

AL NOOR-ABA NEWS

21st November 2019

Important Notice:

* Due to school closure on Thursday, 21st November 2019, Middle and High School Parent Teacher Conferences have been rescheduled to Sunday, 24th November 2019. We will follow the scheduled appointments from Thursday. There will be no classes for Middle and High School students on Sunday.

* School Returns from Winter Break on 5th January 2020

Message from the Head of School

Dear ABA Community,

The word is out! On Tuesday, we welcomed well over thirty 6th graders from the area to ABA so that they could observe what it is that we do and how we do it. ABA is special! Kathleen Bowin and her team presented three of our classes to the visitors to demonstrate that there are value-added experiences here at ABA. We hope to see many of our visiting students join us at ABA next year!

Also on Tuesday evening, parents were invited to delve into the math curriculum in the PYP. One of the important qualities of sending your child to ABA is a partnership between the parents and the teachers. Sam Cook has carefully planned information sessions in both literacy and math. Congratulations to the parents who attended the evening session. It isn't easy with all that is going on with your busy lives.

Upcoming Dates

25 Nov	Booster Club Fundraiser Drama Court 11.30 am - 1.00 pm
26 Nov	Grades 11 & 12 Parent Coffee Morning PTA Room 7.30 - 8.30 am
27-28 Nov	Public Holiday School Closed
01 Dec	School Resumes



National Day in Oman is stunning to someone experiencing it for the first time. The pride that you have in your country and in your Sultan is compelling. Reflecting on the day was summed up when we went to Al Fair in our neighborhood. We saw love and tradition. We saw the amount of joy and respect when employees made sure they communally touched each other for the cutting of the National Day Cake in the grocery store for the employees. We won't forget this scene.

I have found friends at ABA. As His Majesty once said, "We belong to the international family." We have over 70 nationalities at ABA and the school mimics the values of our host country. Oman is truly the home of tolerance and peace. Our National Day at ABA celebrated His Majesty's birthday and the heritage and culture of Oman. It was breathtaking!

Sue

Dr. Susan R. Groesbeck



Message from the Elementary School

It's a busy time of year! There has been much celebration and learning throughout the school, and it is set to continue in the weeks leading up to our winter break.

Parents learning...

Ms Mara and Ms Sam welcomed two groups of parents to the library last week to learn a little about our approach to reading at ABA, to hear about what the library has to offer and how it complements our reading programme, and to explore the importance of reading aloud to your child - whatever their age.

- Reading is making sense of a message or a text by using all the clues available.
- Children need to see and understand the big shapes in stories before focusing on the small shapes.



The Kindergarten and Grade 1 parents experienced a taste of what it is like for our children to 'crack the code' of letters and words on a page, and discovered that without exploring the "big shapes" in stories, the small ones are meaningless.

Parents of Grade 2-5 students had the opportunity to listen to an extract from a story and experience the importance of visualisation as a skill to support comprehension. They also learned how children who can already read are only exposed to important comprehension skills when listening to books read aloud.

(Read aloud infographic - as big as possible please - probably down the side?)

View some extracts from the presentations [here](#)

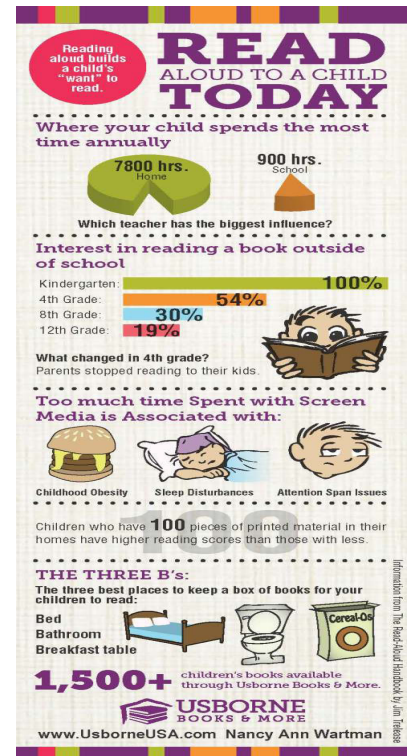
A useful read: [10 reasons you should read aloud to your big kid](#)

Students learning...

Our monthly What's Happening assembly WH@ABA gives a great snapshot of just some of the learning around school. Check out the slideshow [here](#).

Teachers learning...

Our teachers continue to challenge and deepen their thinking during our weekly professional development time. This year, we are analysing and reviewing our approach to literacy learning and teaching. In a recent meeting, we learned more about two contrasting strategies connected with phonics and word study. After some professional reading and a presentation, teachers shared their current beliefs and practices, and had a lovely professional conversation about how we can increase consistency and ensure an effective balance of approaches to maximise student learning. The journey will continue with an updated philosophy and essential practices, and a comprehensive review of our learning objectives.



Early Childhood Open Day - Thursday 5th December 2019

We are proudly opening our doors to prospective families for admission to ABA in August 2019. This Open Day is aimed at parents with children age appropriate for Kindergarten or Grade 1. Brochures outlining our philosophy and approach to Early Childhood education are available at the Registrar's desk. Please feel free to pick up a few brochures, and spread the word to interested families.



You are invited to an OPEN DAY at ABA!

An international school in Muscat, representing over 70 nationalities, using the IB continuum of education.



Parents are invited to visit the ABA campus and its Early Childhood Centre for an open morning

AGENDA:

- ✓ A brief presentation by the Elementary Principal
- ✓ Tour of the classrooms & ABA facilities
- ✓ Admission Information
- ✓ Q&A

Save the Date!!!
5th December
9.00 am-10.30 am
ABA Campus, Al Khuwair



Location

Reserve your spot now!

Call: 24955800 EXT 807
OR
Email: registrar@abaoman.org





An international school in Muscat, representing over 70 nationalities, using the IB continuum of education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMME



ABA offers an early childhood education based on current research and best practice.

Using a play-based approach, we follow children's natural desire to explore, inquire and understand themselves and the world around them. The curriculum is developed within the IB PYP framework which gives the children the best possible foundation for later success.

K1 - age 3 by 1st September
K2 - age 4 by 1st September
K3 - age 5 by 1st September
G1 - age 6 by 1st September

Sam Cook - Elementary Principal

Message from the Middle School

MS Explores! 2019

MS Explores! 2019 was an amazing experience both for teachers and students. For the first time in ABA, the long-awaited challenge was accepted by the Middle School team to facilitate all three outdoor trips simultaneously. This required a considerable amount of detailed planning and precise coordination with numerous excellent contributors.

With the trips being in three different environments, the planning and execution had to be spot on to ensure a successful outing. MYP 1 students spent their time in the Al Raha Desert Camp, MYP 2 spent their time in Bandar Khiran and MYP 3 spent their time in Jebel Shams at Sama Heights. These trips provided our students with a fantastic opportunity to collaboratively experience the resplendent and magnificent geography of Oman. Students who complete middle school in ABA, will be able to enjoy each camp as they move from MYP 1 to 3.





In the end, MS Explores! was a successful venture with our dedicated staff and eager students recognising the immense value of learning in the great outdoors. Students returned from camp forming new friendships, learning more about themselves and with stronger coping skills. Advisors, had a unique opportunity as well, to bond with their groups, auguring well for the rest of the year.

Finally, we would like to thank all our Middle School families for embracing this concept and supporting the Middle School team in pulling off this event. We look forward to next year, where the promise is that MS explores! Will be bigger and better!

Hats off to all our committed and ever-giving teachers for volunteering their time to be with the students and making it a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

Here are some videos of the trips for your indulgence - MS Explores [Video 1](#) & MS Explores [Video 2](#)

Middle School Open Day

ABA welcomed over sixty visitors onto campus on Tuesday for the Middle School Open Day. Student Ambassadors met families on their arrival and led small groups in a variety of activities including a scavenger hunt, mini lessons and break-time snacks in the common room. Mr. Pugh, Mr. Hus-sain and Ms. Schwarzkopf organised lesson activities for both parents and students and Mrs. Lama Samman met with the group and discussed the work the PTA in the school community. Mr. Barker introduced the Middle Years Programme in a presentation to parents and the whole group learned about 'A Day in Middle School' in the opening presentation. We look forward to August 2020 and welcoming this group of new families to the ABA community.

*Middle School Team
Ms. Kathleen Bowin, Mr. Megel Barker
and Ms. Claire Anthony*

**MYP Personal
project exhibition**

ABA IS DELIGHTED TO INVITE YOU TO COME AND BE A PART OF OUR PERSONAL PROJECT EXHIBITION. GRADE 10 WILL BE SHOWCASING THEIR TALENTS AND SKILLS THROUGH; SPORTS TUTORIALS, COOKING EXHIBITIONS, COSPLAY, WRITING AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

DATE: THURSDAY 5TH DECEMBER
TIME: 3:00-5:00PM
LOCATION: GYM

ib Middle Years Programme

ABA
AN IB WORLD SCHOOL
First in the region



Congratulations to Rehana Khan, Anja Van Der Merwe and Vaishnavi Manivannan who brought 15 gold medals and 12 silver medals in all from the Tournament of Champions, World Scholar's Cup, Yale University, USA, 7th November 2019 to 13th November 2019.

The team qualified through a regional round held at BSM, where there were 500 students. After which they went to Kazakhstan for the Global Round in June 2019. Our ABA team was placed 5th out of 80 teams from all over the world. The team won first place in collaborative writing. This enabled them to qualify for the Tournament of Champions in which 60 countries from all over the world participated at Yale University, USA.

Congratulations again, we are very proud of these young ladies!

Ms. Bowin - Middle School Principal

Message from the Secondary School

After the cheering has died down, the courts have been swept and medals are given pride of place in the homes of our MESAC students, there is a pause for a moment's reflection, before another season begins. We are extraordinarily proud of our student Scholar-Athletes at ABA and recognise their incredible success which stems from hard work, dedication and self-management in order to balance out sporting, academic and extra curricular commitments. MESAC, as our Athletics Director reminds us all annually, creates moments that will genuinely last a lifetime, whereas 'no one will remember' a maths test, or English essay when reminiscing about their schooling. And of course he has a point: it is in sport that we get to know ourselves – our true characters. We know our strengths and weaknesses; we compare ourselves to our peers, we control our emotions, swallow our pride and learn to be magnanimous in victory and humble in defeat. It is no coincidence that the Olympics are an Ancient Greek invention, when "Know Thyself" was a key maxim carved into the marble of the temple of Apollo at Delphi.

MESAC moments are indeed indelibly carved into our students' memories. MESAC also recognizes that excellence takes many forms, not all physical, hence the Forensics, and Academic Games teams who also pit themselves against their peers in heated competition. Often as teachers we imagine what it would be to have just a sprinkle of that MESAC magic brought to bare on the rigors of more academic learning!

The IBs Approaches to Learning (ATLs) that we teach and report on, are a clear link between students' academic and extra-curricular activities. The 'soft-skills' of research, sociability and communication; of critical and creative thinking and of self-management are as fundamental to our sporting success as they are to our academic success. Coaches, Supervisors and Teachers all teach these skills. For those students preparing for their International Award this weekend, ATLs are at the heart of the planning and execution of a successful expedition. The ATLs, much more than any one summative or single sporting achievement are what will bring our students success (however that manifests itself in individuals) for all of our students for the rest of their lives.

At ABA, we wholeheartedly believe in an holistic education: that students demonstrate their excellence in myriad ways. At ABA they do this with a frequency that is truly astounding.



We teach students to reflect on their approaches to learning in the way they write their CAS reflections, or in one to one discussions on progress with teachers and learning mentors. We want all our students to own their academic performance as they own their place on a team, the project on public show or their membership of a club. The evidence of the success of this belief in a truly holistic, international education is clear in the pitch invasion at the moment of victory, but also in the moment of pride demonstrated in National Day celebrations, or in the moment of applause as the final bow is taken by the cast of the school production: it may be raucous but often it is quiet and reflective as in this extract written by ABA graduate Tayla Shair, from the class of 2019 for 'Blue and Gold' the high school magazine:

"It is often at times when we are drowned out by cheering as we run our last lap and motivated by our team's support, that we feel the love among each other. Although we face moments of defeat, we are able to see moments of success and when we win, we are able to appreciate the hardships we experienced. It is in those precious moments on the court, in the stands or on the field where we feel our community support. We feel the friendship between players, the admiration or hope of the spectators and the pride of the teachers and coaches. In our little ABA world, we are a family and even though we may sometimes complain or wish for better, it is the years we spend here where we will make lifelong friends and moments."

Guy Essex - DP Coordinator

The University Search – Where to Begin?

Like every other crucial life decision, making a choice about where to undertake university studies is one that requires time, thought and lots of research! Once students get beyond that first hurdle of choosing a field(s) of interest, the next step is to determine where to apply. Some family circumstances make this a straightforward point of consideration, for example, those who are returning to their home countries and opt to study there. For others: factors such as courses, cost and climate might come into play. Whatever a family's situation is, there are various tools that can be used to begin the search for the tertiary institution that is the best fit. Some of these were highlighted at recent Parent Information Evenings but are worth reiterating here.

School Data

Having a look at where ABA graduates have enrolled in past years is a beneficial starting point as it provides guidance about which institutions are interested in students who fit the ABA profile. These university professionals, having already worked with students from our school, will understand very well the programme of study applicants have completed as well as the calibre of the students who are applying. Information about past enrolment can be found on the school's website under the University Counseling section.

Career and University Platforms

Platforms such as Bridge-U and Unifrog are designed specifically to support career and university education and are exceptionally useful as the searches are personalized to each student.

These are fairly new platforms that have been introduced within the school community and many of you will have already attended training sessions on how to use them. The parent access code for Unifrog is ABAOmanParents.



Grade 11 Students at a Unifrog Workshop

Country-Specific Search Tools

A number of search engines specific to various countries are also readily accessible online (for example DAAD for Germany and Course Finder Netherlands). Within application portals such as UCAS (for the UK) and the Common App (for the USA) detailed university profiles can also be found.

University League Tables

University ranking tables can be another valuable search tool – if used appropriately. As with all research, it is recommended that different sources are consulted. It is also important to check the criteria used to determine these rankings as these might not align with the priorities each family has in mind when determining the ideal institution. Rankings that centre around student satisfaction of the quality of teaching might be the most suitable. Engage your son/daughter in a conversation about what stage they are at in their search and do tap into these various resources – happy browsing!

Denise Barker - University Counselor

Message from the Extra Curriculum Program

MESAC Achievement Awards

WOW! Sunday night was a very powerful and special night for our Volleyballers, Golfers, Swimmers and Academic Game Players. All the teams were recognized and honoured in front of their peers and families. A huge thanks to the Booster Club for making this evening so successful and the MCs of the evening, Alice Maxwell and Stefan Klefasz. The pride our players/swimmers showed in our school, our teams and themselves over season one was infectious and inspiring. Furthermore the coaches of season one need to be commended for giving their time and talents to coach.



Games for next week

24th November	U19 Girls Soc vs BSM @ BSM	4:15 - 5:30pm
24th November	U19 Boys Soc vs TSS @TSS	4:00 - 5:00pm
24th November	U16 Boys B'Ball vs PSO @ ABA	3:00 - 4:15pm
25th November	U14 Boys Soc vs BSM @ BSM	4:15 - 5:15pm
25th November	U14 Girls Soc vs BSM @ BSM 4:15	4:15 - 5:15pm
25th November	U16 Boys Soc vs TSS @TSS 4:00	4:00 - 5:15pm

Muscat Football Academy K3 - Grade 5

Reminder Registration for Muscat Football Academy (MFA) for season two opened on Nov 12th. If you are interested in MFA sign up at the ABA reception. The season starts on 3rd December. All questions and enquires about Muscat Football Academy need to be directed to chuck@muscatfootballacademy.com.

Paul Brace - Athletics Director



Pictured above: Elementary Benchball team.

Message from ABA Libraries



Dear Parents,

It's Book Fair time again! And just in time for some holiday gift shopping. Leaflets will be sent home with students on Thursday, 14th November and have a sampling of the books available. See the website for a much wider selection of quality books from the UK:

<http://world-schools.scholastic.co.uk/americanbritish-academy>

All orders must be placed [online](#), and directions on how to place your order were shared by homeroom teachers on Seesaw for ECE and Elementary, and the grades 6-8 parents have been emailed with details. The price of books includes the shipping from the UK to school and all VAT and duties.

Kindly note that the online order closes Saturday 23rd November, 2019 so that books can arrive before the Winter Holiday!

Thank you for supporting our school and encouraging students reading for pleasure.

Mara Hakim and Courtney Park

Message from the Fine Arts Department



ABA Concert Band Weekend will be held at ABA on the weekend of 17th and 18th January 2020.

The Festival is open to all MS students and costs RO 10/000 for the weekend. For this money your child will receive amazing coaching from professional musicians and get to play in a concert on the Saturday evening. Food will also be included in this charge.

This is a great opportunity for your child to come and really work to develop their musical skills alongside students from BSM and TAISM. Time is given for teambuilding exercises and for students to create new friendships. Application forms available from Mr. Langrish.

Anthony Langrish - Fine Arts Director

Message from the Eco Society

Eco-Spot

Check out the ABA garden promo-reel: <https://youtu.be/MzZyBX-Vr90>

Thank you to Mr. Mackenzie Rory, Ms. Jeyaram Sarah, Mr & Mrs Cole

Message from the PTA



Thank You

First off, we would like to thank the kids from High School and the three from Middle School who put in countless hours during breaks and after school to come and practice in preparation for The Omani National Day performances. Their dedication and determination resulted in a beautiful display of Omani culture and heritage. Thank you to the moms from the Omani community for donating the cost of the band and sourcing dresses from all the regions and cultures of Oman. To Um Majed and Fatma AlMaamari for making sure all the girls were fitted and matching when they danced the Raboba. To AlShaima AlRaisi for always donating decorations, flowers, cake and her time and knowledge to making ABA's National Day a success.

PTA DATES
Fri. Nov. 22nd @ MPH Flea Market: 3.00 to 5.00 pm
Mon. Dec. 2nd @MS common room Santa's Workshop: 7.40 - 2.00 pm
Thu. Dec 5th @ ABA Pitch Winter Festival: 6.00-8.00 pm
Mon. Dec. 9th @ PTA room Community Meeting: 7.40-9.00 am

To see ABA's melting pot of cultures get together and celebrate the lovely country we live in was truly a beautiful site and as our Head of School so eloquently stated, "...we are lucky that our mission, vision and values mimic those of our host country."

We hope you enjoy what little we could capture from the spirit of that day!

Flea Market

Here's your chance to declutter - the first flea market of 2019-20 is coming up on November 22nd. Cakes, Cookies, Brownies and Thai food will be available too!

We need volunteers to help at the popcorn and drinks tables. **You can volunteer for as less as 30 minutes to 2hrs.** Do spread the word! **For queries or to volunteer please contact Meeta at 97893131.**



Santa's Workshop

Santa's elves have been busy sourcing quality gifts to make our young people's shopping experience worthwhile! This year they will have a choice to buy from 1 OMR & 2 OMR presents for the loved ones. Do remember the workshop will be on Monday the 2nd December during school hours for Elementary students. All Middle School students will have access to Santa's workshop during their breaks. Remember to send in change if you would like your child to participate.

Volunteers to sell at the workshop can sign up at: Volunteer@Santa's Workshop



Winter Festival

We're racing towards the conclusion of 2019 and another time of year when there is excitement, celebration and goodwill.

The Winterfest committee is working hard to create an evening of nostalgia, winter cheer and festive fun for our ABA community.



Enriching Volunteer Opportunities for Everyone



Our plans are well underway and it's time to reach out to you and ask your for your help in areas such as selling tickets : 5.45 - 6.45 pm / 6.45 - 7.45 pm volunteering on the bake sale stall. Alternatively by making a contribution to the bake sale stall. We really want to provide culinary fayre that is special at this time of year and give it an international flavour too eg: Stollen from Germany, Pannetone from Italy to name a few.

We're also planning lots for all the family and community to enjoy, apart from delicious seasonal food - savory and sweet! Santa of course in his Grotto, seasonal choral music, an exciting bazaar to buy those all important presents! Festive games and crafts to keep our little people occupied.

So please, join us as attendees, volunteers and most importantly ABA community to an event that we hope will be truly memorable. Please contact the team on Winterfest@abaoman.org, Alison on 95188959, Theresa on 93391639 or Nandita on 79039623.

*Have a wonderful weekend!
Your PTA - 'Building Our Community Together'*



Message from the Booster Club

MESAC Season I Awards Night - 17th November, 2019

What a night to remember and what a fabulous way to end a successful Season !!

The MESAC awards night was all about celebrating ABA's MESAC students' achievements with family members, coaches and friends. The pride, excitement and positive energy exuded in the hall was absolutely palpable! This is what the VIPERS Spirit is all about!!! Gooooo VIPERS!!!!

Even though many of the players came back with a host of medals, it was ultimately qualities they exhibited such as sportsmanship, dedication, passion, and value for team work that were highlighted in all of the coaches' speeches throughout the evening.

The Awards Night was also a wonderful opportunity to reflect on how well how our students and their coaches represented ABA locally and internationally and how successfully they embodied the IB learner profile and ABA's Mission, Vision and Values. Many of the coaches of visiting teams or host countries have commended the IB learner attributes our students have internalized and subsequently displayed during this season, namely being principled, open-minded, caring, risk takers and balanced. There is a lot to celebrate indeed!

Once again, the Booster Club along with Mr. Brace, were working hard behind the scenes to make this event a memorable one for all attendees. Whether it was time spent purchasing decoration items, setting up, creating table centerpieces, cutting and sticking photographs on boards, hanging banners or coordinating and liaising with caterers, it all came nicely together and the event ran smoothly. A big thank you to Michelle for taking the lead on this event!

Pop Up Shop - 25th November, 2019

The VIPERS Booster Club will be having their monthly Pop Up Shop on Monday, 25th November, 2019 in our usual spot outside the ECE from 7:00 - 7:45 am. Come and get your merchandise and spirit wear just in time for the upcoming holiday season. Hoodie orders will be taken from 7:00 am - 7:30 am on Monday as well.

Ice Frenzy - 25th November, 2019

The Booster Club will also be having their awaited Ice Frenzy fundraiser in the Drama court from 10:30 am - 1:00 pm. Please bring your Baizas!!!



Yours in community spirit - VIPERS Booster Club

A poster for the 'VIPERS Merchandise 2019/20' pop-up shop. It features the ABA VIPERS logo and the text: 'Booster Club Pop-Up Shop', 'Get your official VIPERS MERCHANDISE', 'Monday 25 November 2019', '07.00-7.45am', and 'come see our friendly team outside the ECE Building HOODIE ORDERS AVAILABLE!!'. Below this, a grid of merchandise is displayed with prices: Personal Hoodies (\$15), Sports Bags (\$10), Custom Socks (\$5), T-Shirts (\$10), Parent Supporter (\$10), Car Sunshade (\$10), Cap (\$5), Water Bottle (\$5), Spray Water Bottle (\$5), Car Sunshade (\$10), Personal Care (\$5), and Shave Bags (\$5). A large 'BRACE NOW AVAILABLE NOW' banner is overlaid on the merchandise. At the bottom, it says 'All proceeds from the sale of VIPERS merchandise go to the VIPERS Booster Club - supporting our kids!'.