

"It is one way to celebrate families, to promote families," said Mr Lim, who sits on the organising committee of the NFC 2012.

This year's celebrations, themed "Family Time Odyssey: Past, Present, Future", pays extra attention to youth participation, with the aim of reaching out to more than 12,000 youths and their family members.

At the media briefing yesterday, Mr Lim revealed findings from a focus group study of 40 youths commissioned last month, where they gave their views on the state of family and related issues.

The youths, aged 17 to 25, had

three suggestions to better encourage youths to connect with their families: Have well-known public figures for role models, create more opportunities for youths to participate in events with their family, and ensure parents lead by example.

Of the last suggestion, Mr Lim said: "This is a message from our youths to their parents, that it is important to adopt and follow a family-comes-first mentality."

"It means that we as parents, have to redefine the definition of success beyond a good education and a good job or career to include a happy family," he said.

To ensure that the month-long celebrations will attract youths, the 16-member organising committee increased youth representation, with five students aged 18 to 22 coming on board to provide views on what their peers would be interested in.

Suggestions spanned from having more interactivity in activities, to details such as a different colour theme for the NFC 2012's website.

The NFC 2012 will kick off on May 25 and features more than 240 ground activities such as the Eat with Your Family Day and Jurong Family Day 2012 organised by over 50 community and private organisations.

This includes coordinating with other agencies and to do forward planning, while the operator will be at a "tactical level" such as managing passengers and restoring services.

He also clarified that it does not mean that the LTA would not render any assistance to the SMRT in the first hour of disruption.

During the Dec 15 disruption, the SMRT did not ask for any assistance for bus bridging services, Mr Yeo said. The LTA also dismissed earlier claims that it had directed SMRT to

rail claw design back in 1987, as it was contended with the older design's performance.

Mr Hartland is an engineering director from Brecknell Willis — the company tasked to design and manufacture components such as the rail claw of the third rail system back in 1985.

As the new design has not been in service, MRTB was naturally "nervous about introducing" it. Instead, MRTB had placed an additional spring clip design feature, which Mr Hartland believed had "cured the problems".

HETTY MUSFIRAH

New international school with advanced facilities to open in August

SINGAPORE — A new international school, described as the most advanced learning environment ever built, will open its doors here in August.

Students at Stamford American International School, located along Upper Serangoon Road, will be able to enjoy an interactive school environment where teachers can conduct lessons about faraway places like ancient Egypt from the base of the

country's most prominent icon, the Great Pyramid.

There will be "one-to-one" iPad programmes for students as young as six years old, while older students will get their own MacBooks. A virtual lecture hall will also allow them to interact with teachers from around the world. The school cost some S\$300 million to build.

The company behind the school said

the number of international school students here has grown from 32,000 to 40,000 over the past four years, similar to markets like Hong Kong. The only difference is that 65 per cent of international school students in Hong Kong are local, while most students in international school students here are foreigners.

Mr Brian Rogove, CEO (Asia Pacific) of Cognita, said: "Singapore and Hong Kong

are fundamentally different markets. Fundamental demand that is driven in Singapore is actually driven by expatriates, not by local demands, and that is a fundamental strong selling point for Singapore, it shows how strong Singapore is a hub for attracting foreign talent."

The new facility will accommodate 2,500 students aged between two and 18.

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