Board Renewal

During the year under review, the Executive Committee adopted the policy to continuously seek to co-opt new volunteers to serve in the Subcommittees. It was also resolved that every two years, the Executive Committee would nominate at least one such new volunteer to be elected or co-opted into the Executive Committee provided such volunteer shall have served at least one year in a Subcommittee.

Through “Board Match”, a scheme by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) to link VWOs with professionals wanting to serve, we were able to recruit six volunteers this year to serve in our Association. They are: Mr Stephen Hindle (from Verizon Business) and Mr Yogesh Lundia (from Macquarie Capital Singapore) to serve on the Audit Sub-committee, Mr Anselm Lopez (from Singapore Police Force) and Dr. Victor Tay (from Spring Singapore) to join the CFA Management Committee, Mr Royce Seah (from Biosensors International Group) to serve on the Finance Subcommittee and Mr Roger Tan (from Civil Service College International) on the Admission and Review Subcommittee. Three of the recruits (Mr Anselm Lopez, Mr Roger Tan and Dr. Victor Tay) have also accepted co-option into the Executive Committee with immediate effect until the AGM on the 29th August 2009. However, our very first Board Match appointee was Mr Anthony Tan, a Director at the Ministry of Health. He was co-opted onto the EXCO, and latterly elected, in 2008.

Every member of the Executive Committee has a responsibility to ensure board renewal. Thus, while the Nominations Subcommittee is tasked with identifying suitable Board members, other members of the Executive Committee are also required to help identify suitable Board candidates and participate in the selection process to ensure that these candidates have the qualifications and expertise in fields that are critical to the effective management of the Association.

Board Self-Evaluation

A policy of annual self-evaluation has been adopted based on the recommendation in the Code of Governance for Charities and IPC. The evaluation is done by members of the outgoing Executive Committee. The process starts with the Executive Director (ED) sending out a “Board Self-Evaluation Checklist” form immediately after each Annual General Meeting to members of the outgoing Executive Committee. The responses are then collated and the findings presented to members of the incoming Executive Committee for their actions. The presentation, conducted by the ED, must not be later than three months after the conclusion of the AGM.

The first exercise was completed on the 25th October 2008 and was helpful in identifying the key strengths and weaknesses of the current operation which will be addressed in the coming months.

Whistle-blowing Policy

In line with the ‘Code of Governance’, a ‘Whistle-blowing Policy’ was established at the beginning of 2009 to ensure that no misconduct is taking place in the Association. APSN is committed to improving the environment of its organization while assuring employees that their privacy will be protected should they submit a report against the wrongdoer.

Besides the Whistle-blowing Policy, the Association is working on introducing a channel for staff and the general public to submit their feedback. An online Feedback Form is being created so that not only are they able to submit their feedback, they are also given an option through a scroll down button to choose which department their feedback is for.
IT Improvements
A comprehensive software system, Tracker+, was selected and is now being installed in APSN network to provide thorough support to key areas such as HR, Accounts, managing Client Database and developing Curriculum for schools and CFA. The software will also be beneficial for identifying and maintaining a list of donors and volunteers and monitoring public opinion.

The Association is looking forward to full implementation of the software by end of 2009.

President S R Nathan visits Tanglin School
On 2 April 2009, President S R Nathan visited Tanglin School. On hand to welcome him was the Acting President Dr Francis C. Chen, Honorary Secretary and Schools Management Committee Chairman Mr T U Naidu, the Executive Director Dr Chey Chor Khoon and Mrs Liza Ow, the Principal.

The occasion was the Singtel Touching Lives Fund Cheque Presentation Ceremony. After the welcome address by Dr Chen, The Group CEO of Singtel Mrs Chua Sock Koon and President Nathan jointly presented the cheque to Mrs Jennie Chua, Chairperson of Community Chest and RAdm Kwek Siew Jin, President of the National Council of Social Service. Tanglin School was one of six beneficiaries this year. The visitors were then brought round to see the school exhibits, and President Nathan was very impressed by the programmes carried out at Tanglin School.

Dr. Francis C. Chen welcoming the guests

Mr T U Naidu, Mrs Liza Ow and guests tour the school with President Nathan
APSN Volunteer Recognition Awards

On the occasion of the Presentation Ceremony by Children’s Charities Association on 25 October 2008 at the St Andrew’s Community Hospital Auditorium, the Association for Special Needs gave out its Annual Volunteer Awards for notable contributions as follows:-

**SILVER AWARD**
1. Sparks Pte Ltd. (Mrs Pinky Pant & Mrs Savi Kapoor)
2. Keppel Volunteers (Mr Wayne Siek, Mr Ivan Teo, Ms Sharon Seo & Ms Chia Tsui Lin.

**BRONZE AWARD**
1. Celebrities Sports Club
2. Mdm Siti Alawyiah binte Md. Eunos
3. New Creation Church (Mr Khai Leng)
4. Tan Chay Bing Education Fund

Activities in affiliated organizations

**Asian Federation on Intellectual Disabilities (AFID)**

The full Board was present for the Executive Board Meeting which was held in Singapore on the 7th to 10th November 2008. Amongst the items discussed were the details for the 19th AFID Conference which will be held in Singapore from the 22nd to the 26th November 2009. APSN together with MINDS constitute COMPSIDS (Committee for the Promotion of Service to the Intellectually Disabled in Singapore) and it is this joint committee which will be responsible for the organization of the 19th AFID Conference.

During their stay here, the Board members were brought to a variety of places – both educational and cultural – to give them a taste of what Singapore has to offer. A few of the places they visited were MINDSville for a tour of the facilities, the Botanical Garden (National Orchid Garden) and the Singapore Flyer to enjoy the view of Singapore’s skyline.

AFID Executive Board Members (L-R Seated) Mrs Pramila Balasundaram (India), Prof Emily Lu (Taiwan), Dr Francis C. Chen (President, Singapore), Prof Yong-Wook Kim (Korea), Mr T. Kanjiraj (Malaysia).

(L-R Standing) Prof Sunartini Hapsara (Indonesia), Dr Teresita Inciong & Dr Yolanda Quijano (Philippines), Father Brendan O’Connell (Taiwan), Prof Jang-Kwon Kim (Korea), Prof Kaoru Yamaguchi (Japan), Ms Sajida Humayun Kabir (Bangladesh), Ms Naoko Taniguchi (Japan), Mr Jeffrey Tan (Singapore) and Ms Chiyoko Numata (Japan).
Singapore Disability Sports Council
After serving on the Board of SDSC for more than fourteen years, Mr. Tan Ju Seng stepped down this year. Our Exco appointed our Executive Director, Dr. Chey Chor Khoon to be the interim representative of APSN on the Board of SDSC.

Special Olympics Singapore
APSN has been an active member of Special Olympics since it first started in Singapore. As one of the two founding members, APSN is represented on the Executive Committee. Every year, our students and trainees from CFA take part in the regular sports training programme organized by Special Olympics Singapore.

Special Olympics Singapore hosted the 7th Special Olympics National Games from 5 – 8 Jun 2009. A total of 151 athletes from APSN were involved in various sports in the games such as athletics, aquatics, badminton, basketball, bocce, bowling, floor hockey and soccer.

Best Buddies International
Ms. Valerie Vitale, International Programmes Director of Best Buddies, visited APSN on Friday 20 March 2009. While here, she renewed the affiliation of APSN with Best Buddies International. Founded in 1989 in the United States, Best Buddies is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships and integrated employment. First started in 2007 in the Centre for Adults, we are glad to report that to-date, a total of 45 buddy pairs have been created on a one-to-one friendship between volunteers from National University of Singapore and the clients at Centre for Adults. This programme has created mutual benefits where our clients at the Centre get to expand their circle of friends to include their mainstream peers. The friendship has in turn created awareness of the people with intellectual disabilities by their NUS peers.

Moving forward, the Association plans to have more of our clients and members to be involved in this programme and we do hope to be able to start a Best Buddies Chapter with other education institutes.

Children’s Charities Association (CCA)
APSN has been a member of Children’s Charities Association since 1977. Three of the key events under CCA are
- Flag day
- Donation Draw
- CCA Carnival

Through the fundraising efforts, a total of $168, 628 were disbursed to our APSN schools. The funds were used for various programmes and initiatives such as educational outings, camps, art & craft training, educational & academic materials & curriculum expenses and many others.
**APSN Pupil Enrolment**

As of April 2009, the enrolments in our APSN Schools and Centre are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Centre</th>
<th>MID</th>
<th>ASD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaoyang School</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katong School</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanglin School</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>387</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Adults</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1154</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*MID = mild intellectual disabilities  ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder*

**Community Partnerships**

APSN has been actively engaged with the various stakeholders. Working closely with individuals and organisations in both the private and public sectors, all are actively involved in a myriad of activities and initiatives to create awareness of the social cause of our Association.

Some of the key events for the past one year include:

- **NCSS 50th Anniversary Carnival – A Caring Community**
  APSN had a booth at the carnival held at Esplanade Park on 23 and 24 Aug 2008

- **APSN 1st Charity Golf Tournament**
  Partnering with the Celebrities Sports Club, APSN 1st Charity Golf Tournament raised a total of $105K for the building refurbishment works of the Centre for Adults. Mr Chan Soo Sen, MP for Joo Chiat Constituency officiated the tee off for the tournament which saw our local celebrities and 144 participants coming together to play for Charity.

- **Official Opening of COMCHEST Green**
  Our performing group from Tanglin School, T shock, participated in the launch of ComChest Green held on 17 October 2008 at Labrador Park.

- **MOE Excel Fest ‘Nurturing Every Child for the Future’**
  Chaoyang School was invited to put up an exhibition booth to share the PATHS Curriculum (lifeskills programme) in the event organized by MOE on 4th and 5th July 2008 at Suntec Convention Centre.

  Tanglin School also presented the school’s IT programme at the event.

The 2-day event attracted some 70,000 educators, public and students both from mainstream and SPED schools.

- **A Nation in Concert (ANIC) 2008**
  Tanglin School, Chaoyang School and Katong School participated in ANIC 2008. Themed “Wish Upon a Star”, ANIC 2008 was held on 11 and 12 Oct at Victoria Theatre. Organised by a group of dedicated volunteers, the event attracted about 2000 audiences in the 3 shows with over 100 performers including those from the 4 beneficiaries: Association for Persons with Special Needs, Handicaps Welfare Association, Singapore Association for the Deaf and Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped.

Moving forward, APSN will continue to work closely with the various stakeholders. Some of the key projects will be fundraising for the new purpose-built building for our Delta Senior School which will be located at Choa Chu Kang Way, south of the proposed ITE West College. Construction is expected to begin in 2010 and to be completed by 2012. With the new building, Delta Senior School will be the flag bearer of special education in Singapore.
Commercial Handicraft

Instructors: Miss Yap Chui Hoon, Mr Yee Hung Pak

CFA Commercial Handicraft has developed our clients’ interest in art. They are taught to design and make Door Hangers, Glass coasters, Mugs, Buttons, Christmas ornaments, Batik Painting and Soft Toy making and etc. We generated $15,554.00 in Sept 2008 from selling door hangers to Tech Semiconductor S Pte Ltd.

Below are the CFA handicraft projects from 2008 to 2009
1. Door Hangers: Tech Semiconductor S Pte Ltd
3. Mugs: Strategy Management Group
5. Customized Notebook: Public Utilities Board
6. Christmas ornaments: Horticulture Park (NPark)
7. Venture into Batik Painting
8. Venture into Soft Toy making
9. NTU Committee Project 2008 (Mugs Painted by CFA trainees and Students from NTU)
10. Exhibitions Sales at:
   - SMU Project (Citibank - YMCA Youth For Causes)
   - General Electric (Pacific) Pte Ltd
   - Microsoft Realsing Potential Charity Futsal Carnival

Job Placement

Job replacement officers: Mr Benny Leung, Miss Lee Siew Cheng

Our goal is to provide our clients with vocational training and open employment. To prepare them for careers, we believe essential skills are needed and at CFA, our instructors offer our clients a variety of training programmes to choose from.

These programmes are Commercial Handicraft, Recycling, Thrift Shop, Café

Job Placement: Well equipped for open employment

Operation, Grass Cutting, Janitorial and Horticulture. Some of the programmes are for job hardening training purposes that reinforce clients’ attitude and aptitudes required in open employment.

In 2008, 43 clients gained either job attachment or employment. Up to the end of the year, 24 of them remained in open employment. Moreover, 30 clients who gained employment in 2007 could sustain their jobs for at least one year. However since the economic downturn, several clients were terminated and they came back and sought help. Under CFA’s arrangement, 15 members gained employment in 2008.

We are optimistic that the adverse economic condition will be over and our clients and members will have better chance in open employment.
Café Operation

Instructor: Mdm Winnie Loh

Our objectives are:

- Inculcate in clients the passions and skills in food and beverage.
- Creating shared knowledge and practical experiences for the food and beverage enthusiasts.
- Establish vocational skills for livelihood betterment.
- Entry level cashier training for food and beverage operation.
- Training in food and beverage serving, hosting, interaction and culinary skills.
- Integrated practicum constituent for trainees experiencing both theoretical knowledge and applied skills acquired in a full service food and beverage operation.

We ensure they understand the importance of Personal Grooming and Hygiene, their work responsibilities, follow the work schedule and carry out the deployed duties. With the roles and responsibilities deployed, trainees are able to select the appropriate tools, equipment and materials.

For Housekeeping Duties, we ensure the clients clean all cooking utensils and service wares used and all working areas and materials after food preparation. Clients have to wipe, sweep, mop and clean service areas. All rubbish bins and chutes have to be emptied and washed on the day itself.

For Entry Level Cashier and Personal Social Skills, clients are trained to identify the variety of coins and notes by the value and doing simple cashier duties like petty cash handling, counting money (simple addition and subtraction), and food item pricing, collecting the right amount for the food item and returning the correct amount of change.

We ensure the clients observe safety and comply with all safety rules and regulations in the work areas and also apply care and safety skills and knowledge in their career. Proper techniques were taught for handling hot food, sharp knife and electrical equipment or appliances.

All CFA café clients are taught the Basic Food Preparation: Washing, cutting, seasoning and measuring of ingredients. They can prepare both hot and cold beverages, know the proper storage of hot cooked food and able to serve and pack meals.

CFA Grasscutting

Instructors: Mr Thomas Goh, Mr Johnny Tan

Clients are taught to handle as well as maintain the grass cutting machinery. They go on assignments with the supervision of two instructors. They are taught to observe safety and comply with all safety rules and regulations in the work areas. Working in the sun also helps to toughen our clients for eventual work in the open job market. Some of our contracts include managing the Gold Kist Chalet and Hougang Park Connector’s turf.
**Horticulture**

**Instructors: Mr Koh Guan Hoe, Mr Philip Li, Miss Orrapint Tan**

Horticulture enables us to train our clients in endurance, motor skills and observation skills. It also generates revenue by selling self-grown plants and hydroponics vegetables. Horticulture trains clients to work independently and engages them in meaningful and healthy outdoor activities. Horticulture consists of Nursery/ Recycled Plants area, Designing and Building of Gardens/ Landscaping, Chinese herbs and Hydroponics farming.

**Nursery/ Recycled Plants** – Clients are trained and taught different methods of growing new plants. They know the ratio of soil and fertilizers to mix for the preparing of the soil mixture, and the soil mixture that works best for propagation. Clients are taught to nurse and nurture plants from sickly condition (collected by our recycle team) to healthy plants.

**Designing and building of gardens/ Landscaping** – Four CFA gardens were designed by ourselves and built by our very own clients with very low budgets. Recycled materials were used and clients were enriched by learning to recycle discarded items.

**Chinese herbs** – We use Chinese herbs to make our clients have a better understanding of some of the medicinal values of our plants. We have a collection of many different species of herbs.

**Hydroponics farming** – It helps our clients to earn their own income (selling vegetables) and improve their general knowledge about different methods of growing plants.

**Outstanding Achievement** – in 2007, we won a silver award in the “Community in Bloom” competition organised by Nparks. Philip Li, one of our staff received the award of CIB ambassador in view of his active and outstanding involvement in gardening.

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**Janitorial Report**

**Instructor: Mr Matthew Chan**

There are 3 areas of training and activities in CFA.

1. Trainees learn to clean. They are taught to clean the walls and window, the toilets and the offices. Some trained have found employment.

2. Trainees are taught to use the smog machine to exterminate the mosquitoes. These include clearing the drains and filling unleveled grounds in the compounds and chokes in the building.

3. Trainees are taught how to level sunken surfaces in CFA. This is done by filling the holes using buckets with soil provided by 30 lorries.
Recycling & Thrift Shop Project

Instructors: Mr Nelson Kang, Mr Pang Chong Tong

- Recycling & Thrift Shop Project was reintroduced in 2008.
- A new Truck was sponsored by our corporate partner, The Keppel Group.
- The responses from the donors have dropped at least 30% after a year of stoppage.
- Six display panels and two clothing stands were donated by corporate partner, Isetan, for our Thrift Shop.
- A range of retail services skills were introduced to the trainees such as folding, arranging and price tagging of clothing and items.
- Cashier skill was also introduced to trainees.

President’s Star Charity 2008

The Centre for Adults (CFA) was one of the 31 recipients who benefitted from the President’s Star Charity show, broadcast live on MediaCrop Channel 5 on 12 October, 2008. The event raised $5.04 million.

That year’s show was themed “The Singapore Cabaret” and featured music and dance from nearly 90 performers, including Singapore Idol Taufik Batisah, MediaCrop artistes Kym Ng, Fiona Xie, Tay Ping Hui and many more.

Aida’s story was featured in the show about her life and the challenges she faced. Her mum was overwhelmed with emotion as she expressed her gratitude to CFA for guiding her daughter.

The show ended with a high note as Aida presented a bouquet of flowers to President Nathan.
CFA First Fish Pond

“What else to add to a garden?” was a question thrown to the horticulture team who built the many gardens using recycled materials. "FISH POND!" came the answer and indeed, it is a splendid addition to the existing gardens the horticulture team had built; recycling garden, ornamental plot, vegetable plot, sensory plot, fruiting plot and managing the 5 hydroponics farms. We started by visiting and collecting information on DIY pond from various sources.

We finally started digging up the existing garden plot to convert it to the proposed pond in February 2008. The Horticulture Team used skills they have learnt like handling changkol, shovel and fork to complete the task. The entire team was broken into few groups. The ‘diggers’ group would dig the shape of the pond while the ‘hammers’ group broke large pieces of debris into smaller stones in preparation for the foundation laying.

Finally the mixing of cement part lifted everyone’s spirit as it indicated that the project is near completion! After a few days of trial and errors and tips from the professionals, we managed to finish the plastering of the entire pond. Last step was to beautify the pond and thus we built a sturdy ‘bridge of hope’ across the pond using materials off a discarded bed. Colors were added and a sense of satisfaction was clearly visible on all the faces of our horticulture team when we received tons of compliments and was awarded a plaque and certificate by NPark.

By Philip Li and Orrapint Tan

One of CFA’s many gardens
Volunteering at a Home

It was a bright and sunny morning, I enjoyed the feeling of packing my bag and leaving home on a Saturday morning and was all excited to meet my clients and volunteers. This is a very good opportunity for CFA members and clients to contribute back to the society as a volunteer after being taken care of by many volunteers all these years. Following this volunteering trip was a sequel in May where Bain & Co and APSN Centre For Adults members and clients volunteered to paint and clean AWWA, home for the aged rooms. Prior to this, our trainees volunteered in many other small scale projects like cleaning and painting of wall in Katong School and doing up a garden for Chaoyang School.

This volunteering trip with volunteers from YMCA of Singapore was planned months ahead and we had many recce trips to determine the possibilities and obstacles in order for our trainees and volunteers to enjoy the maximum benefits.

We started the day with a short ice breaking session for our trainees and volunteers then a lesson on managing wheelchairs. There were loads of role-play and exercise. After the training, they were all eager to meet their senior buddies in wheelchairs. We split into three main groups and set off for the Republic Polytechnic Café.

To quote from one of our volunteers “I think it is the most memorable outings I’ve been to so far. Firstly, ‘cause I dont really like helping out at old folks home and such as my dialect is horrigible. I sound like a duck trying to converse in Hokkien. And I always encounter angry and bad tempered aunties. Yesterday was no exception. I envy those who got happy old folks who will smile and sing along. My “ah po” (Granny) was super difficult.

“I’m so glad for Tom, Philip and Fion who helped me to talk to “ah po” along the way. They are really good at conversing with the ah po. I really need crash course for Hokkien before helping old folks next time.

We treated our APSN buddies really well and took care of them. When my client kept pushing the wheelchair too fast, I would keep reminding her to focus, to be careful and not to panic. My buddy was sensitive and cried when we were leaving the old folks. She still asked me for more time so that she can hug “ah po”.

Quote from Valerie YMCA Volunteer, Liu Chun Lian’s Buddy (APSN CFA)
Written by Philip Li
Quality Assurance Journey Continues

A key indicator that Delta Senior School is moving in the right direction in our pursuit for excellence is the achievement of the Approved Training Organization (ATO) status in May 2008. We now possess the autonomy to certify our students with Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) certifications accredited by WDA. WSQ is a national programme that promotes the upgrading of skills and training framework designed to enhance the competency and employability of Singapore’s workforce.

‘Innovate, Engage, Enthuse and Inspire Confidence’ is the mantra of our school. Our dynamic Formal Transition Programme trains and prepares our students for employment and life in general by equipping them with relevant and current work skills, lifeskills and also seamless opportunities for lifelong learning.

Currently, the school is pulling together its human resources to support its student population in the coming WPLN assessments in August and October 2009. The recent Parent-Teacher Workshop was used as a platform to inform parents about the Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum - structures that can be used to facilitate and support learning in school and at home and strategies to engage their children in learning at home.

On a positive note, the goals set are gradually being realized. With the achievement of ATO status, we are establishing the necessary physical and human infrastructure to gear ourselves to be a Centre of Excellence for the provision of person-centred transition programmes. We are also seriously involved in establishing long-term strategic partnership with business partners and the community at large. Our other goals are to see DSS as a hothouse for local research and a credible training centre for job support personal. There are existing practices that are gaining momentum to bring us recognition in future.

Strategic Events & Programmes

The school’s departments collaborate to offer the best in vocational education and work experience. The Literacy and Numeracy curriculum uses a structured method in planning and delivering the lesson, which is the four-step model are namely **Prepare, Show and Tell, Try Out and Follow Up**.

The teacher prepares well-structured, progressive activities that are differentiated with visuals and verbal cues to help students relate easily. Through show and tell, the teacher models and thinks aloud of the ‘problem’ to help students learn the literacy and numeracy skills through observing the actions of the class. Systematic instruction with repeated practice and feedback is to promote the retention of information learned. To help our students to contextualize and engage in learning, experiential learning journeys are designed to help students understand the essential language and vocational literacy and numeracy skills needed. The students’ observation skills via sensorial and tactile learning are developed through virtual tour, mapping skills, word games and a final group work project at the end of their Learning Journey.

DSS students at HortPark to learn about modern developments in Horticulture & Landscaping trying their hands on ‘Seed Tile Art’
In our keenness to explore the best teaching method that will suit our students’ needs and attributes, we added another innovation called the ‘Inspirational Morning’ programme. It serves as an arena for students to inspire their fellow students. This programme’s success is not only because students put their heart and hard work into showcasing their public speaking talent but it also provides a platform for students to develop team work and build their character as well as language skills and their confidence. The language used in the presentation is simple, clear and concise to ensure that fellow students understand and gain inspiration from it. Students word the material themselves with their teacher’s assistance. Our students love and enjoy this opportunity to express themselves and share their life-stories with peers.

Maths quiz is also conducted termly to make numeracy concepts come alive, promote use of problem solving and thinking skills in a fun way.

The F & B School for a Bright Future!

A milestone in the history of the F & B department was when Delta Senior School was accredited the first Singapore WSQ module in **F & B Safety & Hygiene Policies & Procedures** on 20 August 2008.

An ATO, the school assessed and awarded eight students with the Statement of Attainment (SOA) in the WSQ module in **F & B Safety & Hygiene Policies & Procedures** on 4 November 2008. To date, we are proud to have awarded a total of seventy-five SOA to our students for this module, making a saving of more than $10000 in training and assessment fees for the school and APSN. Armed with the SOA, our students savoured their first stint in various F & B sub-sectors such as restaurants, cafes and bakeries. Another WSQ module in **Prepare Basic Cakes** gained accreditation on 6 May 2009. We look forward to three more WSQ accreditation by the Work Development Agency by the end of the year.
Students who met the Horticulture Competency standards were shortlisted to attend the WSQ modules in landscape operations. These students were pre-trained in school and then assessed either by our school assessor or went through external assessment conducted by CUGE.

The training programmes are differentiated to meet the needs of different groups of students as the programmes provide horticulture and landscape activities ranging from easy (e.g. Nursery work) to the most difficult operations (e.g. turf maintenance).

The Horticulture team has developed a WSQ package for the module in “Support Landscape Implementation Works” and obtained accreditation by WDA in 2008. The package had been used for the training and assessment of our students within the school premises.

Providing Hospitality Services

As of Term Two 2009, Hotel and Accommodation (HA) Department at DSS took on a new name, Hospitality Services (HS) training department. This change was made to more accurately reflect the variety of skills, knowledge and ultimately work sites we are preparing our students for.

Onsite training at Prince’s Landscape: Transporting plants

The HS department has also co-developed a total of 3 WSQ curriculum packages in Hotel and Accommodation together with Leadership Learning Center (LLC), an external ATO. The 2 core competency units include ‘Work Safely’ and ‘Interact with Guest’ and the elective competency unit developed is ‘Service Guest Rooms’, which prepares
trainees for work as room attendants. An up and coming fourth competency unit preparing trainees for work as public area cleaners is expected to be completed by Term Three 2009. The first 3 curriculum packages were also developed in close partnership with Holiday Inn Parkview (HIPV).

All our WSQ developers, trainers and assessors have attended and been assessed as competent by WDA in the necessary competency units in Advance Certificate for Training and Assessment (ACTA).

Over the last year, there were significant new partnerships with employers such as Pinnacle Laundry Pte Ltd, RASA Sentosa, Holiday Inn Atrium and NTUC Costa Sands Resorts who provide training and job attachment opportunities in the areas of laundry, room and public area cleaning for HS Trainees. In total 90% of our track 1 student cohort in Year 3 and Year 2 have been trained at work sites and individually accumulated more than 120 hours.

(*Pictures courtesy of Rasa Sentosa)

Hygiene is Our Focus

Since the rebirth of the Janitorial Department in June 2008 we have made many significant changes to the programmes, systems and processes.

Our System for Differentiated Assessment and Reporting 2009 has been in operation for one Semester. Students generically start from the foundation module working their way towards onsite training and certification. Depending on their own pace and abilities, they will be trained and assessed every term on a modular basis.

Staff members continue to be trained in various critical aspects of Janitorial work. To date various staff members have been trained in (1) Clean Hard Floor, (2) Clean Sanitary Fixtures, Fittings and Toilet Floor and (3) Clean Vertical Surfaces, Glass and Ceilings. Other courses planned for the rest of this year includes: Clean Carpets and Clean Furniture and Furnishings. Since June 2008, several cleaning modules have been developed along the lines of the NSRSAWSQ Framework. They include both NSRS programmes and 2 domestic modules, namely, (1) Foundational Janitorial Skills, (2) Onsite Janitorial Skills, (3) Clean Hard Floor, (4) Clean Vertical Surfaces, Glass and Ceilings, and (5) Clean Sanitary Fixtures, Fittings and Toilet Floor.

Making a Difference by Creating Job Opportunities

The Job Placement Unit has been kept busy with the tremendous support from employers of various deployments. It was tasked to engage the students in Work Experience Programme (WEP) with various companies like Gloria Jeans Coffee, Coffee Club, McDonalds, Astons, Hans’ Café, Holiday Inn Park View, Phoon Huat Pte Ltd, Ace Dane Construction & Landscape, Greenology, Prince’s Landscape among others.

Out of 35 F&B students on WEP, 28 were gainfully employed (80%). Even two F&B students from Track Three have been employed as part timers. The Hospitality Services has seen outstanding support from Holiday Inn ParkView in terms of training expertise and programmes. Similarly, the Horticulture Department has received unwavering support from Prince’s Landscape.

Students undergoing janitorial training in school

Performing their customer service and kitchen duties at BBQ Chicken kitchen

*Pictures courtesy of BBQ Chicken*
The Job Placement Officers are finely in tune to the needs of employers and students alike. Many more employers are in the wings to develop relationships and foster better understanding of and support for Delta Senior School.

**Student Well-Being is also Our Priority**

1. OBS Customized Character Development Programme

Beginning March 2008, we worked with Outward Bound School (OBS) special programmes to develop a customized character development camp for Delta Senior School. Both parties worked closely in crafting programmes based on the needs of DSS students.

A series of small scale tests and pilot run were conducted to gauge the suitability of the programme for our students. Some of the activities include an OBS community service day at East Coast Park campus and a 3D2N camp at OBS Pulau Ubin.

2. Community-based CCA

In 2009, Line Dance was introduced to the students as a CCA. In just a short time, it can be said to be one of the CCAs that students enjoy immensely. Delta Senior School approached Kim Seng Community Centre in an effort to raise our students’ level of awareness of the multitude of leisure activities available to them outside of school.

Endurance, Stamina and Confidence-Building through Fitness

The Fitness and Health (FH) Department assesses students’ fitness level based on the Official Assessment (OA) and Life Skills Set (LSS). Each student has to complete an OA & a LSS module each term. To date most of the students have completed at least 2 OAs and LSS, apart from students who went for WEP or Part-Time work. Students are motivated to improve their fitness level through a comprehensive incentive scheme which includes gift items like fruit bars, shampoo, isotonic drinks, vouchers to sports equipments and many more items that help improve students’ well-being. The FH department gives out rewards to students who maintain a good standard of fitness throughout their stay in school. A 73% passing grade was achieved for the whole school and a total of 299 students from all tracks and years received the rewards.

**Healthy lifestyle beyond school hours** is an exclusive running club set up by an ex-staff and he serves as a volunteer in the running club to train our students in endurance and stamina and to prepare them for national running events such as the Benjamin Sheares Bridge Run and the Special Olympics track & Field event. Since it started in late April, 10 students have been attending the run regularly. It is believed that by setting up the club, we are in fact giving them an invaluable opportunity to integrate into the community at large.

The picture below captures the multi-faceted fitness programme in DSS.

Line dance members in a group shot!

Cardiovascular training through group Aerobics

All the events and programmes planned and executed are done with a common purpose in mind, that is, to nurture fit individuals with high quality and highly demanded work skills. It is also our hope that our students would learn to face the world with optimism and overcome any obstacles to turn their dreams into real, success stories.
The Vision, The Actions & The Passion ~ The VAP @TS

Life-long learning has becoming more prominent in the globalised context of Singapore where change is not just a constant but phenomenal in extent and affect. For Tanglin School to remain relevant in this competitive arena, approaches to life-long learning and professional development have been appended to better prepare the staff to meet the challenges of change. Teaching and learning are accorded the highest priority. Individual student progress and whole school programmes are carefully planned, implemented and monitored through systematic collection and interpretation of data. Decisions about the ways to improve teaching and learning outcomes are based on that data and through professional conversations with the staff and external stakeholders. Teachers provide timely and helpful feedback to students about their work. They ensure that every student will acquire the knowledge, understanding, attitude, values and skills necessary for their ongoing participation in education.

Tanglin School envisions being a vibrant learning community leading the way in best practices through engaging students and empowering teachers with enriching teaching-learning experiences leveraging upon the 5 positive core values of the school which are passion, respect, patience, perseverance and collaboration. To realize the vision we put in place the following 5 strategic steps:

1. Cultivate inclusive, engaging and innovative teaching-learning practices
2. Foster a culture that encourages all to work collaboratively as one
3. Promote personal and professional development
4. Nurture collaborative home-school-community partnerships
5. Develop a safe and inviting school of the future

The characteristics of success in FY2008/2009 include:

- Maximizing students’ progress & achievement through inclusive, engaging and innovative teaching-learning practices
- Participation in a professional learning community
- Appropriate and innovative use of Information & Communication Technology
- Collaborative school-home-community partnerships
- Win-Win Character Development

Maximizing Students’ Progress & Achievement through Inclusive, Engaging and Innovative Teaching-Learning Practices

The school promotes the wide use of Cooperative Learning (CL) as an instructional strategy amongst its teaching staff with the primary objective of impacting on students’ intrinsic motivation through classroom activities that are challenging, engaging, informative and one that builds enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility amongst learners (Forsyth & MacMillan, 1994). In 2005 and 2008, as part of the professional development efforts, Tanglin School engaged an external consultant to assist teachers, over a period of 5 weeks, to embed CL techniques in their lessons. Teachers who have completed the consultancy programme subsequently mentored fellow colleagues in the use of the approach. Over the last three years, teachers at Tanglin School have adopted, adapted, refined and honed their use of CL in lessons across the curriculum.

Teaching and learning to write have always been a challenge for the teachers and students respectively. Writing is often viewed

Celebration Tree – A Recycling Project.
as a component in the English Language curriculum that should be given the least focus. Notions such as ‘students need to learn to read before they can write’ inevitably surface as most of the students struggle not only with basic reading but also with spelling, writing, sentence formation and the development of ideas. ‘Process Writing’ at Tanglin School instead focuses on the students’ thinking and doing as they write rather than on the finished product alone. We believe that students learn to write through experiences and activities in writing; as they write, they gain an insight into the written language such as the mechanics of writing, the importance of considerations of purposes, form and audience; they also learn to apply skills learnt through writing across the curriculum (M.R. Ruddle, 1997; Applebee & Langer, 1987). With ‘Process Writing’ the task is no longer viewed as something to be completed in one sitting but involves recurring cycles where students are able to personalize the writing process to meet their needs and their writing assignments.

Project-based learning (PBL) which is an inquiry-based approach emphasizes learning activities that are essentially long term, interdisciplinary, student-centered and integrated with real world issues and practices. PBL typically involves completing complex tasks that result in realistic products, events or presentations to an audience. PBL provides opportunities for students to become more engaged in their learning, apply and integrate the content and skills of different subject areas in an authentic way as well as develop real world skills such as working well with others and making thoughtful decisions. At Tanglin School, PBL offers the perfect avenue for building relationships with students and with people in the larger community. This is facilitated by the need for teachers to take on varied roles of coach, facilitator and co-learner during the PBL process and in the sharing of their students’ work with other teachers, parents, mentors and the business community.

**Participation in a Professional Learning Community**

Continual development is the mark of a true professional at Tanglin School. Teachers are constantly keeping themselves up-dated with their area of expertise and with recent research about pedagogy. Educational research is greatly encouraged and on-going teachers’ learning are provided so that teachers are empowered to improve on teaching-learning practices, contribute to curriculum development, take on new roles
and responsibilities, manage change and acquire new skills. The school leaders encourage and support the involvement of all school staff with timely, high quality professional learning opportunities. Extensive and highly professional relationships are evident and the culture of the school is one of mutual support and enhancement. Teachers are not just on the receiving end of professional expertise and growth; they find ways to make substantial contributions to the profession such as:

- Conducting class-based research and sharing the results with their colleagues through professional presentations within the school
- Participating in or leading small groups in professional conversations with fellow colleagues
- Writing and sharing experiences at seminars and conferences such as MOE ExCEL Fest 2008 and IASSID 2nd Asia Pacific Regional Congress 2009.

**Appropriate and Innovative Use of Information & Communication Technology**

The pace of change at Tanglin School, particularly in Information & Communication Technology (ICT), is supported by a strategic plan which is designed to guide on-going improvement efforts of ICT in supporting the mission, vision and values of the school and to facilitate the provision of quality special education and teaching practices that meets the demands of students and staff working in a global environment.

The ICT strategic plan is guided by the following set of principles:

1. Cultivate inclusive, engaging and innovative teaching-learning practices and providing meaningful ICT experiences for character-development as students are empowered to become independent and integral members of society. This will be at the forefront of our thinking and decision making processes.
2. Support all staff members through continuous professional development, conversations, reflections and feedback/evaluation. The development and implementation of the plan is owned by every member in the school and will continually be assessed for its effectiveness and improved through a responsive evaluation loop (RADAR logic).
3. Provide flexibility to allow for innovation and adjustment to accommodate independent learning, exploration and discovery in an environment where each student/staff is able to proceed and excel at different pace.
4. Integrate sustainable and user-friendly e-platforms and sound practices which will enhance the sharing of resources, building collaborative-learning communities and continuity to engage in sustainable ICT initiatives.

ICT does not stand alone within the school community, but acts as an enabler, both supporting and challenging students and staff to execute their work, to think differently, using new and emerging technologies to try different, innovative approaches to teaching, learning and research. ICT will be the next wave of communication specialization. We harness technologies not only to communicate but to create, to manipulate,
to design and to self-actualize. Students with special needs learn these ICT skills as part of their lives, like language, which they learn without realizing they are learning it.

Illustrate Your Imagination - A Digital Literacy Programme for Youths with Special Needs demonstrates how students acquire the ability to read and interpret media (text, sound, images) to produce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments. Digital literacy represents the child’s ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment, with digital meaning and information represented in numeric/visual forms.

E-LEAP@TS is the acronym for E-Learning, E-Assessment & Portfolio at Tanglin School and it consists of 3 electronic components namely E-Learning, E-Assessments and E-Portfolios. E-LEAP, which was supported by President Challenge 2007, has enabled students to complete his/her learning cycle by providing students exactly the lessons they needed with time assigned to individual student on a particular topic. E-Learning helped to improve on “concentration, motivation, independence and self-esteem as well as developing problem solving, thinking and communicating skills to ensure successful access to the curriculum” (Strack, 1995). The project has added value to the teaching and learning process of students through the use of Digital Technology. It has helped to identify the strengths and weaknesses of students during an assessment to enable teachers develop suitable teaching/training approaches for intervention and remedy.

We push the frontiers aiming to achieve excellence that is both forward-looking and realistic to facilitate teaching-learning and connectivity at a school-wide level. We aspire to develop an ICT-enabled learning environment not only within Tanglin School but for the whole SPED community—an ‘ICT Hub’ to share research-based practices and provide personalized learning opportunities for all students with special needs.

Collaborative School-Home-Community Partnerships

Our youths with special needs require an avenue to channel their energy in constructive ways after school. Guided activities and relationships with caring adults can lead to important developmental gains by increasing skills, instilling confidence, broadening cultural horizons, promoting positive values and pointing youths in the right direction as they

Educational Tour to JB sponsored by Sparks Pte Ltd.

Community Service at SSTI Resource Centre.

A home away from home @Sparkz Cabin.
grow up (Barton J. Hirsch, 2005). It was for this very reason that the Sparkz Cabin at Tanglin School was born. The Sparkz Cabin is a collaborative effort between the school and the community to provide our youths with a safe and conducive space – a home away from home, whereby they are able to enjoy being kids and connect with caring adults and volunteers who provide mentoring and a variety of meaningful activities. With the generous sponsorship of furniture and fittings by Sparks Pte Ltd, the programme at the Sparkz Cabin is run by parent-volunteers with the objective of motivating our youths to ‘come running to school’ which resulted in win-win partnerships that the school has with the parents and the community.

To establish and maintain positive home-school partnerships and increase parental involvement so that parents/caregivers are actively engaged in their children’s learning, we initiated a series of workshops for parents. Entitled Hand-in-Hand with Parents/Caregivers to Nurture a Community of Learners @TS, the objective is for teachers to share teaching strategies, tools and tips in the spirit of collaboration, to facilitate the reinforcement of the child’s learning at home. The workshops focus not only on their children’s academic development but such positive and planned home-school activities offer a positive, welcoming school climate for parents to become involved in their children’s education at home and school positively predisposes parents about the school’s efforts.

**Win-Win Character Development**

The primary aim of the Win-Win Character Development Programme is to facilitate learning environments that are both academically and socially inclusive where learning opportunities and activities revolve around the teaching of appropriate attitude, beliefs and values as well as knowledge and skills to foster development of the whole person within caring relationships in the context of an inclusive community. Such a learning environment is extended to all students and staff, yet responsive to individual needs and abilities. ‘Character – what a person is, is ultimately more important than Competence - what a person can do’ (Covey, 1994). The programme is designed to help students with special needs to acquire the 4 Cs namely Character, Competence, Courage and Consideration. When students learn mature, responsible ways to manage their emotions and actions, the students win: They have their needs met without becoming a discipline problem.

Capacity building versus deficit finding…. we are building on students’ capacity by focusing on what they can do (capacity finding) rather than dwelling on what they cannot do (deficit finding). We add value in promoting and enhancing students’ self-esteem: pride and belief in oneself and in achievement of one’s potential as they become valued members of the society. The increased participation in the community has provided our students with opportunities and resources that he/she previously might not have access to and in return allowing the community to appreciate the abilities of our students.

On 3 November 2008, we saw 27 students awarded the National Youth Achievement Award (Bronze) during the NYAA Award Presentation Ceremony held at Singapore Polytechnic. As they received their awards from Dr Mohamad Malik Osman, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of National Development, every student was
beaming with joy and pride, amidst some ‘stage-fright’. This was the first time where students with special needs were awarded the NYAA Bronze Award in Singapore. With the guidance and encouragement of the teachers, some of them are currently working towards their NYAA Silver Award.

**Achievements**

- 37 students of the graduating cohort achieved an aggregate of L2 and above across Numeracy, Literacy (Reading) and Literacy (Listening) for WPLN Computer Adaptive Test.
- 10 students attained the Higher Certificate in Baking (Bread) from Baking Industry Training Centre, accredited by Singapore Workforce Development Agency.
- 16 students attained the Certificate of Achievement for Basic Building Maintenance from ITE College East.
- 28 students achieved NYAA Bronze awarded by the NYAA Council, Singapore.
- 2 student awarded the Most Courteous Singa Award (1 Gold and 1 Silver).
- Microsoft Soccer Challenge – Overall Champions for Junior Division.
- Disability Soccer League – Overall Champions for ‘B’ Division Team A and Runners-Up for ‘B’ Division Team B.
- Singapore Soccer Challenge – Overall Champions for ‘B’ Division Team A and Runners-Up for ‘B’ Division Team B.
- SDSC National Swimming Championship 2009 – 9 Golds, 5 Silvers and 4 Bronzes.
- SDSC National Track & Field Championship 2009 – 25 Golds, 21 Silvers and 11 Bronzes.

‘A mind that is stretched by new experiences can never go back to its old dimensions’ (Oliver Wendell Holmes). As the saying goes, Tanglin School’s positioning in PY2008/2009 is summarized and located within the spectrum of possibilities and new experiences where evidence based school improvement is a gradual process and an educational journey towards greater effectiveness. The central focus of school excellence is student learning and well-being. Evidence-based planning and action, supported by the dedication of school leaders, the staff and the community have enabled us to achieve our goals in providing youths with special needs, customized and differentiated learning experiences to achieve success academically, socially and physically.
Anchoring Our Future

2008 has been an exciting year for Katong School as we strive to create an open, vibrant and conducive learning environment to ensure that every student’s as well as staff’s potential is developed to the fullest. This is achieved through strategic partnerships with the various stakeholders, effective teaching and learning processes, purposeful organizational restructuring for community building and effectual organizational redeployment for professional growth that are aligned to the school’s mission and strategic thrusts.

Our Beliefs

The school functions as a family unit and every individual is accepted, respected and encouraged to go as far as his potential can take him. It supports each student in his quest for learning, recognizes that the effort each student puts in and celebrates every success that comes as a result of having an unyielding spirit even in the face of challenges. The school believes strongly in holistic education and participation in CCA as a mean of ensuring that our students are equipped with life-skills and tools for personal effectiveness to help them take progressive steps towards achieving their goals to lead dignified lives. Abundant opportunities are created to engage students in school. While the school functions as a family unit, the school in itself is a living and learning community embedded within a wider society. The support that is envisioned by Katong also extends to other members of this school community – staff, parents and volunteers. The community support is one of the critical factors that help sustain a learning organization.

Environment of Opportunities

The school makes learning enjoyable and fun for students by providing an enriching environment with opportunities for all. Student learning is not confined to the classrooms. Students are actively engaged in role-play, problem solving activities, field trips and experiential learning through brief work attachment with Delta Senior School. These opportunities widen the students’ scope of experience and develop in them the independence and confidence needed for their continuing learning journey.

The school also provides a lively environment in support of the arts and aesthetics. Visual and performing arts have been integrated into the curriculum. This is so that students acquire the foundation for the appreciation of arts and aesthetics. Through this approach, even students who are not members of the art club and performing arts CCA have many opportunities to showcase their talents and be engaged in performances. These opportunities come in the form of presentations at appropriate platforms during school celebrations and events, as well as external events. Such exposure has boosted students’ confidence and enhanced their performing skills and enthusiasm for the arts. The resourcefulness in teaching methods and use of creative ideas by our committed and highly qualified instructors have kept our students enthralled.

Students enjoying their meal during a social competence outing

Students learn to play percussion instruments during performing arts lesson.
Engaging Curriculum and Programme

Curriculum planning and development continues to take centre stage at Katong School as teachers expand their role beyond just delivering the curriculum. The task of curriculum and assessment planning, though demanding as it may be, has increased greater awareness in teachers of the desired learning outcomes for students. It has also called upon teachers to be more reflective in their pedagogical practice as they plan more effective teaching strategies, provide more engaging learning opportunities and prepare more purposeful assessment tasks that are aligned to the learning outcomes of students. In concrete terms, a platform has been created where teachers come together on a regular basis to engage in professional conversations around these educational practices.

The Heads of Department have also been called upon to take a more pro-active role in leading these sessions as curriculum leaders. Departments for instructional programmes are empowered to experiment and adopt innovative strategies that best meet the needs of students.

The English Department has collaborated with MOE to pilot the Reading Mastery Programme for all Grade 2 students in 2009. The instructional model used in “Reading Mastery” is called ‘Direct Instruction’ (DI). DI is characterized by a clearly defined scope and sequence of skills, highly structured and scripted lessons, and a focus on mastery learning. DI has strong research bases and has evidenced positive results for students of all abilities, in particular, disadvantaged and struggling learners. The specific objectives of the project are to raise the quality of literacy teaching and the literacy outcomes of students. Thus far, the programme has been driving positive learning outcomes.
Students posing outside shop houses at Chinatown

The English Language teachers also conduct learning journeys to make learning authentic for our students. In 2009, the Grade 5 and 6 students learn about Chinatown through brochure design lessons on places of interest. To make learning real for the students, the teachers organise trips to Pagoda Street and Sago Street so that the students can connect with national monuments - the Sri Mariamman Temple and the Jamae Mosque (a.k.a. Chulia Mosque), as well as experience the hustle and bustle of shop houses activities along the streets of Chinatown.

The Maths Department supports the Math curriculum and enhances the teaching and learning of Maths through the initiation of the annual Maths Challenge Day. The objectives are to develop in students a positive attitude towards Maths and the ability to reason logically, to allow students to apply essential Maths concepts and skills for real life situation, and harness mathematical tools and technology in the learning and application of Maths. Students visit six stations – sandwich making, info-tech, drinks, endangered animals, fitness and line dance corners to perform activities, solve problems, have fun, collect stickers and win prizes. These stations provide students with opportunities to apply money skills, draw chart/graph using computer, measure volume, recognise endangered species, measure time, listen to tempo music and do counting.

Values Inculcation and Character Development

The school believes that anchoring students on sound values and character development provides the foundation for their achievements. The school culture is built around its core values: Responsibility, Respect, Resilience, Integrity and Openness.

Students working in teams to solve problems during Maths Challenge Day

Value Trees where students share how they live out the school values

Education on the values is featured prominently and is incorporated into Principal’s weekly address with students - the school’s student leadership development, self management, life skills, before and after school, and CCA programmes. The formal extension of the Standards Work Performance through 15 behavioural work performance outcomes across the primary and secondary level also operationalises the core values of the school. These 15 outcomes of school and work performance cover the following areas of attendance and punctuality, dress
and hygiene, relating with others, work behaviours and self regulation.

Besides acquisition of skills, there is also a strong emphasis on social-emotional competencies. The annual ‘We Can’ Leadership & Training Camp has been conducted for secondary student leaders to provide authentic activities where students can experience small successes that will raise self-esteem and positive self-concept; to inculcate a sense of responsibility and ownership in taking actions; to enhance goal setting, planning, problem solving and decision-making behaviours; and to improve perseverance and mental resilience in seeing things through. After their training, student leaders are expected to run camps, sports events and assist in major school activities to provide them with ample opportunities to practise and exhibit the leadership traits they have acquired.

The school also nurtures talents through an ability and interest driven CCA approach. Students are allocated their respective CCA through a comprehensive process of selection and allocation based on their personal choice, interest and aptitude. This ensures that students participate actively with enthusiasm and passion. For 2008, Gu Zheng, Juggling and Basketball have also been added to the existing spectrum of CCAs to provide more choices for students.

Before and after school programmes have been implemented for at-risk students to equip them with skills to lead healthy lives and work towards behaviour modification. Students participate in activities once per week. These activities include inline skating, creative music, adventure day camp, creative animation, personal safety awareness (which includes addressing boy-girl-relationship issues), personal effectiveness session, visit to reformatory/ rehabilitative centres and general maintenance work as service to school.
On 30 July to 5 Aug 2008, four scouts, namely Javier Neo from Level 4/2, Koh Wei Bing and Nigel Teng from Level 2/3 and Nicholas Lee from Grade 6/1, participated in the 10th Nippon Agoonoree - ‘We Can’ overseas trip to Japan, Kobe. It was an eye-opener for them as they interacted with the scouts from the other local special needs schools. They mingled with the over one thousand overseas scouts from Japan, Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Tanzania, experienced the Japanese culture, visited the Universal Studio and took part in the interesting on-site activities like Japanese traditional arts, horse-riding, baking, woggle and name-card making sessions. The scouts were simply thrilled when they shook hands with the Japanese royal family.

Learning Staff

As the key driving forces behind the teaching and learning programmes within the school, the Principal and teachers embrace opportunities to upgrade their knowledge in the leadership, content and pedagogical domains. Professional sharing sessions are also an integral part of staff development.

There is also a high level of involvement of staff in committees for school improvement. The Teaching and Learning Committee, Student Well-being Committee, School Partnership Committee, Staff Well-being and School Safety Committee adopt an open consultative style of management with a high level of trust which encourages ideas and suggestions. Staff are empowered to innovate and respond professionally to the call of duty within a strong established system of support, which comes in the form of well-defined work plan and work flow, well developed teaching resources as well as organisational support from the Heads of department and administrative support staff. This engenders a strong climate of collegiality and teamwork where colleagues work across committees to achieve common goals.

Strategic planning and envisioning exercises have been a mainstay at Katong School over the past two years. The purpose of these exercises, apart from reviewing the work done over the year and planning for the future, is also to bring a sense of renewal in staff as well as to bring the school community closer together in a more informal environment. Last year, the strategic planning...
exercise was conducted over a period of 5 days in late November, culminating at Bintan for the last two days where the school staff worked and played equally hard. It was a fitting way to end the year where everyone felt a sense of accomplishment for the year and a sense of hope for the future.

Strategic Partnership

Effective collaboration with parents, mainstream schools and the community adds a new dimension to student learning. Through active engagement with parents, volunteers, schools and external agencies, the school has developed a culture of collaboration to impact teaching and learning. The parents of Katong School remain a strong partner of the school. We also leverage on other external partners to provide an environment to develop our strategic areas further.

Katong School’s involvement in the School Family Education (SFE) programme under the auspices of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) has given the additional funding and impetus for Katong School to organise additional workshops on parenting topics and family concerns. A parent support group room was also set up within the school to provide the space and platform to strengthen the partnership with parents through the school’s parent support group.

Katong School is certainly anchored for the future and will continue to do its best in developing a learning school community that maximizes the potential in every staff and in providing a nurturing environment that brings out the best in every child.
The past year has seen many new learning experiences and successes for Chaoyang School. We continue to strive towards excellence in teaching and learning for the overall development and well-being of our pupils. Many initiatives were implemented last year. We share some key milestones and developments.

**Milestones:**

1. **Prototyping School for Social-emotional Learning Programme**

   Chaoyang School was selected by MOE to prototype the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programme using the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) curriculum. The prototyping of the programme will allow for the design and customization of a suitable SEL programme for the SPED schools in Singapore.

   ![Working together @ SEL Camp](image)

   The PATHS curriculum focuses on developing children’s social and emotional skills (a cornerstone to effective behaviour and academic success). It covers areas such as self-control, emotional understanding, self-esteem, peer relations and interpersonal problem solving skills. Under this programme, the school was provided with PATHS training, consultancy and teaching resources and materials. PATHS strategies are being integrated into the school’s key learning areas. Using PATHS resources such as puppets, feelings cards and story books, our pupils are taught PATHS concepts and strategies. Our pupils learn to use the ‘circle rules’ to build discipline and sustain attention and the concept of self-control by using the “turtle”.

   ![Using puppets to teach PATHS concepts and values](image)

   Teachers and the Multi-Disciplinary Support Unit (MSU) were trained to use the programme by an MOE-appointed consultant. Our Head of Department for Pupil Well-Being, Mrs Anita Suwandi was also nominated by MOE to attend a PATHS conference and school visits in Pennsylvania, USA last May. She brought back many ideas and learning which are being adapted and applied to the school’s evolving SEL programme.

   In March this year, a 3 day 2 night SEL camp was organized for our level 6 pupils. This is a collaborative project with Raffles’ Girls’ School and Presbyterian High School student volunteers. The camp is aimed at reinforcing the PATHS values, control signals, feelings words and circle rules through games and activities designed jointly by our teachers and student volunteers. On the last day of the camp, our pupils demonstrated their understanding of PATHS values and concepts at a celebration concert for their parents.
2. Using STELLAR to teach English Language
Following the successful prototyping of the Special Edition of STELLAR (Strategies For English Language Learning and Reading), the programme was rolled out to all our lower level classes in June last year. We are grateful to MOE for providing the school with books and training for our teachers. Since embarking on the STELLAR Programme, teachers and parents have reported improvements in their children’s reading. The school held a STELLAR Workshop for some 38 parents in April this year to share with them the STELLAR strategies and other useful tips so that they can help their children read at home.

Performing Arts pupils showcasing their talents

pupils’ self-confidence and self-expression, improving their fine and gross motor skills and instilling values and attitudes in them. Through class sessions and various events, our pupils were observed to have shown improvements in these areas. Pupils gave performances during Family Day, Teachers’ Day and Prize Giving Day held last year. They also performed at the Celebrity Golf Tournament prize-giving ceremony held at Raffles Country Club last September. Based on encouraging results from the assessments, the Performing Arts Programme was then extended to level 4 pupils this year to benefit a larger group of pupils. The teacher in-charge, Ms Rasyidah and Mrs Low Siew Ting, our Principal, attended an Inaugural International Symposium: Re-imagining Special Education Through Arts Education and Arts Therapy that was held in Melbourne, Australia. The learning experiences gained have enabled the school to fine-tune the Performing Arts curriculum. The school plans to extend the programme to benefit a bigger segment of the school population.

3. The Performing Arts Programme
The school embarked on this project with a SCTL Innovation Grant from MOE/NCSS last year. The grant enabled our teachers to be trained and for the school to engage instructors to provide expert and specialist training sessions for the pupils. Through dance, drama and music, this programme offered to Level 1-3 pupils aims at developing

L1 – 3 Parents @ The STELLAR Workshop

Confidently performing their play

4. Partnerships
Chaoyang has established a strong relationship with various community partners and schools who support us through their active involvement and sponsorship of various school programmes.

Our existing partners; SPARKZ, SIA 5Cs, Boston Consulting Group, Energy Market Company (EMC), Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), Keppel, VSA and Braun Buffel, remain actively involved in our school events and sponsorship. In October 2008, SPARKZ, our long-time partner helped the school to establish the inaugural Outstanding Contribution Awards for teachers in recognition of their hard work and dedication to the school. They sponsor 2 awards each year for 5 years. They also sponsor the
Parents and volunteers were actively involved in our Family Day Carnival last August. Games to develop literacy, numeracy and gross motor skills were planned. For our children, it was a day of fun and bonding with their loved ones. For our volunteers, it was a day where they could contribute to a VWO organization and for us, it was a day when we gave due recognition to our volunteers.

Achievements

Much has been accomplished by our CCA groups. At the SDSC and Special Olympics competitions, our athletics, swimming, badminton and soccer teams brought in a total of 17 gold, 7 silver and 8 bronze medals last year. This year, both our swimmers and athletes have won 13 gold, 6 silver and 8 bronze medals so far. In June this year, 30 of our pupils will be participating in the Special Olympics.

We signed a Memorandum of Understanding with St Anthony’s Canossian Primary School (SACP) last year to collaborate in areas pertaining to staff development, curriculum and CCA. Last year, our pupils danced alongside SACP dancers at their school’s annual concert and our teachers were attached to their school to learn about the Performing Arts Programme and teaching pedagogies. Other mainstream schools include the Raffles family of schools, Yuhua Primary, Presbyterian High School and Anderson Primary School.
As for our Performing Arts groups, our popular Hip-Hop Dance group, who receives support from VSA and Braun Buffel, gave numerous public performances. Our Percussion Band gave 2 public performances, including “A Nation in Concert”, staged at Victoria Theatre. They won much public acclamations.

Our batik painters also deserve equal recognition. Their works continue to be sought after by organizations like MOE, Community Chest and SPARKZ for use as commemorative pieces or souvenir gifts for visitors and dignitaries from both within and abroad. They were featured in ComChest Charity TV show in June this year.

Our school made a mark in the SPED arena when we won three out of the five awards given out at the MOE-NCSS SPED Teacher Award ceremony held last November. The Outstanding SPED Teacher Award, given out to those who have demonstrated the passion, commitment, courage and perseverance needed to nurture and inspire children with special needs were accorded to two of our teachers - Mrs Anita Suwandi and Ms Chui Kit May. The Innovation Award, given to outstanding innovations that promote students’ learning and contribute to a culture of excellence in SPED schools was given to our school’s Innovation Team, comprising Mrs Anita Suwandi, Ms Chui Kit May, Mdm Lim Poh Hoon and Ms Maggie Ho, for their i-café project “Surf and Serve”. The i-café project was our effort to enhance our Lifeskills and IT curriculum through a new teaching...
package on IT, service and hospitality. For making this experiential learning possible for our pupils, we would like to thank New Creation Church for their generous donation, Seagate Technology for sponsoring new laptops, the parent volunteers for their assistance rendered to our staff and the students from Raffles Institution for the work they have put in into designing the webpage and teaching package for us.

The school also participated at MOE’s ExcelFest held at Suntec City last July. Our Lifeskills Team and the school Discipline Team put up an exhibition on the PATHS curriculum and Prefects’ Leadership Camp respectively. Both teams drew a large number of interested audiences who wanted to learn more about the programme and the school.

**Conclusion**

Chaoyang’s accomplishments thus far can only be attributed to the many helping hands – APSN HQ, MOE/NCSS, our community partners, volunteers, parents and our dedicated teachers who have all played a significant and contributory role in continuing to develop our pupils’ potential.
Effective February 2009, the Professional Staff services underwent its final phase of development as it changed its name to Multi-Disciplinary Support Unit (MSU). The name change was necessary to reflect more accurately the multi-disciplinary nature of the various disciplines that make up the MSU.

The MSU comprises the Head of MSU, Principal and Senior MSU Staff, Psychologists, Educational Psychologists, Social Workers, Art Therapist, Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapist Aide, Speech & Language Therapists, MSU Assistants, and Admissions & Support Officer.

As early as 2005, the re-structuring of professional staff services was necessary in facilitating 3 key changes that enable for more effective delivery of services:

1. The standardization of services across the Association. Consequently, requests for services of the different disciplines are now formally made on a standardized referral form, and all schools and CFA follow similar procedures in making direct referrals and referrals for case management. Monthly student/client lists, which document names of students/clients served, presenting issues, disciplines involved in providing services and status of group work are now available to the recipients of services for the purpose of accountability.

2. The deployment and re-deployment of staff to fill in gaps in services due to staff resignation and/or leave of absence. As a result of the re-structuring, MSU is now an independent unit within the Association. This enables the Head of MSU, in consultation with various key players, to mobilize staff, as necessary, to fill in any gaps in services. This approach aims to make the delivery of services more equitable across the Association.

3. The mentoring, supervision, and professional development of staff are now under the purview of the Principal Staff who heads the specific department. With this approach, discipline – specific monitoring and supervision provide opportunities for professional development and career advancement.

The MSU is focused on providing a high level of multi-disciplinary services. In addition to core services which include consultations, case management, direct referral services and group work, the following are highlights of various training sessions and workshops that were conducted throughout the past year.

**Supporting Teaching/Training Staff**

In order to better support APSN teaching/training staff, the MSU has been conducting an ongoing series of workshops for staff, focusing on areas identified through feedback from colleagues - mild intellectual disability, behavior management, communication skills, working with parents, literacy development, gross motor functioning, etc.

In April 2008 and in January and February 2009, the Occupational Therapy Department was busy conducting ergonomics workshops for teaching and training staff on proper lifting and carrying techniques to prevent injuries to the muscular-skeletal areas, which
could cause back pain. Participants had fun learning basic body mechanics in lifting and carrying boxes and work-related objects. With the knowledge gained, staff members were able to instill in their students the same principles during vocational training. Annually since 2006, training in the Alert Programme is provided to the staff at Delta Senior School to equip them with an awareness of the need to prep their students through a series of exercises to increase their readiness to learn.

In August 2008, two runs of the workshop Understanding Mild Intellectual Disability were conducted by the Psychology Department for new APSN staff. In March 2009, 35 APSN teaching/training staff gathered at Chaoyang School for another workshop conducted by the Psychology Department: Managing Classroom Behaviour/A Problem-Solving Model for Management of Learning and Behaviour in Class.

In April 2009, teachers from Delta Senior School were provided with an additional support through the workshop Teaching Students Phonics, conducted by Speech & Language Therapist, Hempla Verma. Also in April 2009 the Basic Counselling Skills workshop for new APSN staff was conducted by Acting Principal Social Worker, Nisha Kader. In September 2008, the Social Work and Counselling Department had conducted Working with Parents of Students with Special Needs – Communication Skills, as a sequel to their previous run of Basic Counselling Skills.

Supporting Parents

In April 2008, the Occupational Therapy Department conducted a workshop on fine motor skills for parents. The aim was to increase parents’ awareness of fine motor difficulties that their children may have and to arm them with strategies to help their children improve their fine motor functioning through activities done at home.
In July 2008, the Senior Speech & Language Therapist, Kritika Sharma conducted a talk for parents and caregivers at Tanglin School on Understanding Social Skills for Our Adolescents. Co-presenting at this same workshop was Psychologist Stan Poh, on the topic Understanding Teenage Developmental Issues. The talk was attended by at least 30 parents and was well received.

**Engaging the Community**

The Psychology Department has been involved in conducting a series of talks aimed at raising public awareness of its role in supporting individuals with mild intellectual disability. Between June 2008 and May 2009, the following groups participated in information-sharing sessions presented by APSN psychologists at different venues.

- **a) At Chaoyang School:** three psychologists from Asian Women’s Welfare Association (AWWA); five scholars from Ministry of Finance, Economic Development Board, Singapore Police Force; psychologists from KK Women’s & Children’s Hospital;
- **b) At Katong School:** ten psychologists from the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS);
- **c) At Department of Child Development (DCD) of KK Women’s & Children’s Hospital:** DCD staff;
- **d) At Republic Polytechnic:** polytechnic staff/students marking “medical month”;
- **e) At NUS:** volunteers for “Best Buddies” at Centre For Adults.

Engaging participants from various FSCs

Participants left the event feeling greatly satisfied with both the knowledge and support gained from the networking session.

**Conclusion:**

MSU staff will continue to run various workshops, which feedback suggests has been helpful to teaching/training colleagues, parents, as well as community partners. Planning for new workshops and additional runs of existing workshops is done yearly so as to provide a range of training to meet the needs of our stakeholders.