HAPPENING!!! - This is how we would describe this latest issue of our newsletter, which features two significant events in the history of SEAB.

The first event is the change in the leadership of SEAB. With the retirement of Mr Tan Yap Kwang as the founding Chief Executive (CE) of SEAB, we welcome Ms Tan Lay Choo as the new CE of SEAB. To mark this transition, we took this opportunity to invite them to pen a few words for SEAB-ling.

The second significant event is the launch of the book, ‘Examinations in Singapore - Change and Continuity (1891 - 2007)’, written by Mr Tan Yap Kwang and our colleagues, Mrs Chow Hong Kheng and Mdm Christine Goh. This is the first book to talk about the development of examinations against the backdrop of the broader history of Singapore and of education in Singapore.

At the end of this issue, we have provided snapshots of the activities that had taken place in the past months. We hope you'll enjoy reading this issue of SEAB-ling!

The SEAB-ling Editorial Team
FROM CE’S OFFICE...

As its first Chief Executive, Mr Tan Yap Kwang helped to establish SEAB as a statutory board and expanded its scope of services. Under Mr Tan’s leadership, SEAB has successfully implemented the new Singapore-Cambridge GCE A-Level examination and the changes to take greater control of the Singapore-Cambridge GCE O-Level Examination. As a statutory board, SEAB has offered a wide range of assessment products and services such as training workshops for teachers, consultancy services in assessment and the introduction of the iPSLE, the international version of the Primary School Leaving Examination.

To mark his retirement, SEAB-ling invited Mr Tan to pen a message for our readers.

Words from our former Chief Executive...

My career in education spanned 30 years, of which one-third was in examinations and assessment. My first stint in examinations was with the Central Testing Service Branch (1984-1987) and the second stint with Examinations Division which later became the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board.

During these two periods, I was able to contribute to the development of new examinations – the Primary School Proficiency Examination, the GCE Normal (Academic) examination, the GCE Normal (Technical) examination and most recently the new GCE A-level examination.

The most satisfying aspect of examination work is the smooth conduct of national examinations year after year. Over the years, our national examinations have fulfilled the key objectives of assessing student achievement accurately and maintaining high standards in education. This is an important aspect of education in Singapore because every student’s life chances and the hopes and aspirations of his or her family are influenced to a great extent by examination results. Moreover, as progression in the education system is by merit, grades in examinations must reflect as accurately as possible the achievement of students.

The high level of public confidence in our examinations is the result of the contributions by many – officers in MOE HQ and SEAB and principals, Heads of Department and teachers. All have an important role to ensure that there is a level playing field for all examination candidates. We must acknowledge their work and the extraordinary lengths they go to achieve this.

‘EXAMINATIONS IN SINGAPORE – Change and Continuity (1891 – 2007)’
Book Launch

This is the first book written by our own officers to explore the development of Singapore’s education and examination system in the context of politics, economy and society.

For more information, please log on to: http://www.worldscibooks.com/socialsci/6773.html
I am honoured to be appointed as the Chief Executive (CE) of the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board (SEAB) and be given the opportunity to lead the 4-year-old statutory board into its next lap.

With increasingly sophisticated Information Communication Technology (ICT) implementation in schools, there is a great opportunity for ICT to play an even greater role in assessment. ICT can be harnessed to facilitate innovations on the mode of assessment as well as to open up new possibilities for assessing meaningful and authentic constructs. SEAB is currently conducting research in the use of ICT in national examinations. In the next few years, I hope to see ICT being better integrated with assessment, both in national examinations and in school-based assessment.

At present, there is a heavy reliance on national examinations as a means for assessing learning. A healthy assessment climate should have a good balance of both assessment ‘of’ and assessment ‘for’ learning. I would like to see greater focus given to assessment ‘for’ learning in Singapore schools.

As a system, we may not have fully tapped on the many opportunities that school-based assessment can offer to inform teaching and learning.

Next, I would like to see greater international recognition of SEAB’s products and services, such as the Singapore International Primary School Examination and our consultation services on educational assessment. I hope that with the sound reputation of the Singapore brand of education, SEAB would be able to share our products and services with more countries so that educators and, ultimately, the children in these countries can also benefit from them.

The key to achieving the above aspirations lies in the quality of our educators. We must have a team of world class educators with strong assessment literacy. It is this strong foundation in assessment literacy that will enable our educators to have the confidence and knowledge to play larger roles in new initiatives in examinations and assessment. Such high quality educators will also contribute greatly to Singapore’s reputation as an education hub, giving the international community greater confidence in the Singapore brand of education.
The theme of the 4th SEAB Day was ‘Breaking Walls, Building Bridges’. The event aimed to bring people from the three Divisions together to forge a common SEAB identity through team building activities. It was heartwarming to see SEABlings’ enthusiasm as they gathered together to design their team flags, shout their team cheer, and participate actively in the various games.

The launch of SEAB’s first book titled ‘EXAMINATIONS IN SINGAPORE – Change and Continuity (1891 – 2007)’ was the next highlight of the day. It was with much pride that the authors of the book – Mr Tan Yap Kwang, Mrs Chow Hong Kheng and Mdm Christine Goh ‘unveiled’ the book, and shared the reasons for and the experiences related to the writing of this book.

To end off the exciting day, inter-divisional games like scrabble competition, Captain’s Ball and Darts Competition were organised in the afternoon. Everyone had fun playing and interacting with colleagues from other divisions.

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The party started with a bang as Mr Tan made his grand entrance into the hall with all SEABlings singing at the top of their voices ‘For he’s a jolly good fellow’. This was followed by a show featuring memorable and significant moments of Mr Tan’s life. Audio recordings of people he knew or had worked with at certain points in his life were played and he was requested to guess their identities. The highlight of the programme, SEAB Karaoke Singing, followed soon after, reaching a climax with Mr and Mrs Tan singing a duet.

To further show our appreciation of Mr Tan, a special photo montage of memorable moments of his life in MOE and SEAB was put together. A collection of heartfelt thanks in the form of writings from the staff of SEAB was also presented to Mr Tan.

This memorable party finally came to an end as Miss Seah Jiak Choo, Director General of Education, gave a closing address, expressing her thanks to Mr Tan’s many years of contributions to education and examinations.

**CE Retirement cum Farewell Party**

An appreciation and celebratory party for our former Chief Executive, Mr Tan Yap Kwang, was held at the Equinox Private Function Hall, Swissotel Stamford.

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**Long Service Awards**

40 Years Awards

Mrs Chua Lee Kheng Irene

25 Years Awards

Mr Leong See Cheng

30 Years Awards

Mr Toh Poh Guan

15 Years Awards

Mdm Tan Hsiao Ling

Mdm Yee Wai Theng Esther

Miss Rokiah Mohamad