



Queensway Secondary School

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

We have come to the close of an exciting though busy Semester 1. If we take time to look back at the past few months, you would agree with me that your child/ward has gone through much in the learning experiences in school. This year has been different for many of us, whether teacher, student or parent. For instance, it is the first time we experience no Mid-Year Examinations, which has probably reduced a lot of angst and stress or friction between parent and child, though at the same time, I hope your child/ward has demonstrated the self-responsibility to take time to learn and be ready for the Weighted Assessment that gives a reflection of the learning that he/she has made. The Parent-Teacher Meet today gives opportunity for us to discuss ways that we can continue to help your child/ward make the improvements, not only in academic learning but in developing holistically. I am also sure that for many, it would be an opportunity to affirm the good progress your child/ward has made thus far.

This year, we also had the opportunity to organise a Learning Fiesta where our students had the opportunity to take in a range of learning experiences that broadened their perspectives to the broader world outside of school. Some even had the opportunity to see the world of work as they visited workplaces and engaged with working adults about their careers and work life. Time was also carved out for students to relax and enjoy time with their peers and teachers during Queens Week, as building relationships, facilitating the showcasing of talents amongst our Queenswayans and celebrating their efforts are also highly educational. We appreciate that each child/ward has diverse and different talents and gifts that they can bring to bless the community.

In the past months, your child/ward also participated in CCAs that broadened his/her development as a person. Whether it was in sports, performing arts or uniformed groups, they have not only learnt new skills but also enjoyed the thrills of competition, the pain of defeat and the exhilaration of victory or doing well. In my earlier letters, I have shared the successes of our various CCA groups and I affirm our students for the effort and diligence they put into their training to bring about the outcomes they worked for.

Doing the Right Thing

This morning, like we do each time at the close of a Semester, we invited the Police to address our students on areas of concern they observe that pertain to young people like our students, who can be influenced. They covered areas of appropriate and civil behaviour and conduct but also cautioned students to avoid getting involved in any **activities that are not legal**. For instance, staying out past 11 p.m., gathering in large groups or using illegal substances including vapes. I trust you will also engage your child/ward on such matters to prevent their getting themselves into trouble or making friends with people that will bring greater stress to your relationship and family life.

Making Good Use of the June School Holidays

Some of you will probably be taking advantage of the school holidays to travel overseas. This would be a good time for **family bonding** and also to do interesting things that can strengthen family bonds or pique the interests of your child/ward in their interests. The “down time” to relax and enjoy meaningful activities is also good for refreshing your child’s/ward’s spirit and mind.



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For some of our students, the June holidays would be a good time to **catch up on work** that they have fallen behind in, or areas of learning that they need to re-learn. I do not expect that this would take up the bulk of your child's/ward's time, but it would be helpful, particularly for those in the graduating classes to make plans and carry out their study plans during the holidays. Catching up on their learning will make it easier when they return to school in Semester 2, as it is a relatively short term compared to Semester 1.

A very useful activity for your child/ward would be **reading**, whether physical or e-books. All our students are members of the National Library and they can take advantage of the school holidays to enrich themselves with good reading materials that would enhance their learning and development. Parents/guardians may want to join them in this endeavour as reading reaps a reward of its own. Best of all, it is free. On this note, I urge parents/guardians to check with your child/ward if they have borrowed books from the school library and not returned them. They should do so as soon as possible, if they are overdue or consequences would be meted out. Holding onto a book past the due date is irresponsible and selfish as it deprives others from enjoying the book/s they are holding onto.

Social Media could Harm Youth Health

In this day and age, we cannot avoid the use of social media for our children. However, the judicious use of social media and the amount of time spent on technology, particularly the mobile device or computers can be better managed. I came across this article in The Straits Times this week, <https://www.straitstimes.com/world/united-states/social-media-could-harm-youth-mental-health-us-surgeon-general-warns>, and strongly recommend it for your reading and sharing with your child/ward. They would also be able to access this as letters to parents/guardians are also copied to all students. Working together with them to take ownership and responsibility of their time spent in social media is helpful. Encouraging your child/ward to share with you what they see in social media would also be most helpful and can be life protecting. You may have read about a 13-year-old Australian girl who died because she participated in a challenge called "chroming". Unfortunately, such challenges are posted on social media and have resulted in unnecessary loss of young lives.

Please take time to engage with your child/ward about their use of technology and social media. I doubt you can ban the use of devices by them. So the more constructive way is to engage your child/ward on these issues in meaningful conversation to help them understand your care and concern to help them manage time spent on social media or the devices and how it impacts them.

Wishing you and your family a good June school holiday break!

Yours sincerely,

Peter Tan Chong Tze
Principal