

## 1. English Language Education

Mr. J. Oddie

This has been a year of steadfast application and consolidation. In October we welcomed the team from the Quality Assurance Division of the Education Bureau who conducted the external review of our school, and we are happy to report that we received favourable comments as well as useful feedback regarding the delivery of the English curriculum at DGS. We are especially pleased with their favorable comments concerning our ability to cater to the learning diversity of our students, particularly our policy of splitting Set G into G1 and G2 classes in Secondary 1, which enabled us to provide our students with more individualized attention and care during their first year at DGS. In the last academic year our students reaped very pleasing results in language and literature in public examinations. In English Language, 40 % and 72 % received 5\*\* and 5\* and above respectively in the HKDSE external examinations. We invited S6 students to engage in oral practice sessions with students from another school as part of exam preparation. This proved a very worthwhile activity for both schools, and we shall continue this practice in the coming year. Those sitting the Literature in English examinations also performed well, with 33 % of students obtaining 5\* or above. The GCE A Level cohort sat the IELTS test whilst in Secondary 5 and performed well, with all scoring pleasing grades. These results ensured that our students are able to pursue their preferred university choices.

The Speech Festival, a popular perennial event in the school calendar, is now in its 69<sup>th</sup> year. There were 17 first places, 15 second places and 18 third places in the competition. Students were able to perform well, thanks to the guidance from our teachers, who placed particular emphasis on enunciation and pacing in their delivery of lessons. I thank teachers for sparing personal time to coach the speech festival entrants.

Over the past year, the Debating Team has sought guidance from external coaches, taking into consideration students' previous experience in debate. The taster programme in debate continued to be featured in the Other Learning Programme (OLP), giving students who are less accustomed to debate the opportunity to try out this novel activity. As students master the prerequisite debating skills through coaching, they will gradually be weaned off their reliance on such coaching as they mature, and become more independent and able to hold their own when competing in debating tournaments. The team comprising Eunice Chong, Lydia Chan and Jada Fong competed in the World Scholar's Cup 2018 and won the Top Debating Team and Top Writing Team awards. In the UNESCO Hong Kong Sustainable Development Debating Tournament, the team comprising Eunice Chong, Ngan Sze Yuen and Gwyneth Gunawan received the Certificate of Excellence and were Runner-up in the Grand Finals. In the Oxford Schools Debating Competition the team comprising Tania Chan and Sharon Chau were one of the top two teams in the Hong Kong Regional Round 2018. The School also sent delegates to the Mock Trial Competition in San Francisco in October 2017. In the Junior Hong Kong Schools Debating Competition the team comprising Jade Wong, Gianna Lai, Cheng Chun Yan, Madeleine Wu and Chong Sum Yip were the Grand Finalists whilst Natalie Woo and Jessie Lo were the Grand Finalists in the Senior British Parliamentary Debate Competition. All students are to be congratulated for their efforts as they were able to harness their skills effectively and reap results.

The practice of spreading opportunities equally amongst the MUN team delegates continued this year. At the Harvard Model Congress 2018, Peko Chan, Phoebe Ho, Annika Lam, Katrina Leung, Renee Chan, Pearl Fan and Aimee Wong were awarded Best Delegates while Olga Kwan, Phoebe Ho and Annika Lam received Honorable Mentions. Students also went to the Singapore Chinese Girls' School Model United Nations Youth Conference in March 2018 where Li Wing Yan received the Best Position Paper award. Other conferences attended include the Hong Kong Model ASEAN summit and the Hong Kong Secondary School Model United Nations Conference.

Apart from public speaking, girls also sought expression through creative writing competitions. Nicole Tsang won the WYNG Philomathia English Essay Writing contest. This marks the 4<sup>th</sup> year that a DGS student has won this competition. On the artistic front, Miko Leung and Ingrid Ip won the Champion's trophy and the First Runner Up trophy in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Hong Kong Schools English Penmanship Competition.

Students also contributed many articles and reflections of high quality to the 5A magazine, *Scintillate*, as part of a journalism project, and these were sold during the DGS Mini-bazaar in December. Students involved themselves in the Reading Club, working in tandem with the Chinese Department to enable them to gain literary pleasure and insight through reading works from authors in both languages.

In the last academic year we played host to visiting students and teachers from overseas schools in New Zealand, Australia and a school in Hawaii, USA. We are glad that we were able to be of service to teachers from our sister schools on the Mainland, who were very interested in observing our classes, and we note their keenness in learning our recipe for success in teaching language and literature at DGS.

I thank the English department for their dedication and hard work which have propelled our students to reach a high level of mastery in language and in their appreciation of literature. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to our Headmistress, Mrs. Lau for her full support and encouragement throughout the year.