

MUSTAFA DAVIES

Board of Governors Member
Doha College



Dear DC Community,

If I am completely honest, I don't recollect much maths, science or English from my time at school! My best memories were at sea-scouts or canoeing with my dad (who taught maths when he wasn't doing water sports). Years later, I can see the benefit of these activities and the opportunities they gave me.

During the strict lockdown in 2020, all face-to-face activities were cancelled. The Duke of Edinburgh's international award programme, THIMUN (The Hague International Model United Nations) and others transitioned online while other activities had to wait for rules to relax. The Doha College offering of 'co-curricular activities' is governed by Ministry guidance and isn't able to restart for the time-being. 'Co' rather than 'extra' stresses a close alignment with core-curricular goals. Thankfully, other activities in Qatar have returned for our children and we're busy again with clubs and sports, including the Evo Sports and Mockingbird after-school clubs.

While some restrictions continue, we all hope the situation continues to improve and a full programme of varied activities can be made available again.

A very smart school principal once said, "we offer a wide range of after-school clubs so that all our students can find something they are good at". Academic research proves that co-curricular activities have a direct impact on educational achievement. Just think about the persistence and drive needed to play an individual or team sport, not to mention ability to follow instructions!

Co-curricular activities build character and life-skills in young people, contributing to higher confidence, resilience, and self-esteem, for example, a musical or theatre performance. Students develop time-management, leadership and problem-solving skills that help in their future academic and working careers, no matter which field of life they choose. Co-curricular activities can give a lifetime of pleasure, like playing a musical instrument, learning to sail,



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playing chess or picking up a new language.

Students' social development benefits from co-curricular activities. Young people acquire communication and language skills, while access to friendship groups and positive mentors help to give a sense of belonging and community. The students learn to make better life decisions while boosting their physical and mental well-being.

These outcomes show the importance of 'out-of-the-classroom' activities. Our whole society profits from engaged and conscientious young people who want to 'give something back' while they find their own passion and purpose in life.

Last, but not least, co-curricular activities look great on a student's resume and university applications, even if they haven't discovered a hidden talent!

Thanks for reading this blog. I hope I convinced you how awesome co-curricular activities are. A few years later, I'm still involved in scouts, love playing sports and giving something back to the community, like serving on the Doha College Board of Governors.

Mustafa Davies