PL parents! I would also like to invite you to join this awesome group of parent-volunteers and other parents to the following, where you can share parenting tips, support each other and even bond with your daughters when the opportunity arises.

Every Mon morning, 7.30am at SFE Room or 8am via Zoom	<i>PrayingParents@PL</i> meets every Monday morning either in school (SFE Room) or via Zoom, for a time of prayer and fellowship. If you are interested to join in, please email Ms Josephine Oh at josephine.oh@yahoo.com.sg
Once a term	<i>Fathers@School</i> will be holding its first event of the year: Breakfast with Dads on 23 Apr 2024 (7.15am to 8.15am). More details will be shared shortly via PG this week.

Please check the school website (<http://plmgss.moe.edu.sg>) for regular updates on the school programmes and other administrative matters. Do also follow us on our Facebook page for the happenings in and around the school (<https://www.facebook.com/PAYALEBARMGS>).

Thank you for your continuous support and for partnering us to help our girls learn and grow as Confident PL-Lites, Passionate Learners, Active Citizens and Inspiring Leaders.

Yours faithfully,
Ms Amy Ng
Principal