



To Serve with
Quality

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To : Fellow Shuqunites & Parents / Guardians

Transforming Lives Towards Excellence

The past six months has been a period of consolidation and reflection for the school. The school went through its second *External Validation (EV)* under the *School Excellence Model (SEM)* in August. The last EV for the school was completed in 2003. The results of the latest EV showed that we have improved one band in terms of organisational excellence. Our organisational reflection nevertheless continued as we consulted students, parents, alumni and other stakeholders of the school to see where our next three years should take us. The feedback from every direction told us that the school is going in the right direction. We should continue to nurture stars through key programmes like **Student Ambassador Programme (Sap)**, **Advanced Programme for Excellence (APEX)** and **Student Leadership & Character Development (SLCD)**. We should also upgrade our crucial areas like **BASICS (Basic Academic Success for Independent Confident Shuqunites)** and **Professional Learning Communities (PLC)** for our staff.

The current global economic recession provides a great opportunity for Singapore to retool itself to take leadership in areas like education, finance and science. Opportunities are also emerging as Shuqun is well-placed to benefit from developments around us like the *new Science Centre* and *Jurong Lake District*. In 2010, the nearby campus of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will also be one of the key places to play host to the *world's first Youth Olympic Games (YOG)*. All of us – teachers, parents, alumni and our partners – must seize all these opportunities to give our students a leading edge in the world full of talents. Hence, we have combined our theme for the self-reflection “**Transforming Lives**” with the theme for last year’s Prize Giving Day “**Towards Excellence**” to become our focus for the next three years – “Transforming Lives Towards Excellence”.

In 2009, the school will work hard to build the “**World Class Teaching Force**”. This will bring us on par with MOE’s drive towards of a *Global Education Hub*. In 2010, our efforts to upgrade our teaching and learning should see emerging results. We should see “**A Constellation of Stars**” emerging from the 2000-plus student population. This means that every Shuqunite should get a chance to showcase their talent groomed through the relentless efforts of teachers, parents and alumni. They should challenge themselves to achieve excellence in PSLE and win in various talent competitions like Math Olympiad, Sony Creative Awards, SYF, National Sports Championships and NSW International Competition for Schools. By 2011, we should see the school emerging with **Best Practice Awards (BPA)** in areas like Teaching and Learning and Student All-round Development.

Certainly, the challenge for Singapore to pull together through the current economic crisis is a real one. Our financial assistance applications have already reached levels of previous years even before the school term began. More students are asking for help because their families have been affected by retrenchments and pay reduction. Likewise, the challenge for our school to nurture a star in every Shuqunite requires all adults to pull together to prepare our children for an even more competitive future after this crisis. Great global cities like New York and Shanghai have people who are talented and resilient. They will persevere until what they are doing become recognised world-wide. Likewise, we must build resilience and a persevering attitude in our young to strive for excellence.

We have begun our ground work for “World Class Teaching Force” since last year. Our staff has been reorganised into two main teams to develop curriculum in two areas that matters most in

student holistic development: **Academic Development Group (ADG)** and **NExtgen¹ Group (NEG)**. ADG members will focus on action research and curriculum development to bring every Shuqunite on par in their academic performance. This will include study into areas like how to tackle misconception in Math and Science as well as strategies to master English language for students whose family do not use the language. The ADG teachers in the Chinese Department will also be setting up a **Chinese Language & Culture Centre** as part of the effort to develop teaching strategies to nurture students who can excel.

MOE's *Desired Outcomes of Primary School Education*² highlights the fact that our students must learn how to distinguish right and wrong and love Singapore. Values and character development are keys to the primary school education even though our pursuit for good PSLE results seems to sometimes overshadow this more critical purpose of school. To this end, Shuqun prides itself as a school that has been doing well in holistic education. The NExtgen Group will champion **student leadership & character development** through **authentic learning** programmes like **Outdoor Education** and Student Ambassador Programme.

As the adults work hard in this new and exciting year, allow me to spell out the expectations that I have for all the students. In 2009, our students must aim to:

1. **Earn your Shuqunite Star Award.** We believe that everyone has at least a latent or hidden talent that can be developed. At Shuqun, you can earn a star collar pin in *Service Leadership, Sports, Academic Excellence, Aesthetics and Science / Technology*. You can earn your star by doing well in competitions like interschool competitions or Sony Creative Awards competition.
2. **Take part actively in CCAs.** All students from P3 to P6 must take part in *60 hours of Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs)*. At least 40 hours of CCA will be in the regular weekly club activities (e.g. Boys' Brigade, Golf, Sailing, Ice-skating, Edison's Club, Choir & Band). The other 20 hours will be through camps, Sports or other enrichment activities. Students must attain *100% participation* for 60 hours before they can be considered for *Excellent Conduct Grade*.
3. **Pass the NAPFA test and maintain a healthy weight.** A healthy body is the basic ingredient for a successful life. Everyone must pass the NAPFA (National Proficiency in Fitness Assessment) unless they are certified physically and medically unfit by a medical doctor. Apart from passing the NAPFA, you must also ensure that you have acceptable weight. Anyone who is overweight will be put on a special weight management programme.
4. **Work hard for 5 mark improvements for every test and examination.** All students must take their studies seriously and to work hard to see this *5 mark improvement* from one test to the next.
5. **Be a Shuqunite Star.** A Shuqunite Star is someone who is a "*Connected Global Citizen, Knowledgeable Rooted Singaporean*". Live out the 10 core values of *Integrity, Passion, Respect, Perseverance, Courage, Care, Responsibility, Cooperation, Excellence & Openness*. Seize every opportunity to practise using these values as a young ambassador for Singapore when you go overseas under the Student Ambassador Programme or when you host foreign students under the Friends4LIFE programme.
6. **Go Green.** Think about how you can do your part to conserve the environment through the 4Rs: *Re-plant, Reuse, Reduce & Recycle*.

Wishing you a Happy and Successful New Year!

Together-in-hard-work

Mr Tsu Chin Sun Gary, Principal

¹ NExtgen stands for National Education eXcellence for Tomorrow's Generation

² Desired Outcomes of Education, Reference – <http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/desired-outcomes/>