

AL NOOR-ABA NEWS

10th October 2019 *Have a wonderful holiday!*

Message from the Head of School

Dear ABA Community,

So many wonderful things!

The Tuesday High School Assembly was a pleasure for me. The grade 11's received their MYP certificates and we had the first ever DP live exam performance.

Then, the Elementary Assembly on Wednesday was simply joyful! Singing and recitation... We got to learn how the children are "learning". We were treated to videos and reading. Outstanding!



Our Learning Support Team received professional recognition recently. A team from ABQ Seeb International School requested to come observe how we do things at ABA under the leadership of Donna Chuula. They wrote to commend us for our "commitment to the success of all students", both in our school and in theirs. Way to go, ABA!



I loved meeting the Omani world adventurer Nabil Al Buisaidi this week, along with our grade 4 students.

He was the first Arab to walk to the magnetic North Pole and I was enthralled by his talk! Plus, he ate 16,500 calories a day and lost 10 kilos! That is a miracle to me! He was an exciting lecturer and a lovely man.

Have a wonderful week with your family whether it is a Staycation or if you are traveling. See you back at ABA on October 20th!

Best,

Sue

Dr. Susan R. Groesbeck

Upcoming Dates

13 - 17 Oct	Autumn Break School Closed
13 - 15 Oct	Administration Closed
16 - 17 Oct	Administration Office Hours 08:00 - 11:00 am
20 Oct	School Term Begins University of Toronto Presentation PAC 10:30 - 11:00am
22 Oct	Parent PSAT Information Session PAC 7:45 - 8:45am US and UK University Fair Secondary lecture Hall 10:30 - 11:00am
23 Oct	MS Parent Coffee Morning MS Common Room 7:45 - 8:45am US University Fair Elon and Beloit College Secondary Lecture Hall 10:20 - 11:05am
31 Oct	Oman Tree Day



Message from the Elementary School

Parent Coffee Morning

We had a great turnout for the parent coffee morning this week - more than sixty parents joined us to hear how the elementary staff have been working on a full review of the maths curriculum. We shared our newly updated philosophy on the teaching of mathematics, which you can find on pages 12 and 13 of this year's [Elementary Parent Handbook](#). We provided examples to highlight each of the following principles:

Maths is learned best when:

- Learners see themselves as confident mathematicians who “expect math to make sense” and “puzzle over what they don’t understand”
- Learners develop a growth mindset in an environment where mistakes are expected, respected and inspected, enabling confidence to grow
- Learners approach mathematics in a playful way and connect it to the world around them.
- Learners can select and use appropriate strategies to solve practical, hands-on problem-solving activities and realistic situations
- Learners construct ideas about mathematical concepts before they transfer their understanding into symbols
- Conceptual understanding is developed when students are actively engaged in modeling, discussing, representing and applying mathematical ideas
- Fluency is developed through meaningful number activities that help students to “commit math facts to heart at the same time as understanding numbers and mathematics.”
- Learning engagements give opportunities for students to work at an appropriate level of challenge and to experience success (low floor - high ceiling)
- Learners are given the time to think deeply, consolidate and reflect on their understandings



We then shared our new continuum of learning outcomes for mathematics and explained how we will be able to use this continuum to provide a more individualised report on your child’s progress. You can view the presentation here: [Parent Presentation: Maths at ABA elementary](#) and take a look at the full continuum of mathematics learning outcomes here: [ABA Elementary Mathematics Continuum](#)

We’ll be sharing more information about changes to the report card in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please save the date for our Parent Workshop:

Maths in the PYP - Tuesday 19th November, 5:30-7:30 pm (exact time to be confirmed) - an opportunity to get hands-on and brains-on with your child’s experience of learning maths.



Goal Setting Conferences

You are cordially invited to attend the October Goal Setting Conferences on:

Tuesday 29th October 2019

2:30-4:10 pm

Wednesday 30th October 2019

7:30-4:10 pm (no school for students)

These 20 minute conferences are conducted with teacher, student and parent, and are an important opportunity to share initial progress, strengths, goals and action plans in the months leading up to the mid-year reporting period.

Your child has an active and meaningful role in reviewing and reflecting on their learning during these goal-setting conferences. They focus on communicating their achievements and reflecting on their actions. We actively model our ABA Mission Statement and PYP philosophy by asking students to discuss and reflect on their progress. Please note that EC students do not attend these conferences.

On Sunday 20th October, you will receive a link from your child(ren)'s teacher(s) for you to sign up for an appointment. Families with more than one child are encouraged to sign up for appointments on Wednesday 30th October, when there is more availability. Sign-up will close on Wednesday 23rd October, and the final schedule will be shared by Sunday 27th October.

If you would like to meet with specialist teachers, please contact them directly by email to make an appointment, once your homeroom appointments are confirmed.

These conferences are student-focused. If parents have a need to discuss issues without their child present, an additional appointment should be made for a confidential discussion.

We hope you and your child(ren) will find these Goal Setting Conferences valuable and enjoyable.

Sam Cook - Elementary Principal

Message from the Middle School

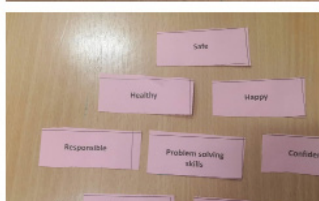
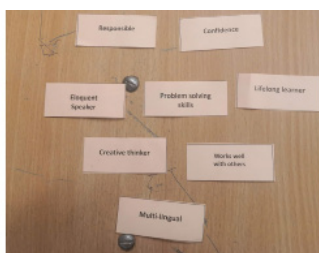
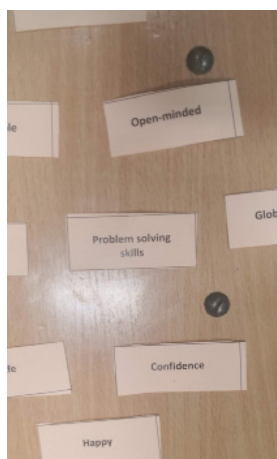
MYP Parent Information Workshop

There was an impressive turnout of parents on Monday at the MYP information workshop held in the Secondary Lecture Hall. The event targeted parents who were new to the MYP and focused on explaining MYP terms and the IB philosophy.

Participants in the workshop had to inquire, collaborate, think and present. The design of the workshop was deliberate in its structure with parents given a chance to experience an IB learning environment. One particular fun activity was the 6-word story to describe the duck video. There were some very interesting and creative summaries. Here is the [link to the video](#). For many this was an example of tenacity, perseverance and learning and the responses were well received.



Another activity required parents to select the 9 priorities for their child's education and represent the responses in a diamond 9. There were many different responses but by and large the priorities aligned with our mission statement and our commitment to the IB philosophy. Some examples are shown below:



Overall, it was an enjoyable event with lots of opportunity for engaging with MYP learning. For many this was a new experience, so terms such as Global contexts, concept-based learning, and ATL skills. What was in abundance though was the willingness to work with each other and exemplify some of the important traits of the IB Learner Profile.

Despite everyone being confident that a growth mindset was necessary for success, no one was willing to take on the challenge of our very own Backward Brains Bike.

You can learn about it by [watching this video](#).



Any risk-takers?

Megel Barker - MYP Coordinator

House of Music Competition

Our grade 9 music student Sarah Nasser Al Taei has entered a "Singers Challenge" competition run by House of Music. She is hoping to win an industry standard SM58 microphone for the school. She has recorded a version of "Shallow" by Lady Gaga, the singer with the most likes on their post will win.



Please go to your instagram account and vote for Sarah by liking her video @sarxhsings#HOMsingerschallenge

Zita Gange - Music Teacher

Dear Parents,

Thank you to those of you who have expressed an interest in your child attending the G8-10 Design trip to London in May. We currently have 22 names down, although there is still room for more if you are still/now interested. This does however mean we have the minimum number required and the trip can now go ahead.

In order to do this we will need to start collecting deposits, although we do not expect you to do this without a more detailed overview and a chance to ask questions. To accommodate this, we will have a meeting with all interested parties on Tuesday 22nd October @ 17:00 in the Middle School common room. It is crucial that you are able to attend as after this date payments will be required in order to secure flights, accommodation and itineraries in London.

We look forward to seeing you after the mid term break.

The Design Team

Message from the High School

High School Learning Mentors

Clearly adults play a key part in children's education: from parents, to teachers in the classroom, to counseling staff and administration, the support network to help with choices and decision making is necessarily wide. However, students may not know who or how to access all the available support or even how to voice their concerns. This is where the Learning Mentor is crucial: as a guide, a conduit to support services, a listening ear and a link with home.

In the High School, over the past two years we have been steadily enhancing the support provision for our students by focusing on the role of the Learning Mentor. In 2017/18 we changed the name from 'Advisor' to really focus on the 'Learning' part. We have spent time in collaborative meetings as teachers to discuss and clarify our roles as Learning Mentors, and how that role can be further supported by the school and by professional development.

The Learning Mentor should have an overview of not only your child's academic progress, but everything that affects their learning whilst at ABA. The importance of mentoring programmes in education has been well documented. Although informal conversations between students and their Learning Mentor will occur in Homerooms on a daily basis: catching up with the students after a drama or sports performance, or after a big test, all of which are a part of nurturing the relationship of support and trust that is so necessary, we also build in time for formal reflection and discussion.

Report targets and grades have now come to Learning Mentors and for the next three weeks they will be involved in one to one conversations about your child's work and progress.

In these conversations not only will they discover a little more about each students' individual interests and ambitions, they will also be able to see traits and patterns (both positive and negative) from the reports that they can highlight back to students and to parents in the long holistic comments written at the end of the report. Every child needs things to aim for and work on, and be praised for and to know that someone is guiding them along the way. Learning Mentors for different grade levels will have different aspects to focus on.

For Grade 9, settling in and being on the correct programme is important; for the 10s it turns to eAssessments, Personal Projects and making choices for those crucial final two years at ABA.

For Grade 11, joining the Diploma or choosing a High School Diploma track may require some adjustments, to both working habits and subjects, and for Grade 12 beginning the journey out into the real world needs as much support and guidance as we, as teachers, admin, parents and support staff can muster.

Throughout our students' journeys, as teachers and mentors we will be helping students develop their 'soft' Approaches to Learning skills in Thinking, Social, Communication, Self Management and Research, that employers (and the world) needs. The relationship between Learning Mentor and student is a crucial one and one very much worth developing.

We hope every parent will make an appointment with their child's Learning Mentor at Parent Teacher conferences on 20th and 21st November. Teenagers can be notoriously uncommunicative with their parents; an effective Learning Mentor can be a great help in clarifying understanding.



High School Course Changes

Please note:

Changes to courses: All High School course changes should have been completed by Thursday October 10th. No further course changes will be allowed except in exceptional circumstances and with the involvement of the student support team, parents, the universities counselor and the relevant IB Coordinator.

'Vipers' Hoodie

Most HS students who ordered them should have now received their 'Vipers' brand navy blue Hoodie. All students are now expected to wear these as tops in the cooler months, rather than any 'non-Vipers' hoodies. If you would like to order a 'Vipers' hoodie please ask your son or daughter to contact their Learning Mentor.

Guy Essex - DP Coordinator

Parent PSAT Information Meeting

If your grade 9, 10 or 11 son/daughter is registered for the upcoming PSAT exam (Wednesday 30th October, 2019) and you would like more information about the exam structure, how students can best prepare and the exam day schedule, please attend the Parent PSAT Information meeting with Alli Hostetter:

When: Tuesday 22nd October, 2019

Where: PAC

Time: 07:45 am

Alli Hostetter - High School Counselor

A Thank You from the Micro-Lending Team

L.O.M.A would like to thank the ABA community for your continued support in our micro-lending efforts. During the Peace Day festivities, we were able to lend out over \$500 in monetary assistance to individuals in conflict zones around the world. We paid particular attention to borrowers in need in Palestine, Congo, and Columbia. Please feel free to look through our portfolio: <https://www.kiva.org/lender/abaoman>

Micro-lending Team

Message from the Extra Curriculum Program

Muscat Secondary Sports League (MSSL)

After the holidays we will see the start of the Muscat Secondary Sports League (MSSL) Volleyball tournaments. ABA will be hosting over 130 athletes at some of the tournaments listed below, in the one afternoon. With our success in the local league, I am sure our teams will step up again in the tournaments. Your support for our ABA teams will be valued by the players.

Below is the schedule for all the MSSL Volleyball Tournaments:

20th October	U14 Girls MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ TAISM	4:00 - 6:30pm
20th October	U14 Boys MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ BSM	3:45 - 6:15pm TBC
21st October	U19 Girls MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ ABA	3:45 - 6:15pm
21st October	U19 Boys MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ TAISM	4:00 - 6:30pm
27th October	U16 Girls MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ TAISM	4:00 - 6:30pm
27th October	U16 Boys MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ ABA	3:30 - 6:30pm
28th October	U13 Girls MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ ABA	3:30 - 6:00pm
28th October	U13 Boys MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ BSM	3:45 - 6:15pm TBC
29th October	U12 Girls MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ AGS	3:30 - 6:00pm TBC
30th October	U12 Boys MSSL Volleyball Tournament @ BSM	3:45 - 6:15pm TBC

Games/events outside of the MSSL tournaments for after the holidays are listed below.

21st October	U12 Girls vs BSM @ BSM 4:15	4:25 - 5:25pm
21st October	U12 Boys vs TSS @ TSS 4:00	4:25 - 5:25pm
21st October	U13 Boys vs TSS @ TSS 4:00	4:00 - 5:00pm
24th October	Strike, Spike, Score	10:25 - 11:00am 11:30am - 12:10pm

National Volleyball Tournament



Congratulations to the varsity girls for their courageous efforts playing in the National Volleyball tournament. The girls were a little nervous, especially when they played the Omani National team. Once our girls settled and played their style of volleyball they looked impressive. It was a huge learning curve for the girls and one which will set them up nicely for the upcoming MESAC weekend.

Paul Brace - Athletics Director

Grade 4-5 MPSL Skittleball



The excitement was at fever pitch for the first MPSL (Muscat Primary School Sports League) tournament of the year, hosted at ABA. This year MPSL events are organised on a regional basis to reduce travel time, and ABA teams will be competing against MIS, PDO, ABQ and TAISM.

The smaller group of schools means ABA can enter multiple teams and this event saw record numbers of our students taking part with four boys' teams and one girls' team.

Skittleball is a fast and furious dodgeball game that promotes the virtues of teamwork, honesty and fair play. All our students did ABA proud, demonstrated the skills, strategies and attitudes they had honed at breaktime practice sessions. By the end of the round-robin tournament, ABA girls' team finished second and boys' teams finished in first and second place.

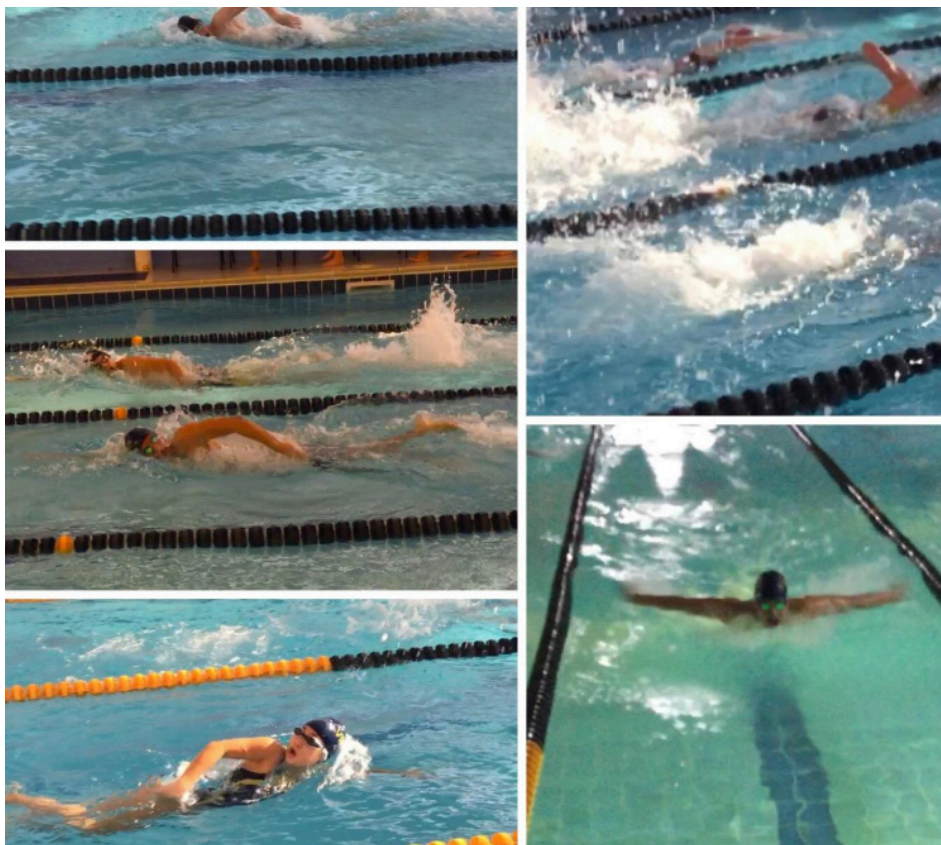
Congratulations to all the students. The presentation saw all participating ABA students receive a Vipers water bottle, kindly donated by the Booster Club.

The next MPSL event will be girls soccer, for both grade 2-3 and grade 4-5 on Wednesday 23rd October.

Neil Cook - PE Teacher

Dual in the Pool

Our ABA Vipers took on TAISM Eagles in the first meet of the season last Tuesday. It was an early season opportunity for our V2 athletes to demonstrate the skills that they have been developing over the last 5 weeks of the training cycle.



It also served as a pre MESAC warmup meet to enable both coaches and swimmers to develop race plans and prep prior to a major championship competition.

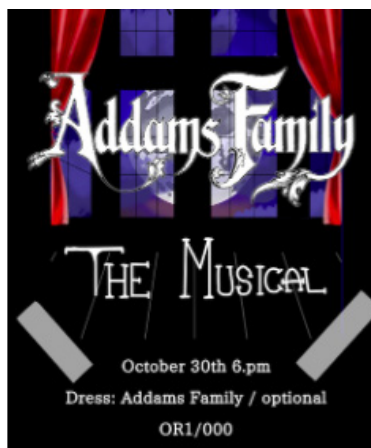
Despite the heavy training load, the swimmers performed superbly, showing marked improvement both in terms of personal best times but also by how they were reflecting on their performances.

Vipers took the meet 1663 pts to 1507 pts.

Well done to all our athletes (who swam an additional 1500m as a team after the meet) and a sincere thank you to all the parent volunteers and the maintenance department for ensuring the competition ran smoothly.

Go Vipers!

Message from the Fine Arts Department



Addams Family Musical

ABA Fine Arts has an instagram account! Please follow us on: instagram @ abafinearts to see pictures and details of upcoming events at the school.

Tickets for the Addams Family Musical are now on sale priced RO 1/000 at ABA reception. Performances on 29th and 30th October at 6:00 pm in the PAC.

Anthony Langrish - Fine Arts Coordinator

Message from the PTA



Building our community together!

Thank you for attending the PTA Open meeting. We received the following two fund requests and both were approved by the community.

PTA DATES
Thur. Oct. 31st @ ABA
 Spooktacular: 5.00 to 7.00 pm

1. Arabic Language Day Gifts

Request from: Elem. Arabic Teachers
 Serves: Grades 1-5.
 Cost: 100 omr

2. Games for Middle School Common Room

Request from: Megel Barker
 Serves: MS students & teachers
 Cost: 150 Omr

New Parents

We hope that you were able to make it to one or both of the Coffee mornings organized by your reps Anjum and Penny. For any further assistance please feel free to drop an email to Anjum / Penny at PTANew@abaoman.org.



SPOOKTACULAR

Spooktacular preparations are coming along nicely, but we still need some additional help with Trick-or-Treat lane!

This opportunity is open to parents, teachers, staff and students! Gather a group of friends, come up with a theme (can be very simple!!!!) and then let us know where you would like your spot along the route to be. We currently have 10 groups signed up to be a Trick-or-Treat stop, but we would like to get closer to 25 to really make this fun for our community.

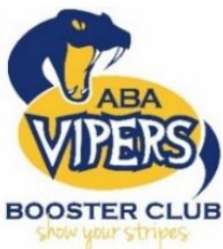
If you are not able to be a door, there are other opportunities to help out! You can donate candy to the event (more on this in next week's newsletter) help sell tickets to the event, help out on the eventing selling tokens, food or managing the line. To get involved simply contact us through our email address trick-or-treat@abaoman.org.



Enjoy the autumn break.

Your PTA - 'Building Our Community Together'

Message from the Booster Club



October overture....

Booster Club pledges have been well received by all our MPSSL and MSSL VIPERS. Check out the smiling faces and VIPERS pride inspired by our ABA community. Thanks ABA!!!!

What's on in OCTOBER...see flyers attached!

- 24th October – Spike Strike Score – for all students Grade 2-12
- 28th October – Booster Club Pop-Up Shop – Hoodie Orders available.

MESAC – VIPERS travel polo's, sports socks, swimsuits, and tracksuit can NOW be purchased from the ABA UNIFORM SHOP on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday 07:00-07:45 am.

Wishing all our VIPERS families a safe, relaxing break. See you on the 24th.

To find out more about the Booster Club and how you can help, simply drop us a line at boosterclub@abaoman.org. Booster Club is a great way to 'support our kids' while making new friends and having fun.





**=Spike...
=Strike...
=SCORE!**

TICKET SALES
At the door on the day!!

Thursday 24 October

COMPETITION OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS

Grades 2-12

Grade 6-12 (first break) 10.25-11.05am - GYM

Grade 2-5 (second break) 11.30-12.05am - MPH

VOX Movie Tickets to be WON!



Get your tickets at the door!!

All funds raised go to the VIPERS Booster Club - supporting our kids!

Available **NOW** from
ABA UNIFORM SHOP

VIPERS Tracksuits are a student led initiative, organized by the students, for the students and proudly supported by ABA.



MENS / WOMENS Adult Sizes: S / M / L



OMR22

VIPERS TRACKSUIT

Yours in community spirit - VIPERS Booster Club

