

# AL NOOR-ABA NEWS

3rd October 2019

## Message from the Head of School

Dear ABA Community,

The ISA tests were administered to specific grades this week. These are not individual achievement tests and are not tests for which the students can study. They are tests which help the school adjust programs and assess how our literacy and mathematics curricula are doing. This is feedback to the school and to our teachers so that we can make sure the substance and delivery of subjects is correct. It is also an indication to the parents to see how their own child takes standardized tests in general. I could tell at an early age that one of my daughters was very agile at taking standardized tests. That didn't mean she would be a successful adult. There is very little correlation with these tests and success as an adult. Please don't over think this testing. Much more valuable for you is the feedback you get on a daily basis from your teachers and from the IB curriculum program. We, on the other hand, find the results of this testing very valuable in planning what and how we teach.

I observed a wonderful MS Coffee this week. Claire Anthony hit exactly the right tone for the parents. Grouping the attendees into small chat sections of 4/5, Claire facilitated a discussion for parents to share techniques that work best for them. Everyone left with a big smile.

Fun and also substantive, the MS got together for a rousing, celebratory assembly after their ISA testing. I, for one, loved watching Mr. Barker, Mrs. Bowin and Mrs. Anthony dancing up a storm on the stage! Best of all was Mr. Hussain's smashing video and call to action on "What will YOU do?" - a moving reminder that we are all in charge of the future and that it is our responsibility, not somebody else's.

Great stuff going on here!

Best,  
*Sue*  
Dr. Susan R. Groesbeck



### Upcoming Dates

06 Oct	US University Fair SLH 10:45am - 11:15am
07 Oct	PTA Open Meeting PTA Room 7:40am - 8:40am
08 Oct	Board of Director's Board Meeting Elementary Library - 4:00PM  Elementary School coffee morning MS Common Room 7:30 am - 8:30am  IB DP Core Grade 11 Parent Presentation PAC 5:30 pm - 7:30pm
10 Oct	MS visit of St. Christopher's School, Bahrain PAC 10am - 2:15pm

# Message from the Elementary School



## Parent Coffee Morning

Mathematics in the Elementary school  
Tuesday 8th October; 7.40-8.20am; Middle school common room

Last year, the focus of our in-school professional development work was mathematics. We read and researched about best practices in mathematics teaching and learning, reviewed our learning outcomes alongside other established curriculum frameworks and updated our mathematics resources.

Come to this coffee morning to hear how we have updated our maths curriculum and how we will report your child's progress this year.

*Sam Cook - Elementary Principal*

## Elementary Library Guest Speakers

ABA Elementary Library hosted two guest speakers this week; Dr. Khaled Abdulmalik and Mrs. Lama Samman.



Dr. Khaled, a local dentist, author and explorer presented to the grade 4 students and shared his adventures exploring the many different canyons in Oman. He revealed his latest exploration of a new canyon near the village of Karb. The students were awed by his stories and had the time to ask questions and satisfy their curiosities.

Mrs. Lama Samman, our PTA head and a parent at ABA also visited the Elementary library to talk to the K2 students about fire safety. She shared her adventures when she worked in California as a firefighter. She explained to the students the importance of following instructions during fires and demonstrated the "Stop, Drop and Roll" technique. The students enjoyed the presentation and had the opportunity to practice the technique, ask questions and share their insights.

*Mara Hakim - Elementary Librarian*



# Message from the Middle School

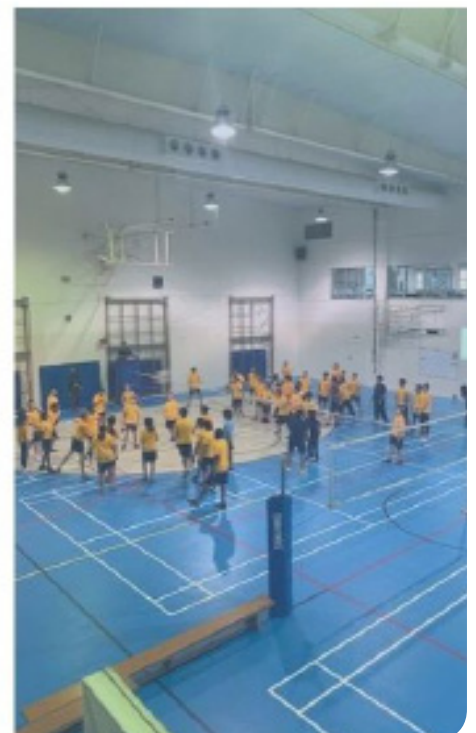


## Pan Arab Golf Championships

We are very excited to share that Ayman Al Busaidi was invited to represent Oman in the Pan Arab golf championships in Egypt last week. Ayman has managed to secure a 3rd place finish and the bronze medal for his individual score over the 2 days in the under 13 category. These scores were also a personal best for Ayman. Congratulations!

## International School's Assessment

Tuesday and Wednesday were exciting days for our MS students. In the mornings they completed the International School's Assessment and on Tuesday afternoon they had a chance to get out some energy during MS Plays! It was amazing to see 250 students all in yellow ABA shirts. Fun was had by all. We look forward to getting some feedback from our MYP 1 - 3 students on how this activity can be improved for next year. Thank you to all of the teachers who supported and helped with this activity. A special thanks to Dave Wood and Julia Hall for organizing the activities and equipment.



On Wednesday a bit of brain power was used on our MS Quiz. Thank you Edwin Nast, the Quiz Master! Want to give the quiz it a try? Click [here](http://bit.ly/ABAMSQuiz). (<http://bit.ly/ABAMSQuiz>) During the last part of the day, our MS students began researching the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) and brainstorming ideas for MS Serves! which is scheduled in December. Have a look at our introduction video that was viewed during our MS Assembly. [MS Services!](#) (<http://bit.ly/MSServes>) A special thanks to Mr. Atiq Hussain, Megel Barker and Sarah Jeyaram.



### MS Explores! - Update

Planning is well underway for the MS Explores! Without Walls experiential learning camp. The camp is from November 12 - 14, with students from the entire Middle School visiting three different locations. The three camps are situated in three picturesque locations showcasing Oman's rich geography, the desert, the seaside and the Hajar mountains.

The Middle School team has visited all the campsites and are confident that students will have an unforgettable experience. MYP 1 students (Grade 6) will be going to the Al Raha Desert camp to experience numerous fun activities including camel riding, sandboarding and sand structures, while MYP 2 students (Grade 7) will be going to the seaside in Bandar Khiran for snorkelling, kayaking and other watersports.





The new camp this year is the mountain camp, where MYP 3 (Grade 8) students will camp inside the grounds of the Al Sama Resort, while venturing out on hikes to experience the magnificent flora and fauna of the Jebel Shams mountain.

Each of the camps will be staffed by our own teachers as well as experienced outdoor education providers. This will ensure that your child will have a safe and enjoyable learning experience.

With less than two months to go before we embark on the camps, be on the lookout for vital information about the camp your child will attend.

*Middle School Team*



Thank you to all the Middle School parents who attended Wednesday's coffee morning on the topic of How to Break the Nagging Cycle and Turn Responsibility Over to Your Middle Schooler. This session enabled parents to share their insights and strategies with other group members and consider approaching their tween/teen in a different way to encourage the development of responsibility. If you were unable to make this meeting, you can access the presentation [here](#).

The Middle School ski trip places filled at record speed and any other student interested in this will be placed on a waitlist. We are looking forward to accompanying this group of excited teens to Switzerland in March 2020 to enjoy what the slopes and ski village have to offer. Parents will receive an introductory email early next week with additional information, payment dates and links to the village webcams.

*Claire Anthony - Middle School Counselor*

# Message from the High School

## **Grade 11 and 12 Parent Coffee morning**

Around 20 parents attended the coffee morning on Tuesday October 1st. Below is a summary of the key points which were discussed.

### Discovery Week

This is planned for the week beginning February 16th 2020 (dates might be slightly different for the overseas trips) for all Grade 11 students. There is an initial parent information evening on Tuesday 1st October to share details of each of the trips in advance of parents/ children making their choices. The trips must all have a CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service) focus and we have tried to provide a range of experiences at different costs. Our planned trips this year are Spain, Vietnam, Salalah, diving (local and non-residential), National Hospitality Institute (local and non-residential), and students can self-organise local CAS experiences. On Thursday 'commitment forms' will be given to students regarding the different trips, places are secured (on a first-come basis) by paying the deposit and completing the commitment form. Further details of the trips will also be emailed to Grade 11 parents.

### New IB DP courses

IB DP courses all follow a 7 year review cycle which results in revised courses. Sometimes the changes are fairly small, whilst at other times changes can be significant. Increasingly we are noticing that there is a closer alignment between the MYP and the DP which assists us in providing a coherent education for your children. This year, new courses have been introduced in Grade 11 for Language A: Literature, Language A: Language and Literature and Mathematics. If you wish to read a summary of any of the IBDP courses (or IBMYP courses) then you can download the various documents from [https://www.ibo.org/university-admission/ib-recognition-resources-and-document-library/#dp\\_briefs](https://www.ibo.org/university-admission/ib-recognition-resources-and-document-library/#dp_briefs).

### Reports

High School reports are due to be published on November 12th. Once available, an email is sent to parents with a notification that reports are available via the parent portal. As part of our reporting cycle, teachers are currently having discussions with students about their targets (which will be included in the reports). Learning Mentors will also have one to one conversations with students and then provide a holistic comment in your child's report. On November 20th/21st we plan to hold parent consultations as a follow-up to the reports.

## **Upcoming Dates**

*Tuesday 8th October, ToK and DP core parent information evening, 5:30pm- 7:00pm (PAC)*

## **Upcoming Student/Parent PSAT Information Sessions**

Our PSAT registration is now complete and we are looking forward to providing the exam for 90 ABA students in grades 9-11. In preparation for the upcoming PSAT administration on October 30, 2019, please see the following information sessions for students and parents. The information sessions will include what students need to know about the PSAT, benefits of taking the exam, their skills that are tested and how to best prepare.

*Registered Grade 9 students: 8 October, period 1 with Mrs. Alli*

*Registered Grade 10 students: 30 September, period 7 with Mrs. Alli*

Please contact the High School Counselor, Alli Hostetter at [ahostetter@abaoman.org](mailto:ahostetter@abaoman.org) with any PSAT related questions.

*Simon Walker - High School Principal*

# Message from the University Counselor



A crucial part of the university and career planning process is careful research which starts in earnest as students opt for the subjects they will study in High School. For this information-gathering exercise, it is beneficial to engage directly with tertiary institutions to get an understanding of their academic programmes, campus environment and admission requirements. On that basis, students and families can make informed choices.

Attendance at university fairs is an effective, cost-free way to get these details. So far this term, we have been fortunate to have a number of university representatives visiting ABA. The most notable among them was the UK Fair at which we hosted representatives from 12 universities.

Students capitalised on this opportunity and came out in full numbers!

The university visits sometimes include career talks and presentations about the application process along with the exhibitions. Reps are generous with their sharing of information and welcome general questions, not just those specific to their institutions. All High School students, parents and teachers are welcome to these events. Along with the university fairs hosted by ABA, there are often events in Muscat for which we will send out information whenever this is shared with us.



Follow [aba\\_collegecounseling](#) on Instagram to get these updates.

<b>October Dates for University Visits at ABA</b>		
Tuesday Oct 1	<b>Boston University, USA</b>	S9, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Thursday Oct 3	<b>University of Birmingham, UK</b>	SLH, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Sunday Oct 6	<b>US Fair:</b> Indiana, Rutgers, Colorado, Boulder & Iowa	SLH, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Thursday Oct 10	<b>George Washington University, USA</b> <b>Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland-</b> Presentation: Studying Medicine	S9, 1 <sup>st</sup> break S8, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Tuesday Oct 22	<b>US Fair:</b> Carnegie Mellon, Northwestern, Georgetown & more!	SLH, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Wednesday Oct 23	<b>Elon University and Beloit College, USA</b> • Presentation: Submitting a Strong US Application • Q&A, Exhibition	PAC, 10:00 SLH, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Monday Oct 28	<b>UK Visits</b> University of Manchester: Presentation - Law, Econ & Management University of Brighton	S9, 7:40 - 8:00 S9, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Tuesday Oct 29	<b>Canada Fair:</b> Ontario Tech, Dalhousie, Nova Scotia, Carleton, Concordia, Ryerson, Guelph, York, Trent, Mt Allison & Calgary	SLH, 1 <sup>st</sup> break
Wednesday Oct 30	<b>University College London (UCL)</b>	SG14
<i>Coming in November: UBC, European Group &amp; Canada Fair #2</i>		

Opposite, is a list of the visits scheduled so far for October – more could be added in the coming weeks. See you at the next University Fair!

*Denise Barker  
University Counselor*

## The Core – Huh? What is it good for...?

An evening workshop for parents on what is ToK? And how ToK, the Extended Essay, and CAS can work together for a better IB Diploma.



Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2019  
5.30 - 7.00pm in the PAC

## Message from the Extra Curriculum Program

### **Middle School Volleyball**

Due to the October break there will be no training or any games on Thursday 10th October for our Middle School Volleyball teams.

### **Middle School Tennis**

The weather is starting to cool down. Every Monday and Thursday starting on 21st October, 2:30 - 3:30pm the Middle School tennis recreational program for all students in Gr 6 - 8 will begin. The main focus will be working on the basics of the game, footwork, stroke work, serving and positions on the court. This all will be done through mini games in a fun environment. There is no competitive games against other schools in this program, it is a recreational club.

### **MESAC Updates**

In line with the school's protocol and procedures on obtaining visas for all external trips, all MESAC visas will now be obtained by the family of the travelling student. Information on how to obtain a visa for your child has been highlighted in the travel letter.





Dates for your diary for MESAC Season One:

*Payment for trips:  
Tuesday 8th October 2019 to the  
ABA Business Office*

*Visa Deadline:  
Thursday 10th October 2019*

*Travel Meeting:  
Tuesday 22nd October 2019 in the  
Lecture Hall @ 5.30pm*

MESAC Travel Polos can now be purchased from the Uniform Shop. The Uniform Shop is open every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday from 7:00 - 7:45am.

Games for next week are listed below.

4th October	National Volleyball Tournament (Varsity girls) @ Muscat College	All Day
6th October	MPSL Skittle Ball @ ABA Grs 4-5	3:00 - 5:00pm
6th October	U19 Boys vs BSM @ BSM	4:15 - 5:30pm
7th October	U12 Boys vs BSM @ ABA	2:30 - 3:30pm
7th October	U13 Boys vs BSM @ ABA	2:30 - 3:30pm
7th October	U14 Boys vs BSM @ ABA	3:30 - 4:45pm
7th October	U14 Girls vs BSM @ BSM	4:15 - 5:30pm
8th October	U16 Boys vs BSM @ ABA	3:30 - 4:45pm
8th October	U19 Girls vs BSM @ ABA 3:30	3:30 - 4:45pm
9th October	U19 Boys vs TAISM @ ABA 4:00	4:00 - 5:15pm
9th October	U16 Boys vs TAISM @ ABA 4:00	4:00 - 5:15pm

All the best to the Varsity Volleyball Girls at the National Volleyball competition tomorrow.

*Paul Brace - Athletics Director*

# Message from the Fine Arts Department

**ABA is proud to present the Addams Family The Musical on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October.**

Both performances will be at 6.p.m and the performance on 30<sup>th</sup> October will invite the audience to come dressed as a member of the Addams Family.

Tickets will be available at ABA reception from Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October priced OR 1.000 each.



# Message from the Eco Team

## ECO SPOT

### Early Childhood Garden

Our EC Garden representatives visited the Elementary student council to request help so that they can grow herbs and flowers in the EC garden. Well done to them and their initiative!



# Message from the PTA



Iding our community together!

## PTA Meetings

Come to the PTA Community meeting to get updated on the events being planned and opportunities to volunteer.

## New Parents

Anjum and Penny, your amazing reps, would like you to take time out and get to know others from the ABA community. Pick up a cup or a quick bite at Mint & Coco Wednesday and Thursday next week and join the crowd. All ABA parents are encouraged to join us in welcoming the newest members of our community. So stop by and treat a new parent to a drink. Please RSVP Anjum and Penny at [PTANew@abaoman.org](mailto:PTANew@abaoman.org) by Monday, October 7th.

Teacher & Staff PTA Fund Requests: Community Vote: Oct 7, 2019

## 1. Arabic Language Day Gifts

*Request from:* Elementary Arabic Teachers

*Serves:* all grades 1-5.

*Cost:* 100 omr

*Why?* Arabic Language Day is a special day in which we celebrate Arabic as the official language of the host country Oman. Students design educational games and present them to younger students to practice Arabic through these games and some competitions. Students enjoy this day very much and are very happy to practice Arabic regardless of their level or performance. The gifts are distributed among the children who have created the games so that they can give out small prizes to the children that play the games.

*Info:* These gifts were previously covered by the department budget. Last year there was a donation made by parents to cover some of the cost. This year the teachers would like to prepare and make sure they have enough gifts for each game and for the students playing the games. The gifts were mainly stationary items such as pens, pencils and erasers, small notebooks, etc.

## 2. Games for Middle School Common Room

*Request from:* Megel Barker, Assistant Head of Middle School

*Serves:* Middle School students & teachers

*Cost:* 150 Omr

*What:* Students to have an opportunity to play card/board games while on break in the common room. By providing the games, students will benefit from an atmosphere that promotes social skills as well as soft affective skills such as perseverance, and negotiation.

*Why?* Games have been considered to have a positive impact on the social development of young children. As they engage in friendly competition they learn to negotiate and deal with losing and winning. Additionally, as devices are banned from the common room, a diversion that increases learning and conversation is a welcomed addition.

*Info:* 15 games are being requested. Previously a similar request was approved by the community for the Secondary Library last year and those games have been a big hit and are being used constantly.

## 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 sign 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.

## PTA DATES

**Mon. Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>** @ PTA room  
PTA Open meeting: 7.40 to 8.40 am

**Wed. Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>** @ Mint & Coco,  
Salaam Gardens  
New Parents Coffee: 8 to 10 am

**Thu. Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>** @ Mint & Coco,  
Salaam Gardens  
New Parents Coffee: 11.30 to 1.30 pm

**Thur. Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>** @ ABA  
Spooktacular: 5.00 to 7.00 pm

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](mailto:address.trick-or-treat@abaoman.org).



### SPOOKTACULAR CAS OPPORTUNITY

Looking for a fun way to to complete some CAS requirements? Look no further! What can be more fun than dressing up in costume and handing out candy!

To get involved is simple! Gather a group of friends (no more than 5 please), think about a theme and then you can choose a spot along the route to decorate as you wish!

Don't delay! Come help us make our Trick or Treat "neighbourhood" a memorable one. We need at least 20 stops (called doors) around school for ABA families to trick-or-treat through.

The event takes place Thursday, October 31st, from 5pm-7pm.

To sign up for a "door" or ask questions, email Clauss and Melanie at [trick-or-treat@abaoman.org](mailto:trick-or-treat@abaoman.org).

Past Trick or Treat "doors"

### Volunteers Needed!

If you enjoy watching kids revel in excitement then this is the event for you! We need fun-loving volunteers to make our Trick-or-Treat 'neighborhood' a memorable one!

The 'TorT' neighborhood consists of around 25 stops (called doors) mapped out from Admin through the grades 4, 5 and 6 areas, around the drama court back to the PAC and ending back in the parking lot.

Each stop is decorated thematically by parents, teachers, or students who then greet our eager Trick-or-Treaters and hand out treats!

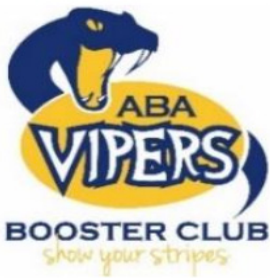
To sign up for a door or to find out more, email Clauss at [trick-or-treat@abaoman.org](mailto:trick-or-treat@abaoman.org).

PTA Calendar Edit : Winter break ends January 4th.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Your PTA  
 'Building Our Community Together'

# Message from the Booster Club



## Boosting our Community...

The Booster Club was created to inspire, encourage, and support our kids, but also to inspire school spirit, encourage parent support and increase community involvement. Our aims and objectives have remained steadfast since conception and it is safe to say that the VIPERS pride is alive and well with our talented, dedicated, and enthusiastic 2019/20 Booster Club committee.



Leading the way ...  
Shanoona Al Barwani, Ann-Katrin Van Schie, Jinane Helou, Kami Lamki, Kathja Keuning, Kim Sutton, Michelle Bourne, Malinka Van Der Gaauw, Manuel Emmer, Paula Colaco, Reem Amin, and Gundi Thum (our fab Alumni Mum). Some of our committee are not only new to the club but new to ABA. Thank you to our wonderful parent volunteers for your continued commitment and belief in the VIPERS Booster Club values. We look forward to a fabulous year ahead!

## What's on in OCTOBER...

24 October – Spike Strike Score – all students Grades 2-12 in GYM & MPH from 10:25-1:00pm. VOX Movie tickets to be won. Tickets are .500bz. Available at the door on the day.

28 October – Pop-Up Shop – outside ECE from 07:00-7:45am. 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 07:00-07:45am.

HOODIE ORDERS - if you ordered your custom personalize hoodie at the September pop-up shop, we will contact you directly via email in the coming weeks to advise when your hoodie has been delivered, checked and is ready for collection!

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

*Yours in community spirit –* **VIPERS Booster Club**



# Community Message

## The fun starts here



For girls aged 5-7 (4-7 in Northern Ireland)

Exciting and full of giggles, take your first brave steps with the Rainbows.



For girls aged 10 - 14

Guides help make a difference in their communities ...not forgetting the camps, trips, festivals and zip wires.



**'I got to do activities and things I wouldn't normally do and meet new people.'**  
Lauren, Guide



For girls aged 7-10

New skills, new thrills, new friends, being a Brownie is one big adventure, so go for it.



For young women 14-18

As a Ranger you'll have the opportunity to travel the world, get your voice heard, support your community, and earn awards and qualifications to help build your CV.

## Join us today

Go online to get involved at [girlguiding.org.uk/joinus](http://girlguiding.org.uk/joinus) or call 0800 169 5901

Registered charity number : UK #306016  
Contact Angi: [bgifc\\_omandc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bgifc_omandc@yahoo.co.uk)