



21<sup>st</sup> October, 2014

## **Letter from the Head of School**

Dear Parents,

As the weather turns cooler and the leaves fall from the trees, we are reminded that we are now well into the autumn term. We have already achieved some key milestones in the school year and experienced some successful school events.

Thank you to the PTA for organising the Welcome BBQ, which has become a traditional part of the new school year. The BBQ was held at Guldheden Campus in nice weather and was again well attended. Thanks to the many organisers including Dorte Holm Egeskov and Mireille Landsbergen, and everyone who contributed with supplies and assistance on the day, especially those who helped with the BBQing and bringing deserts.

On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September we had an open meeting for parents to provide information on our facilities and investigations into new premises. The meeting covered the background of the School, its purpose, and the need to develop facilities. ISGR has a set criteria for international admissions and a mandate to accept students whenever the criteria is met. The School therefore needs to be able to respond to these demands and offer modern pedagogical facilities. It is also one of the School's founding principles to maintain national and international sections for the mutual pedagogical, social and economic benefits. The Leadership team presented information on the reasons why we are looking at alternative options, the prioritized features of any new premises, and how new premises would be financed. Separate meetings were held in English and in Swedish. Following the meeting, a survey has been distributed to parents to formally gather your opinions and thoughts, which will be presented to the Board.

Class numbers at most international school are never completely settled, due to rolling admissions policies and for ISGR, the agreement to accept those that meet the criteria, in order to facilitate smooth transitions for families moving from abroad to Gothenburg for work. Sometimes we therefore have to adjust or create classes according to needs during the year. This is one reason why we cannot provide complete class lists at an earlier time, nor guarantee that they are ever definitive. At this stage, however, there are no pending changes planned.

We are now administering our attendance records through SchoolSoft for all sections. You should recently have received communication from your Deputy Principal about this system and further questions can be directed to them. For the moment, we still operate a separate Student Registry for official student registration with SDN Centrum and therefore any changes to your registered address, still needs to be officially reported to the School for changing in the Student Registry.

In Week 41, standardised tests were held for older PYP and MYP students. We have changed the standardised testing to the 'International Schools' Assessment' (ISA) from the 'Australian Council for Education Research' (ACER). The ISA is especially relevant for us as it is based on results from sample international schools all over the world. It will help us, both teachers and students, to analyse our strengths and weaknesses in the core areas of the curriculum and to compare how we are doing educationally speaking, compared to similar populations of international students.

On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October, the PTA held its first evening meeting, which was well attended by parents from both sections of the school. I provided an introduction as Head of School and then the meeting was co-chaired by Sarah Loddick and Karen Celebuski, who talked about PTA aims and activities, including the Winter Bazaar, which will be held on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at Guldheden Campus. There was also a very productive discussion on ideas about how we can work together to create "One International PTA" and to continue building a shared school spirit! A special thank you to the meeting organisers and to those who attended the evening. Another recent initiative from the PTA is the celebration and explanation of cultural traditions from different nationalities. We look forward to more of these events, including local Swedish celebrations such as Lucia in December – some days before the celebration, I will present the background on this special occasion to students at Guldheden.

Finally, we are also continuing our process for renewing our CIS accreditation. The current step involves a school-wide survey - an important part of our self-study process for the CIS accreditation. We recently sent out a survey to parents from all school sections, as well as one to the teaching staff. Furthermore we are also surveying the students in the following classes - PYP5, LGRM 6-9 and MYP6-10.

It is now not long before our Autumn break in Week 44. I wish you safe travels if you are going abroad or a relaxing time if you stay in Sweden.

Yours faithfully,

**Head of School**

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