

President's Message



Dr Francis C. Chen

PhD (Lond), PBM, BBM

Corporate governance is an issue which the regulatory and / or facilitatory bodies like the Charity Council, National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and the Ministry of Community Development Youth and Sports (MCYS) advise Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) to observe. Governance in the charity sector refers to the systems and processes concerned with managing the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation. The nature and stringency of such governance issues are no different for VWOs as they are for corporate companies, such as publicly listed companies. One can understand why when one considers the annual budget of some of the bigger VWOs, in excess of \$ 10 million and in some cases even much more.

Good governance, transparency and accountability are keywords if one were to follow all the regulations in the Charities Act ("Code of Governance for Charities and Institutions of a Public Character"). However, one distinguishing factor between VWOs and corporate companies is that the Executive Committee or Board of a VWO is made up entirely of volunteers. Because this is not a paid position, the allocation of time becomes a problem, especially when one has a full-time job which is quite demanding and which may require frequent travel overseas. Thus it always becomes a struggle in time management when a volunteer has to attend not only the Board meetings, but oftentimes in the Subcommittee meetings as well.

APSN has grappled with this problem for the past three decades; there is a perpetual shortage of eligible members who can volunteer for such positions. Through Board Match (now re-named the Centre for Non-Profit Leadership), an initiative of the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) and the Kind Exchange, we have been fortunate to have recruited a number of suitable members for our Board. The problem in running a VWO is compounded by the complexity of issues facing VWOs these days. In the case of APSN, which currently has nearly 300 staff, human resource matters are important, as they ensure the welfare and job satisfaction of the staff. From management's point of view, we have to come up with ideas on how to motivate staff to greater heights, in doing a good job better, so to speak. Staff development is the flip side to staff performance, and so one can understand a lot of problems are inherent in managing such a big workforce.

Although all VWOs these days have Vision and Mission Statements, yet the implementation of the objectives is very much the task of the principal office-bearers, especially the President. His role is akin to the pilot of a ship, steering and keeping the ship moving, and to avoiding obstacles. Together with his Board, the educational philosophy in running the APSN Special Schools must be enunciated, and changes made in accordance with changing times and circumstances. Of utmost

importance in the case of APSN is the service delivery in terms of special education, and the adjunct and remedial services some of our clients may need. At the end of this APSN journey, the students will have to transit to open employment, or those who are not quite ready, for further vocational training at our Centre for Adults.

No matter what metamorphosis takes place, a basic golden principle of special education is that it should cater to the holistic development of the child. Because the child has dropped off from the mainstream (some of course are direct entries because of their diagnosed mild intellectual impairment), the special feature in a special school which caters to the learning disabled is that it should be free of examinations. Educators will tell you that the examinations system is the biggest single source of stress to persons with intellectual disability. Special education should be in an examinations-free environment; the individual abilities and learning needs should be emphasized, such as with the IEPs (Individual Educational Programmes) Of course there can be assessments and tests, but these are not the same as examinations.

Another of our tasks, apart from ensuring that all our students know self-help skills and are able to interact with members of society, they would also have to be trained to hold down jobs in open employment. The training for such jobs is restricted to the more menial and manual jobs available, such as customer service, working in fast food joints, in plant nurseries, as cleaners in janitorial positions, etc. Therefore the training we provide should be wide-ranging, stressing on the proper execution of the skills required for any one job. This is augmented by "on-the-job" training, to familiarise the trainees on the nature of the job function required.

In special schools like those run by APSN, we realise there isn't the same inclusiveness as practised in some other countries. This however is not a huge problem, as Singapore is very compact geographically and relatively small. We foster programmes which allow our students and clients to mix (or "integrate") with their peers in normal schools and with members of the public at large. We have introduced a "Best Buddies" programme with NUS students, who act as older brothers or sisters to our clients. We hope to enlarge this and other similar activities, so that our students will feel that they are part of society, and not isolated from it.

Finally, in order that APSN can achieve the "next lap" and for special education to attain its maximum development, the Ministry of Education must seriously think about taking over responsibility in running special education schools. Five years ago, on our 30th Anniversary, we wrote to the Prime Minister on this very issue. We again repeat our request -- as Government has the resources of state at its disposal, and also has the primary obligation of providing basic education to the populace -- including the intellectually disabled. If Government were to so decide, APSN can then concentrate on providing the adjunct services, such as remedial or social, for the learning disabled.

Whilst APSN still has the responsibility of running Special Schools, we endeavour to do our best under the circumstances, though we feel this is not the ideal state. I fear that the oft-mentioned adage of the "Many Helping Hands Approach" may backfire in that the "Helping Hands" may pull in different directions, resulting in no nett progress. Perhaps a re-think or an overhaul of the educational paradigm is required.



Reports of
**Committees &
Sub-Committees**

Schools Management Committee

The School Management Committee (SMC) ensures that the operations of the APSN schools are carried out effectively in pursuit of the Association's mission, and in line with the Ministry of Education's overall strategic plan for special education in Singapore. APSN stands out in the local special education (SPED) scene by having a fully integrated school system, that allows our students to benefit from a comprehensive and coordinated syllabus from age 7 to adulthood (through the Centre for Adults).

Over the past year, the SMC has worked closely with the schools to ensure that they continue to meet the objectives and targets set out in their annual strategic plan, with the ultimate aim of equipping our students with the skills necessary for leading dignified, fulfilling and independent lives as integral members of Singaporean society. Some of the key achievements of the schools over the past year include:

1. For the second year running, Tanglin School was conferred the MOE-NCSS Innovation Award which recognizes outstanding innovations that promote students' learning and contribute to a culture of excellence in SPED schools.
2. Chaoyang School students have achieved outstanding results in the areas of sports, performing arts and community service. For example, the school was awarded 2nd runner up for Best Performing School at the National Special Schools Track & Field Championships 2011. This speaks well of APSN Schools' approach towards holistic development of our children.
3. DSS achieved a breakthrough in 2010, with 41 out of 43 students graduating from the integrated 5-year competency-based transition curriculum with employment, ensuring that they can be self-reliant, useful citizens after leaving school.
4. In 2010, Katong School constructed an office skills training room and the mock-up hotel bedroom with the generous support of Fairmont Singapore and Swissotel the Stamford. This greatly facilitates hands-on vocational training for our students, and represents a big step forward for Katong School in its effort to help every student achieve post-school success.

Both Tanglin and Katong schools have been kept busy this past year, collaborating with MOE, Metta School and Grace Orchard School to create a pre-vocational education framework, which distills the key principles and processes for schools to effectively prepare their students to be employable, in order to lead more independent and satisfying lives. Our other schools have also been kept busy in updating their curriculum and teaching methods to ensure that our students continue to get quality, holistic education that meets their life needs.

Mr Anthony Tan
Chairman

Centre For Adults Management Committee

Centre For Adults (CFA) into its 14th year of service has gone through many changes and moving forward we strive to provide better facilities and services to our clients. CFA is working with the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) to become an Approved Training Organization (ATO) to provide in-house Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Landscape courses. Nine instructors have gone through the Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA) course and are now certified trainers and assessors for WSQ courses.

The Centre enjoyed another year of successful job placement. There is a drop in enrolment from 176 to 165 and it is likely to drop further by the end of the year due to clients staying employed for more than 1 year at which point they are taken off our roll. The intake this year is lower than expected due to Tanglin School and Katong School holding back students who cannot make it to Delta Senior School. The Centre can expect an increase of students coming from our feeder schools next year after the MOE transition programme is in place by end of this year.

The Contract Work programme has managed to bring in two new contracts for our clients, bringing a total of four contract works. Clients who are not ready for open employment and need constant supervision, will be able to perform simple work tasks and earn an allowance in the process.

The horticulture team participated in the Singapore Garden Festival 2010 – Community in Bloom and has won the Platinum Award and Best Garden Award under the Association category. The introduction of mini garden in a pot for sale was a success. The Centre is not able to produce enough to meet demand. We were invited by NParks to demonstrate to the public on the making of the mini garden in a pot. Also, we are collaborating with a fertiliser producer to pack earthworm castings at the Centre. This new activity has good revenue-generating potential.

The Janitorial programme is the most successful in job placement. Most of the clients placed out for open employment are from the programme. The Centre is discussing with NCSS on the WSQ hospitality training for the intellectually disabled. There are two modules – Service Guest Rooms module and Cleaning of Public Areas module. The janitorial training will be incorporated into the cleaning module as part of the hospitality training.

An MOU was signed between ComChest and CFA to produce handicrafts for the Sentosa Leisure Group. The handicrafts will be sold at the Images of Singapore Shop at Sentosa Imbiah Lookout. There are more organizations buying our handicrafts for their corporate customers, functions and special events as we are able to customize the items to their requirements.

The Recycling programme is able to get more organizations and condominiums to help us collect items from their staff and residents respectively. It ensures a continuous supply of items for our clients to practise their skills in sorting, washing, doing simple repair, labeling and pricing. There is

also an increase in customers at the thrift shop. The best marketing method is still by “word of mouth”. The clients working in the thrift shop are given the opportunity to interact with customers to develop their social skills.

The F&B programme has obtained a food license from NEA and was awarded an “A” for food hygiene. Coffee Club Express outlets in NUS and NTU buy muffins and cookies from us on a weekly basis. Many organizations, too, have placed orders for their events.

As part of our outreach programme, the clients celebrated National Day with the students from Tanjong Katong Secondary School for the third year. Also for three years running, four clients from the Arts & Craft programme went to St. Patrick’s School to demonstrate how to make recycled paper and paper weights. Some clients and members have volunteered to participate in Keppel Volunteers monthly home maintenance programme at Moral Senior Activity Centre (Toa Payoh). Participating in such activities help build their confidence and self-esteem and give them a chance to socialize with people outside the Centre.

The Best Buddies programme has difficulty recruiting NUS student volunteers this year. We will explore recruiting volunteers from other institutions. For the past years, only our clients were involved in the programme. This year, we are extending the programme to our members.

The Centre will have two fund raisers this year. One is the Charity Golf, which will take place in October. We hope to raise \$150,000. A commercial firm has also named us as a beneficiary and we hope to raise \$30,000. The money raised will be used to defray our operation cost.

The centre will get a new passenger van donated by San Wang Wu Ti Religious Society to replace the 12 year old van. The van is used to ferry our clients to work sites.

On behalf of the CFA Management Committee, I would like to thank our stakeholders, sponsors, donors, organizations, educational institutions and well wishers for their support.

Also, I would like to thank the members of our Management Committee, volunteers and staff for their dedication, commitment and support in serving our clients and members.

Mr Chan Chee Keong, PBM
Chairman

Admission and Review (A&R) Sub-Committee

Chairperson	Mr. Roger Tan
Co-Chairperson	Dr. Hoili C. Lim (till May 2011)
Secretary	Ms. Joanne F. Especkerman (Jan 2011-present)
HQ Psychologist	Ms. Sutha Raman (Jan 2010-present)
Admissions/ Support Officer	Ms Nolita Noordin
Member	Mr. Frederick Low
Staff Members	Mrs. Low Siew Ting (till may 2011) Mrs. Choo Swee Gek Mrs. Liza Ow Ms. Soh Mee Choo Mr. William Tng Ms. Tan Chia Nee Ms. Amarit Kaur Mr. Andy Lum (till March 2011) Mrs. Tan Jun Lin Ms. Nishta Geetha Theveraja (till Jan 2011) Ms. Ang Wai Min (till Sept 2010) Ms. Ayessha Farveen Mrs. L. V. Jayashree (till Feb 2011) Mr. Wong Tak Wee, Chris Ms. Kwek Hyen Ying (till Dec 2011) Ms. Lau Wan Xin
Ex-Officio	Dr. Chey Chor Khoon

The A & R Subcommittee has seen a many changes in the past year that were reflected in the changing composition of our members as well as in the key developments that were carried out to improve the services of the A & R Subcommittee.

Mrs. L. V. Jayashree (Acting Principal Psychologist), Ms. Nishta Geetha Theveraja (Psychologist, TS and A & R Secretary 2010), Ms. Ang Wai Min, and Ms. Kwek Hyen Ying (Psychologists, TS and CFA respectively) resigned from the Association. Mr. Andy Lum (Psychologist, CYS) stepped down from the Subcommittee with effect from March 2011. Mrs Low Siew Ting (Principal, CYS) is retiring from the Association as well. We would like to thank them for their valuable contributions to the Subcommittee and wish them well in their future endeavours.

We also would like to extend our warm wishes to Dr. Hoili C. Lim (Head, MSU and Co Chair A & R Subcommittee) who has resigned from the Association. Dr Lim has served the A & R Subcommittee with dedication and passion for many years. Her clinical expertise on Intellectual Disability was very valuable to the Subcommittee. She has also played an instrumental role in mentoring and coaching our Psychologists. We thank Dr. Lim for her contributions to the Association and wish her well in her future endeavours.

We warmly welcome our new members who have joined us in the past year. They are- Ms. Amarit Kaur (Psychologist, KS), Ms. Ayessha Farveen (Psychologist, TS), Mr. Wong Tak Wee Chris (Psychologist, DSS), and Ms. Lau Wan Xin (Psychologist, CFA). We also welcome back Mrs. Tan Jun Lin (Psychologist, CYS) from her leave.

The Psychology Department had revised the screening instrument and developed the accompanying A & R Manual and Stimulus Book (see figure 1) that the Psychologists are required to follow during the screening of applicants. This ensures that all screening processes are conducted in a uniformed and objective manner, thereby increasing the reliability of the findings.

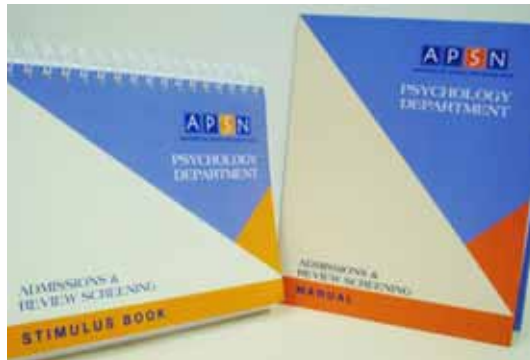


Figure 1: Admissions & Review Screening Stimulus Book and Manual.

The revised screening instrument, which assesses basic academic skills, on-task attention, language abilities and on-seat behaviors (see figure 2), provides a comprehensive evaluation of the applicant's school and/ or work readiness skills.



Figure 2a: Materials in the new screening tool to test time-telling and sequencing skills.

Various A & R documents such as the Screening Report form and forms used in the management of Conditional Placement, have also been revised to align with current changes in procedures and policies.



Figure 2b: Materials in the new screening instrument to test colour-naming, letter recognition, and money skills.

Additionally, specific criteria and case examples of various A&R outcomes pertaining to "Admission", "Conditional Placement", "Review", "Unsuccessful" and "Trial Placement" (for CFA only) were incorporated in the A&R Policy Guide to assist the Subcommittee in making objective decision outcomes.

In addition to the above developments, the A & R Subcommittee, in keeping with its commitment to work collaboratively and effectively with parents and referral agencies, conducted a number of public talks to promote APSN Schools and CFA. APSN schools-based talks were conducted jointly by the Psychologists and School Staff. The Psychologists also conducted various agency talks (such as Institute of Mental Health, Ministry of Community & Youth Services, KK Women's and Children's Hospital) to promote awareness of APSN's programmes and admission guidelines. These talks not only helped to disseminate vital information about APSN to the public but also fostered closer working ties to facilitate referrals by these agencies.

We would like to thank all our members for their continued effort and dedication.

Mr. Roger Tan
Chairperson

Audit Sub-Committee

In pursuit of a robust governance structure, APSN council has set up an internal audit committee some five years ago. Apart from the periodic reviews of organizational structure and policies conducted by consultants through NCSS (SSTI), APSN also invited external groups to conduct internal audit reviews of APSN. These reviews were done by Bain & Co and the Hay Group.

During 2011, we also had a team of final year Accountancy students from Nanyang Technological University to conduct a "Risk Assessment on strategic risks of APSN". The

findings were then presented to the Executive Committee. There were some interesting findings in this report. It will be further analysed to identify strategic risk-areas of APSN that may require improvements. Overall, APSN is currently not exposed to any significant risk and is in compliance with the Charity Council's guidelines.

Mr. Robin Chia
Chairman

Editorial and Publicity Sub-Committee

Although the Subcommittee is styled Editorial & Publicity, the work of publicity really should belong to another Subcommittee. In the past this was tagged on with Fund-raising, but since Fund-raising is not a regular feature but on a needs-basis, there is therefore no formal subcommittee on fund-raising, and it is more convenient to tag the Publicity to the present Subcommittee.

In theory this Committee exercises oversight over all the publications emanating from APSN. The most demanding is in the production of the three issues of the APSN Newsletter (per year) and the Annual Report. Our Corporate Communications Executive, Mr Koey Zi Qi, who joined us last December is largely responsible in co-ordinating the work involved. He has done a good job in this role.

It is part of Editorial policy to give equal coverage to all our five units – the 4 Special Schools and our Adult Centre under

APSN. No school is "better" than another; they of course can be different. It's the ethos of the school that matters. Apart from events that have happened at our schools and adult centre, we also try to cover some important Association events. We also aim to have feature articles on subjects of interest to our readers, and those which are important for the existence of the Association.

I would like to record my thanks to all those on the Subcommittee for their hard work.

Dr Francis C. Chen
Chairman

Finance and Investment Sub-Committee

Financial Year 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011

Chairperson	Mr Royce Seah - Hon. Treasurer
Members	Mr Winston Wong - Asst. Hon. Treasurer Mrs Ruby Cheah Mrs Rose Ng Mr Menon Mohan Mr Chinnu Palanivelu Mr Cavin Teo
Ex-officio	Dr Chey Chor Khoon - Executive Director Ms Faridah Binte Hassan - Finance Manager

During the year under review, Mr Michael McGauran resigned as Assistant Honorary Treasurer. On behalf of the Sub-Committee, I would like to recognize and thank Mr McGauran for his invaluable contribution and support rendered for the past year.

Three new members, Mr Winston Wong (Assistant Honorary Treasurer), Mr Menon Mohan and Mr Chinnu Palanivelu were appointed to the Sub-Committee. On behalf of the Sub-Committee, I would like to extend a warm welcome to them.

The Sub-Committee meets regularly, at least once every quarter to discuss and review matters relating to financial management and controls (which includes budget planning/ monitoring and operational controls). The Executive Director and Finance Manager attend all Sub-Committee meetings to provide information and facilitate necessary discussion but neither take part in decision-making nor vote.

The annual budget is submitted to the Executive Committee ("EXCO") for approval in March 2011. Prior to tabled at the EXCO meeting, the Sub-Committee reviewed the budget planning process and, together with the School Management Committee, reviewed the annual budget prepared to prevent or minimize operating deficits.

On operational controls, the Sub-Committee formally embarked on streamlining accounting functions and processes within APSN to improve efficiency which the EXCO approved.

The Sub-Committee has had a busy but fruitful year. For this, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my fellow Sub-Committee and ex-officio members for their dedication and hard work.

Mr Royce Seah
Chairperson

Human Resources

Sub-Committee

Ms Tin Wai Fun took over as Chairperson of HR Sub-Committee on 5 October 2010. Ms Tin and her predecessor, Mr Anthony Tan had initiated a number of HR projects to fulfil the HR objectives of reviewing and refining our human resource policies to ensure that APSN remains the choice employer for people seeking to contribute to special needs children in the non-profit sector. In July - September 2010, together with the rest of the HR sub-committee members, the inaugural "Employee Engagement Survey" - an engagement with staff to better understand their aspirations and developmental needs was launched. We would like to extend our appreciation to Mr Anthony Tan and his team for their contributions.

The economic outlook for 2011 continues to grow in full swing. Unemployment rate fell to an estimate of 1.9% (as at June 2011). It is an uphill task for APSN to recruit good employees in the tight labor market and to face challenges of losing some good management staff due for retirement. On the other hand, we are glad to have recruited experienced and committed employees in the HR team to work towards a more efficient and productive HR processes.

Some of the recent initiatives undertaken include:

1. Converting the fixed annual increment scheme to a performance based annual increment scheme;
2. Drafting out a structured succession plan;
3. Reviewing the Training & Development policies, and
4. Launching a HR Sharing platform at each school/centre to establish open communication with all staff, etc.

Besides continuing to build a strong HR foundation, the present team shall also be committed to adopt good HR practices.

HR Sub-Committee Composition

Chairman:	Ms. Tin Wai Fun
Members:	Ms. Amanda Chuan Mr Jeffery Kwek Ms. Kristin Van Burm Ms Seet Chor Hoon Mr. Winston Wong

Key HR Facts

	2009	2010
APSN Staff Strength	271	273
Training Hours* per staff	7.39	5.34
Turnover Rate	2.03%	1.97%

*Excludes conferences, DISE, DIDS, Cert in Ed Studies (SPED).

Ms Tin Wai Fun

Chairman

Information Technology (IT) Sub-Committee

Chairman	Dr Victor Tay Kah Soon
Members	Mr Tan Cheen Chong Mr Tan Kar Peng Mr Michael McGauran Mr Foo QiJing Adrian Mrs Liza Ow Mrs Choo Swee Gek Mr Patrick Aw Mr Ronald Lim Mr Philip Li Mr Faridah Binte Hassan Mr Rick Lim Mr Dennis She-Tu Mr Kong Yew Kee
Observer	Mr Quek Keng Oei
Ex-officio	Dr Chey Chor Khoon

The Information Technologies Sub-Committee comprises representatives from the intellectual properties investment, information technology industry, strategy consultancy and financial services industry, as well as, members from various APSN schools.

The Sub-Committee focuses on:

- Developing and strategizing a mid to long-term technology blueprint for APSN to provide quality education delivery to its students, as well as, benefiting stakeholders across parents, strategic partners, and internal staff
- Deriving policies, standardizing processes on information system control
- Harmonizing infrastructure, intranet, extranet, software applications, technological equipments and teaching aids across APSN operating units
- Providing guidance to Heads of various APSN operating units on technology usage and adoption issues
- Reviewing and approving of new technologies acquisition

As a firm believer in leveraging technologies to provide quality education to the students, APSN has adopted extensive modernization and computerization of its teaching environment (refer to Pictures: IT2 Enhanced Learning

through Interactive Whiteboard, IT3 IT Learning in Revamped Classroom, IT7 ICT enabled Environment).

APSN hopes to equip its students in a spectrum of skill sets from essential Numeracy Skills (Picture IT8, Students Engaging in Numeracy Skills) to creative expression through Photography and Multimedia Skills (Picture IT1, Enhancing Expression Skills through Picasa software).

APSN has also constantly scanned for ways to provide resource rich learning environment to provide integrated life-based learning. In order to empower and motivate students in their personal learning, some schools are evaluating personal devices to improve pervasiveness of whiteboard learning. Other schools have embarked on progressive infocomm tools, such as innovative clay modeling and robotics animation (refer to Picture IT6 Interactive Learning with Robotics). Beyond modernizing infocomm infrastructure, some schools have also enriched its teaching contents through adopting of the National Geographic Explorer (Picture IT4).

Dr Victor Tay Kah Soon
Chairman

IT Implementation

CENTRE FOR ADULTS

Multimedia Skills

In an increasing digitized world where multimedia skills is becoming essential for local employment, CFA has formed a new photography class for the year 2011. Most of the members have not used a camera prior to enlisting into the club. The cameras are sponsored by Canon and volunteers from Republic and YMCA of Singapore taught our members photography. After 5 months of training, they learnt to take photos using natural framing, lights, black and white, macro and various functions.



Enhancing Expression Skills using Picasa software.

Members learn to edit photographs using Picasa on the desktops in the computer room. Photography editorial skills like hues, saturation, glow, and other configurations were picked up by the members. The edited photos were then either printed on paper and create a scrap book or posted on their Facebook accounts.

CHAOYANG SCHOOL



Interactive Whiteboard to enhance Learning.

Interactive Whiteboard

In the past year, Chaoyang School continued its wide use of IT in the teaching and learning of pupils. The Interactive Whiteboard (IWB), especially, has become an indispensable part of Chaoyang teachers' lesson delivery. Over the last 12 months, the school have acquired 8 more IWBs for teachers' use. The school now has a total of 19 IWB-equipped classrooms.

Baseline IT Skills

To better enable pupils to pick up essential baseline IT skills such as operating computers, browsing the Internet for information, and using ubiquitous software like MS Word, and PowerPoint., this year, Chaoyang replaced all 32 aging and problem-prone desktop PCs in the 2 IT labs with brand new ones. This would significantly enhance pupils' experience and efficiency when learning in the labs.

Learning Management System

Another new IT initiative for Chaoyang School in 2011 is the introduction of e-learning to the pupils. Pupils will be able to access 'AsknLearn': an on-line learning management system (LMS), either in school or at home to access teacher prepared e-lessons or e-worksheets. Such a system would enable teachers to reach out to pupils even during the school holidays and provide them with supplementary lesson materials or worksheets at more regular intervals.



Students learning in a revamped computer room.

Modernising IT infrastructure

The first half of 2011 saw several advancements in the use of IT within Katong School. Along with the other APSN schools, Katong has hopped onto the new APSN infrastructure which provides a higher level of security and centralization of data. A dozen new computers and office equipment have been added to our computer labs to support our new vocational and IT training curricula. The layouts of these rooms have also been reorganized to better facilitate these trainings by providing an environment that is conducive for instructional teaching.

National Geographic Explorer as Teaching Resource Through recent Interactive Whiteboard (IWB) workshops, all teachers are now equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to harness this technology during their lesson deliveries. To enhance learning contents, the English department has included the use of the National Geographic.



Enriched contents for Interactive Whiteboard (IWB)

Explorer (student magazine) as part of their teaching resource. This magazine is accompanied by a plethora of IWB content that is related to each monthly issue; providing students with a fun and unique learning experience.

TANGLIN SCHOOL



Enriched contents for Interactive Whiteboard (IWB)

Interactive Learning through Clay Animations and Robotics

To promote the development of problem-solving and critical thinking skills, students are engaged using Robotics. To promote creative thinking and better visualization, Clay Animations are also generated by students to enhance visualization. In workshops, students will brainstorm for ideas on how to configure the models for movement.



Student digital-photographers at work.

Story Communication through Digital deli

Tanglin School also launches the Digital deli programme where students transform digital photographs into surrealist-style artwork using Photoshop. Digital collages and music to convey meaning and understanding by visually representing their ideas and communicating a story.

DELTA SENIOR SCHOOL



ICT Enabled Learning Environment.



Students engaging in Numeracy Lesson.

Interactive Whiteboard as core platform for Learning

In 2010, an interactive whiteboard was introduced into the classroom. Initially, teachers who are familiar with interactive whiteboard were identified to be "advocates" to use the whiteboard in their lessons. In-house training was conducted to help teaching staff to enhance the use of the whiteboard. The interactive whiteboard further enhances the interactivity of the students and increases their level of engagement and raises their enthusiasm for learning. The whiteboard is now used by the teaching staff whenever lessons are held in that classroom.

Personal Learning Device

To permeate the philosophy of whiteboard teaching through the entire student population, DSS is currently evaluating newer devices that are much smaller and highly portable. With high mobility and minimal setup, such devices need not be physically installed to a particular classroom. As a result, utilization of the devices can be maximised.

Nominations Sub-Committee

The Nominations Subcommittee continues to be active in recruiting volunteers for management positions. Thus, we were able to introduce more members onto the Executive Committee through co-option, and indeed have been instrumental in getting newly recruited members to stand for office. Currently we have all 14 Exco positions filled.

Some of the volunteers who joined our Subcommittees have left us as they have been transferred abroad, yet others have become inactive due to work commitments. We have since replaced most of them. In a voluntary welfare organisation, one can expect a turn-over as sometimes volunteers find that the voluntary positions they have been placed into either do not suit them or that they no longer have the inclination to volunteer for such work.

The Centre for Non-Profit Leadership under the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) continues to be the main supplier of management volunteers; we are very appreciative of this situation as this has solved our problem of Board renewal and rejuvenation.

The three Task Force study groups that were initiated last year have made good progress. The group on "Communication & Team Building" led by Mr Anselm Lopez, and the group

on "Internal Systems & Processes" led by Dr Victor Tay have already presented their reports. The Exco has decided to form a Working Group led by our Executive Director to implement the recommendations. The third Task Force on "APSN Vision & Mission" led by Mr Roger Tan has also presented its findings, which were very similar to the study made by the NTU team on risk factors involved. However, in keeping with changing circumstances, whether there is a need to broaden our clientele base from IQ 50 - 70, to say 80 or 85. This is to cater to those students in mainstream schools who are "falling through the cracks"; this aspect of the Study Group's deliberations is still on-going, and a final decision will be made by Exco when the Study Group gives its recommendations.

In the past year under review, the Nominations Subcommittee feels justly proud to have inducted so many capable people on board, and feels that this augurs well for the future of APSN.

Dr Francis C. Chen
Chairman

Professional Support Staff Advisory Subcommittee

This Subcommittee has been re-activated following certain developments in the Association. The MSU or Multi-disciplinary Support Unit has been re-organised. All professional staff (psychologists, social workers and therapists) are to be based in schools or the Centre for Adults and they will deliver remedial services to those children in the schools / centre they are based, and answerable to the Principals and Centre Head. A senior psychologist will be based in the HQ to focus on admission screenings with assistance from the psychologists based in the schools/Centre.

The Professional Support Staff Advisory Subcommittee exists to provide guidance to our professional staff, and to oversee their professional development and welfare. It currently comprises these Exco members: Dr Francis C. Chan, Mr Chan Chee Kong and Mr Anselm Lopez; all Principals and CFA Head, and all Professional Support Staff. The Executive Director, who is the Secretary of this Subcommittee will have overall administrative jurisdiction and in consultation with the Principals and Centre Head, will then monitor matters like deployment, workload, promotions, etc.

The terms of reference are:

- To review and determine the special needs and service delivery to our students and clients.
- To determine the most effective way of deploying our professional staff in such service deliveries.
- To discuss and exchange information on best practices in terms of the scope and nature of services.

In the long run, it makes sense to have the Principals / Centre Head to be responsible for the staff within their schools, so that they can better co-ordinate the services and scheduling of activities within the schools. There is also a need to have an HQ-based psychologist, qualified and experienced in performing IQ testing and assessment of suitability for admission purposes -- this may relieve some of the ponderous work currently done by the Admissions & Review Subcommittee.

Dr Francis C. Chen
Chairman