

# AL NOOR-ABA NEWS

6th February 2020

## Message from the Head of School

Dear ABA Community,

Show me a school where the adults continue to learn and I will show you a great school! I have shared that line with you already this year. I remind you that when I went to the Dubai Search Fair to hire new teachers, the ABA table had one of the longest lines of candidates who wanted to work at ABA. That is due in great part because the professional development offered at ABA to our faculty is rich and diversified. Teachers and assistants continue to grow and develop and sharpen their skills.

A Reminder: **Our Professional Learning Days next week, Sunday and Monday 9th and 10th February 2020. There are no classes for students these days. Regular classes resume on Tuesday 11th February.**

Over these two days, we will have two of the world's leading experts on our campus: Mark Church and Kath Murdock.

**Mark Church** is a senior researcher at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education. He is the author of Intellectual Character from Jossey-Bass. Mark is the Learning, Assessment, and Instructional Resource Supervisor for the Traverse City Area Public Schools in Michigan.

**Kath Murdock** is an experienced teacher, author, university lecturer and popular consultant, originally from Melbourne. She supports the development of inquiry programs and practices. Kath's style is refreshingly practical, inclusive and always connected to the real world of teaching. She is widely respected for her work in the field of inquiry based learning and integrative curriculum.

Over the two days, we will expose teachers to this first-hand research, make connections with our ELPs (see right) as well as explore what thinking/learning looks like in practice. We will reinforce the connection between how teachers learn and how those experiences impact their teaching and how their students learn. We will end the sessions with an action plan for the participants which can be reinforced/discussed/modeled during the Tuesday 11th February Faculty meetings. It is a very exciting proposition and one that very few teachers are exposed to.

How lucky we are at ABA!

### Upcoming Dates

9 - 10 Feb	Staff Professional Development No School for Students
11 Feb	Board Meeting Elementary Library 6:30 pm
12 Feb	MESAC Season 2 Awards MPH 6:00 - 7:30 pm

## Effective Learning Principles



- 1 When learners are **intrinsically motivated** to learn.
- 2 When learners feel **valued**, comfortable and are willing to take risks.
- 3 When learners enjoy and are **engaged** in the learning process.
- 4 When learners are learning in their **zone of proximal development** (ZPD).
- 5 When learners understand how to be **successful**.
- 6 When learners have the **ATL skills** to learn independently and collaboratively.
- 7 When learners are able to **make connections** and create new and deeper understanding.
- 8 When learners use a **common language** for learning and approaches for thinking.
- 9 When learners develop **characteristics** that support their thinking.
- 10 When learners take **responsibility** for their learning.

Meanwhile, our athletes and thespians have been very busy and successful at MESAC. Congratulations to all and thanks to our Booster Club, our Coaches, Ms. Abi and Mr. Brace for their dedication to Athleticism, Sportsmanship and international friendship.

*Sue*  
Dr. Susan R. Groesbeck

## Message from the Elementary School

### A Community of Learners

Over a weekend in November, six of our Teaching Assistants from EC and Grade 1 gave up their time to attend a two-day workshop exploring how to embed an inquiry approach into the teaching of mathematics. The workshop added much value to our approach to teaching math conceptually, and deepened the participants' understanding of how best to support learners during maths learning. On Sunday, our Teaching Assistants ran a mini workshop for teachers. They shared common mistakes and misconceptions in math, games to enhance number sense which led the team into rich professional conversations and gave all the teachers multiple ideas to integrate into their classrooms. We are proud of our Teaching Assistants' commitment to their own life-long learning and their willingness to share and implement their new understandings.



## Reports Available to View on the Parent Portal

You will by now have received an email regarding accessing your child's report. Please email [helpdesk@abaoman.org](mailto:helpdesk@abaoman.org) if you experience any difficulty accessing the report. The email also outlined the changes we have made to reports, in an effort to reflect personal growth for each student. For more information about the changes, view the presentation from our coffee morning here: [ES parent coffee morning - What to expect from your child's report](#). As always, we are interested in your feedback - if you have a comment or question about the new report format, please email me directly on [scook@abaoman.org](mailto:scook@abaoman.org). If you have questions about your child's progress, you should direct these to your child's teacher.

*Sam Cook - Elementary Principal*

## Elementary After School Activities

Season three after school activities for our elementary students begun this week. There is a large number of students participating this season with some interesting activities on offer.

Below are snap shots of the season two activities which came to an end last week.



*Raewyn Jack - After School Activities Coordinator*

# Message from the Middle School

Over thirty Middle School parents attended the monthly coffee morning presentation on Wednesday morning of this week. The topic for discussion was the CAS programme. Parents were given information on the activities available, where to access CAS information on the ABA website and the learning outcomes for each student. If you were unable to attend this event, the link below can be used to view the presentation.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13dqEwRGp8CFpSY8hIKmpXmIF-ftu1Q9R/view?usp=sharing>

If your child has any questions regarding this important aspect of their middle school programme, please encourage them to ask me, their advisor, Ms. Bowin or Mr. Barker-we are all here to offer advice and assistance.

*Claire Anthony - Middle School Counselor*

## **MYP Assessment**

On Monday, February 2, parents who were new to MYP participated in a workshop on MYP Assessment. This workshop follows a previous session that focused on the philosophy of the MYP. The purpose was to help parents improve their understanding of MYP terminology and assessment processes.

Parents enthusiastically engaged with the tasks that were set and used the opportunity to gain familiarity with the phrases that were common in the MYP. One task provided the parents with student work and the task description. Working in teams they used the rubrics that were provided and discussed how as teachers they would have decided on the child's level of performance. The other task guided parents through the process that led to a final MYP Achievement level.

The purpose of these sessions is to help parents support their child. By getting an in depth knowledge of the MYP, parents are in a very strong position to assist their children.

Our next session will delve into key terms such as ATL skills, Global Contexts and Concepts.



*Megel Barker - MYP Coordinator*

# Message from the Fine Arts Department

## Senior Fine Arts trip to American Community School (ACS) Abu Dhabi

Fifteen SFA students departed last Wednesday for Abu Dhabi in the capable care of Mr. Pugh and Ms. Zita. What an amazing trip. I hope you enjoyed watching the live feed of the concert given by the combined bands and choirs on Saturday. There was a memorable drama production utilising the talented Mark Hill who has visited ABA in the past. The choir was conducted by Jason Drahos and Melanie Brink, well known in Muscat as head of singing at TAISM, while the Band was led by Chris Ward who conducted the ABA Concert Band Festival in 2019.

Differences this year were that the choir was split into male and female voices, leading to some really enjoyable songs in more unusual styles.

Students enjoyed a morning at the Louvre museum, an ice cream party, a pizza party and an open mic session plus working with some amazing industry professionals to create Art, Drama, Band and Choral features as part of the 'Lift' theme of the festival. A huge thanks to Ms Zita and Mr Pugh for taking time out to accompany the trip and making the experience positive and possible for our students.

*Anthony Langrish - Fine Arts Director*

# Message from the PTA



*"Building our community together!"*

Time flies fast! It will soon be time to elect a new PTA executive committee for the new academic year 2020-21.

While we work hard at our end, we encourage you to think and consider a role that you might want to volunteer for in the new PTA. By volunteering not only do you get involved in the school but it gives you an opportunity to bring in new ideas to bring the community closer together and of course it gives children a sense of pride to see their parents volunteering.

In addition to the PTA positions you can volunteer for a number of other activities you enjoy; be a Homeroom Parent, donate food or help manage an event. Want to volunteer but don't know how or for what - visit the link: <http://abaoman.org/wp-site/pta-volunteer/> and submit the form on the page. We would love to hear from you.

## PTA DATES

**Mon. Feb. 17th @ PTA room**  
Community Meeting @ 7.40 - 8.40 am

**Tue. Feb. 11th**  
TTT - Hiking Club continues @ 7.40 - 1 pm

**Thu. Mar. 12th @ TBD**  
ICF - A World without Borders @ 6-8 pm

**Parent Art Exhibition - Cancelled**

## Coming Up...

### Teacher/Staff Fund Requests- Round 2

Deadline for the second round of fund requests has closed; voting on the fund requests will take place in the community meeting on February 17th, 2020.

### Talks & Travels (TTT)

This week's hike to Wadi Adai took us to a view of amazing rock formations. The more adventurous climbed higher up to explore a tucked away cave. The wadi was lush and green and led to unlimited hills and peaks with breathtaking views. The group also caught up with a shepherdess and her herd.



*"I absolutely loved today!  
Thank you all for the  
lovely company and PTA  
for organizing!"*

*"Being Omani, I thought I new  
my country well. However,  
seeing two jebel dogs being used  
as sheep(goat) dogs  
was a first and something I will  
no doubt be telling people about  
for a very long time!"*

*"I have the sound of  
music soundtrack playing  
in the back of my mind  
🎧"*

*"Another great hiking  
experience. The most interesting  
part for me was seeing the goats  
with their herder on the  
sides of the mountains while  
walking through the valley!  
Thank you once again for the  
PTA for their efforts ❤️"*

To receive updates on hiking destinations and to join the upcoming hikes, email Laila at: [PTAVice@abaoman.org](mailto:PTAVice@abaoman.org).

### International Cultural Festival - *A World without Borders*

We are excited and inspired as we start preparing for ICF. It is only a few weeks away and we would like to invite volunteers to lead and coordinate for various cultures. Each cultural lead will be the point of contact to bring together the food donations, decorations, music and a stage performance (optional) from that specific culture.

Please [click here](#) to volunteer to be a lead. This year the PTA is working with the language department to make it a week of cultural experiences culminating in Thursday nights gastronomically entertaining festival and in order to break down the borders, this year's event will not feature individual stalls for each country. Instead, similar types of foods will be grouped together, your childhood games will be enjoyed and decorations from all cultures will be distributed throughout the event.

Please feel free to contact Lama at: [PTAChair@abaoman.org](mailto:PTAChair@abaoman.org) for any queries. Have a great weekend!

Your PTA  
"Building our community together."



## Message from the Booster Club

We wish our travelling VIPERS basketball and tennis teams all the best for a sensational weekend as they compete against ASD and DAA in Dubai.

GOOOOOOOOOO VIPERS!!!!

Thank you to all our VIPERS family for showing your support and VIPERS spirit last weekend at Bousher. The Booster Club will do it all again this weekend supporting our MESAC Varsity Soccer teams 6th - 8th February. We are expecting over 180+ athletes, coaches and support staff, as well as spectators at the Sultan Qaboos Stadium.

We are looking forward to a great weekend of competition and to once again showcase our ABA hospitality and VIPERS pride to our international guests. If you can spare some time this weekend to come support our VIPERS, we would love to see you there! Grab a burger, cold drink, refreshing ice cream, or some official VIPERS merchandise and watch the action LIVE!!!



### Food Donations

\* **NON-Perishable** items can be dropped at ABA reception Thursday 6th February between 07.00 - 08.00 am

\* **FRESH** food items can be dropped at...

- ABA reception between 07.00 - 08.00 am Thursday 6th February
- Concession stand at Sultan Qaboos Stadium 8.30 - 3.00pm Friday 7th and Saturday 8th hFebruary

### MESAC Achievement Awards

DON'T MISS OUT - MESAC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS – Wednesday 12th February – grab your tickets for SEASON 2 all weekend from one of the Booster Club members at the concession stand. Ticket sales will continue in Admin up to 11th February. NO TICKET SALES ON THE NIGHT!!!!

### Hoodie Orders

**HOODIE ORDERS** – If you have already ordered your personal VIPERS hoodies, an email will be sent directly to you for date of collection!

**Goooooo VIPERS!!!!**

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

