



July 8, 2011 – September 11, 2026

Our tribute to

Abdullah Nusaibah

September 13, 2026

KING'S ACADEMY

Remarks by Mrs. Penny Townsend Head of School

Thank you for being here this morning at School Meeting in the Shoman Auditorium, a place where we gather as a community. School Meeting is very much a part of our structure and our routine; structure and routine will bring us comfort.

Today we gather to mourn the passing of Abdullah Nusaibah, a member of the Class of 2029 who entered King's Academy in the seventh grade.

Abdullah fought a long and courageous battle against cancer with remarkable strength and courage.

Abdullah's mother shared with me yesterday that he also fought to be in school, and when he was unable to attend school, he fought to keep pace with his schoolwork.

Abdullah was a warrior in the very best sense of the word. He met what came his way with extraordinary determination and grace. We will always remember that about Abdullah. He never gave up, even when the path before him was unimaginably difficult. We were blessed by Abdullah's presence and the example he set for all of us.

There is no right way or one way to feel at a time like this. Those of us who knew him best are deeply saddened and most likely shocked. Some of you may be confused or angry. Others of you may not know how you feel.

The important thing for you to know is that whatever you are feeling this morning and whatever you are carrying today and the next few days, weeks or months, you do not have to carry alone.

Our counselors, Dr. Nathan and Ms. Zeena will be available to you throughout the day today and tomorrow in the Academy Building. You will find them either in the satellite counseling office on the first floor or in room 225 next to the OSL office. You may drop in to see them. After tomorrow, they will be in their offices in the Health Center. Ms. Lindsay will be in her office in the Middle School.

The Spiritual Center is available to you for quiet reflection.

We will have an advisory lunch today so that you may check in with one of the most important adults in your life at King's.

There will be condolence books in the OSL where you can write your own memories of Abdullah to share with his family. You may include a photo. A drawing. Poetry. Please allow us a day or so to organize, and we will let you know when to come by.

If you would like to create collages or anything similar to remember Abdullah and express your love for him, reach out and we will get you the art supplies you need.

We will adhere to our daily routines which include evening study, and we will be flexible and empathetic when it comes to assessments and class participation. We ask that you attend class — being with others is important at times like this — unless you need to step out and find a counselor or another trusted adult. We ask that you attend co-curriculars; being active also helps us feel better.

Abdullah would give everything to be on the new turf fields or in a class with you. I ask that you remember that as we honor his memory. Abdullah was a young man of outstanding character.

We will support one another in our grief.

You will also hear this morning from Mr. Sam, SLC president Azd and several of Abdullah's friends.

I now would like to share with you a poem by Maya Angelou.

When Great Trees Fall

*When great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us:
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.*

May I ask for a moment of silence.

Horatio says to a dying Hamlet in Act V, Scene 2 of William Shakespeare's Hamlet:

Now cracks a noble heart.
Good night, sweet prince.
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Good night, sweet Abdullah. And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Remarks by Mr. Samuel Hennessy Faculty Member, Department of Visual and Performing Arts

There is very little that feels adequate to say on a morning like this.

I was fortunate to know Abdullah both as his advisor and as his Digital Music Production teacher. That meant I got to know him in two different parts of school life.

In music, he was a very steady student. He kept on top of his work; he cared about his grades; and if he ever needed to catch up, he did. He also genuinely wanted his music to improve. He would take feedback; go back to a project; make changes and try to make it better.

At some point I started calling him Nusaibeats, as a play on Nusaibeh. It became one of those little class nicknames that stuck, and I still associate that name with him now.

One moment I remember particularly well was a group vocal project. His group needed someone to sing, and Abdullah volunteered to do it.

That might not sound like a huge thing, but for someone who was naturally quite private and understated, I remember being impressed that he just stepped up and did it.

That was quite typical of him.

He did not make a fuss about things.

And that is also what stands out to me now when I think about what he was going through.

Abdullah was very private. He never wanted it to dominate his life at school, and he never used it as a reason to expect anything from anyone.

He just kept going.

He came to class, did his work, caught up when he needed to, spent time with his friends and carried on with school.

I knew that he was dealing with something serious, but I do not think I fully understood at the time how much he was dealing with.

Looking back, I have a huge amount of respect for the way he handled it.

He never seemed to want people to see him differently. He just wanted to be Abdullah.

For his friends and classmates, I know your memories of him will be different from mine. You knew parts of him that teachers never saw. You will have your own jokes, conversations and stories.

I hope those are the things that stay with you.

One of the memories that has stayed with me is from advisory.

We used to play a game called Impostor. I would give everyone the same word except one person, who would not know what it was. Everyone would then give clues, and the group had to work out who the impostor was.

Abdullah was unbelievably bad at being the impostor. Whenever it was him, everyone knew almost immediately.

He just could not bluff convincingly at all.

We used to find it hilarious.

And I'm glad that is one of the memories I have of him.

Because when I think of Abdullah, I do not only want to think about what he went through or about how sad today is.

I want to remember him as the student working on his music.

As Nusaibeats.

As the boy sitting in advisory with everyone else, trying unsuccessfully to convince us he knew what the word was.

As someone who was liked, respected and very much part of the group.

I feel very fortunate that I was able to teach and advise him.

I will miss him.

And I know a lot of people here will too.

Remarks by Azd Yaish '27

Student Leadership Council President

Bismillah

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.

Today is a sad day.

But we aren't here to grieve more than we are here to celebrate the life of a brave, kind and inspiring friend, student, classmate, brother, son.

Several months ago, Abdullah came back to school just as he left, always infusing us with his contagious smile and honestly, radiating happiness and positivity to everyone around him.

This April, in every community time and O Block we'd go to the Commencement Lawn, Middle School or in front of Al Kaziye, and either sit on the red chairs or play football: freshman and juniors vs. sophomores. Even with him not playing for a while he was honestly still the best of us on the field, living up to the flair of playing football wearing his signature black Yankees cap.

Abdullah is a family friend of mine, so I've known him as long as I remember. Our parents were friends who became family ever since they were teenagers.

He is survived by his father Amo Raed, mother Auntie Lina and sisters Aisha and Rahma whose faith and strength are beyond imagination.

And I wanted to thank you all on behalf of his family who are deeply touched and consoled by the overwhelming pouring of love by all of you who have showed up at the azza and those who were there at the dafneh.

One thing about Abdallah is that his whole life he kept that calm, peaceful demeanor.

I honestly never in my life heard him say anything negative about anyone nor even complain about anything. He was always smiling and finding the good in any situation.

Before Abdullah came to Upper School, I would only see him at gatherings, but when I would see him with his friends whether at Middle School or otherwise, I still distinctly remember to this day his face lighting up as he approached me. And his friends would always say the same sentence, hay sa7bak Abdullah (meaning here's your friend Abdallah).

Now looking back at it, he wasn't just sa7bina or our friend, he honestly was our little brother.

Abdullah will always be in our hearts, and just like him I want us to keep on smiling, radiating happiness onto others because in the end it's all about the impression you leave behind, the impact you have on others, your legacy.

And what he left us, even in his passing, is a community that is more united than ever by love of his kind soul and awe of his bravery. Abdallah has left a permanent golden footprint on this campus and beyond.

Here, I'd like to present his closest friends whose hearts he especially touched and who wanted to share with us their own personal remarks:

Hamzah Nasser '29

I'll never forget the day we went to play padel after school during my first week of Grade 8. Even though I didn't know what I was doing, you made me feel welcome and it was the beginning of many great memories. From going on the most random side quests while everyone was busy, to eating lunch at a random Iranian restaurant in Dubai. I remember we found a photo of The Cyrus Cylinder there. We immediately thought to take a photo to show Mr. Hyunwoo when we were back at school since we had just learnt about it in class. You are a fighter Abdullah, and I will never forget a second that I spent with you. I hope to be reunited with you one day Inshallah.

Zaineddeen Kawaf '29

The memories I cherish most with Abdullah are the late nights when we used to drive around listening to his favorite songs, and the days during Ramadan when we would all play football together on the middle school pitch. Abdullah was a brave and silent fighter and lifted all of our spirits with his positivity. We will always miss Abdullah and he will always be a part of our hearts.

Hamzah Mansour '29

When I think about Abdullah, the first thing I think of is how much of a fighter he was. He fought on the football field, in the classroom and through his illness, but he never let any of it bring his spirit down. That's the Abdullah I'll always remember. We'll miss you so much. Rest in peace, Abdullah.

Mohammad Al-Jibouri '29

I remember Abdullah not only as one of my best friends, but as the very first friend I ever made at King's. I still remember Grade 7, when he first introduced himself to me in Miss Muntaha's advisory. He was the first person who truly made me feel welcomed at this school and I'll never forget that. I'll always cherish the memories, the laughs and all the moments we shared. Abdullah held a truly special place in my heart, and he still does today. Love you forever, Abdullah. Allah yerhamak.

Yousef Abu Obeid '29

May 13th, 2025, nearing the summer, I got a note that Abdullah's favorite goalkeeper, Casillas, was coming to Jordan. I made it my goal to get him to come with me. After contacting Abdullah's mom, it was set. He was ready to be surprised. The day we were supposed to meet the player, I showed up at his house. He came down, and we told him the news. I can remember every second of it, from the screaming to the hugging to the thanking. When we arrived, Abdullah ran straight to him, asked for a signature and a photo. Seeing that made me swear to keep him happy throughout what he was going through, and it worked. Me, Mohammad and Jafar made a birthday video for him. We didn't think much of it, but now his family tells me how he used to watch it so many times and laugh more and more. This small action had an impact bigger than any of us could have imagined. Abdullah, I know you're in heaven waiting for all of us to come join you and we will not disappoint you. May your soul rest in peace, habibna.

Here, I'd like to present his closest friends whose hearts he especially touched and who wanted to share with us their own personal remarks.

Yousef Al Tabbaa '29

There was never a dull moment with Abdullah. From all those early mornings in school to those late nights listening to music and talking about life in the car. But with all that time spent together, he never once mentioned the silent battle he was fighting at home. He was a strong silent fighter. Abdullah, I'll miss you forever.

Ibrahim Al Oudat '29

When I think about Abdullah, the first memory that comes to my mind is our trip to Spain in Middle School. One morning at around 5 am, I woke Abdullah up so me and him could go and buy me medicine because I wasn't feeling well. Even though it was so early, he came with me without complaining. When we were walking back, he started telling me how much he loved football and we just talked the whole way back.

It might seem like a small memory, but it is something I will always remember because it showed the kind of person Abdullah was. I saw Abdullah as resilient, funny and one of the kindest people I knew. He was someone who could make the people around him laugh and someone who genuinely cared about others. I know that the memories we all have with him will stay with us forever and he will always be remembered and missed.

Jafar Abdallat '29

I remember the day I first saw Abdullah, he was playing football and I stared at him knowing how talented and skillful he is. Another sport he cherished was basketball and me and him would always argue over who was better. Rest in peace my brother. I love you.

Keyan Shawwa '29

When I think of Abdullah, I remember the first time we played padel together and playing football during Ramadan breaks at school. He was always scoring and always good at whatever he played. But what I'll miss most is how funny and warm he was and I'll always admire how strong he stayed. He'll always have a place in my heart.



As you heard, the bravery and inspiring kindness of this King's Lion will be dearly missed and what he stands for is a beautiful reflection of all that is good in this school community.

Abdallah is in a better place now, but his laugh and smile will forever stay in our hearts as a cherished memory for as long as we live.

May his pure, brave soul rest in eternal peace.

Allah yerhamo.

Keep him and his family in your prayers.