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Volume 9

Issue 11

Mission Statement

The Banjul American Embassy School is an international community providing a high quality, accredited American-Style education for students. In partnership with our community, we empower students to become enthusiastic, creative, lifelong learners who value integrity, cultural diversity and global responsibility.

Please note: The Holiday Bazaar will now be held on Saturday, December 12th from 2:00-7:00. If you can help in any area please contact Jennifer Greathouse. This is the only big event open to the public, that will be held this year so we need all BAES parents help.

Last Thursday after school activities November 19th. No after school activities Monday, November 16th. Thanks everyone. If you are interested in offering an afterschool activity next trimester please let Madame Joof know.

A Fire.... No a Fire Drill: If your child comes home and says there was a fire at BAES, or a bomb it is because we are doing regular drills. Rest assured we will let you know if a fire etc. occurs at BAES. It is important that we have regular drills so if the time comes when there is an actual fire or a mob at the gates we know exactly what to do. On Wednesday for example we had a "Lock Down in Place" drill. We found many things that went smoothly and also areas where we needed to improve. This is the purpose of the drill. We expect if there are parents on campus at the time of a drill that they will participate, rest assured your child will tell you what to do. We appreciate your cooperation if you are on campus during a drill.

Standards Based Report Cards: Many thanks to the parents who attended the report card meeting. I hope you have a clearer picture of the report card that your child will be receiving on the 26th of November.

All parents will receive their child's report card electronically on the 26th. If you do not receive your child's report please let your child's teacher know. These reports will look different than they have in the past and they are about 25 pages long. These reports reflect the AERO standards and hold all teachers accountable for teaching to these standards.

In the adult world, everything is a performance assessment. If adults on the job make poor decisions or cannot determine the quality of their own work, the results are generally undesirable. Quality matters, and the ability to measure the quality of one's own work is a learned skill.

So how can we teach this essential skill? One way to teach quality is to demand it. We must create an environment where standards can and must be met and where students are not permitted to submit substandard work without being asked to revise.

If we base our grades on standards rather than attendance, behavior, or extra credit (which often has nothing to do with course objectives), we can actually help students grapple with the idea of quality and walk away with a higher degree of self-sufficiency. We can and should report information about student performance in areas like attendance and effort, but we can report it separately from academic achievement (O'Connor, 2007; Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006). At BAES we report this through Habits of Mind.

A standards-based report card lists the most important skills students should learn in each subject at a particular grade level. For example, in writing, a second-grade report card might list these skills:

- Writes in complete sentences
- Uses capital letters, periods, question marks and quotation marks correctly
- Uses the writing process (prewriting, first draft, revision, and final draft)
- Writes a friendly letter with a greeting, body and conclusion
- Knows the purpose and use of a dictionary, thesaurus and atlas

Instead of letter grades, students receive marks that show how well they have mastered the skills.

How are standards-based report cards different from traditional report cards?

On many traditional report cards, students receive one grade for reading, one for math, one for science and so on. On a standards-based report card, each of these subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge that students are responsible for learning. Students receive a separate mark for each standard.

The marks on a standards-based report card are different from traditional letter grades. Letter grades are often calculated by combining how well the student met his particular teacher's expectations, how he performed on assignments and tests, and how much effort the teacher believes he put in. Letter grades do not tell parents which skills their children have mastered or whether they are working at grade level. Because one fourth-grade teacher might be reviewing basic multiplication facts, while another is teaching multiplication of two- or three-digit numbers, getting an A in each of these classes would mean very different things. The parent of a child in these classes would not know if the child were learning what he should be to meet the standards.

Standards-based report cards should provide more consistency between teachers than traditional report cards, because all students are evaluated on the same grade-appropriate skills. Parents can see exactly which skills and knowledge their children have learned.

Finally, when your child attends a new school this will give the receiving school a very clear picture of what has been taught at BAES and how your child did in relation to what was taught.

Parent Conferences: The following is taken from the Harvard Family Project:

Parent-Teacher Conferences: A Tip Sheet for Parents

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. You and your child's school have something in common: You both want your child to learn and do well. When parents and teachers talk to each other, each person can share important information about your child's talents and needs. Each person can also learn something new about how to help your child. Parent-teacher conferences are a great way to start talking to your child's teachers. This tip sheet suggests ways that you can make the most of parent-teacher conferences so that everyone wins especially your child.

What should you expect?

A two-way conversation. Like all good conversations, parent-teacher conferences are best when both people talk and listen. The conference is a time for you to:

- **learn about your child's progress in school:**
- **Ask to see data about your child's attendance, grades, and test scores.**
- **Find out whether your child is meeting school expectations and academic standards.**

This is also a time for the teacher to learn about what your child is like at home. When you tell the teacher about your child's skills, interests, needs, and dreams, the teacher can help your child more.

Emphasis on learning. Good parent-teacher conferences focus on how well the child is doing in school. They also talk about how the child can do even better. To get ready for the conversation, look at your child's homework, tests, and notices before the conference. Be sure to bring a list of questions that you would like to ask the teacher.

Opportunities and challenges. Just like you, teachers want your child to succeed. You will probably hear positive feedback about your child's progress and areas for improvement. Be prepared by thinking about your child's strengths and challenges beforehand. Be ready to ask questions about ways you and the teacher can help your child with some of his or her challenges.

Best Practices in Education: Next Saturday almost 100 educators will descend on the grounds of the BAES campus where your children's teachers will present workshops on a wide variety of topics to Peace Corps Trainers and Gambian educators. The BAES faculty will be **modeling** for your children what "Community Service" really means. It is hoped that these educators will take back to their villages what they have learned and share with their own learning communities. Thank you BAES faculty for giving back and for modeling for our students. We are a true community of learners.

And Now A Word From BAES Faculty

Pre-K

We won first place for the Halloween door decoration contest. The Pre-K door was the favorite for its creativity and the adorable tissue mummies the kids made.

We love collaborative art in our class. It's such a good way to foster teamwork and social awareness. Sharing with your neighbor, listening to conversations, taking turns and complimenting another's work are very important skills for the little ones to acquire.

We made monster crafts for Halloween. Sure, some monsters are scary, but our monsters are fun and friendly. We had a great time painting and decorating them. We created Halloween Spider crafts made from pipe cleaners. They're kind of spooky and creepy.

This trimester we have been having fun with colors. So far we have learned 10. We worked on light and dark colors. We went through our school garden and collected different leaves. We learned how leaves can have different colors, sizes and shapes. These past few weeks we had a fun pompom station! This included a pompom drop and a place to sort the pompoms by color. From box full of colored pompoms of different sizes, we focused on the colors and sizes. We also got to compare the texture of the smooth and soft pompoms to the sparkly bristly ones. We also had tongs and scoops available to exercise finger muscles in picking up the pompoms. This was a very popular station with a fun way to learn about and practice sorting colors.

In our morning circle we are learning how many days there are in a week, how many months are in a year and how many seasons are in a year.

In our Math class we made Colorful Beads Trees. We made simple little pipe cleaner trees by taking some brown pipe cleaners. Next, we threaded the beads onto the trees. We practiced counting by putting three beads on each branch. But best of all, this exercise strengthens little hands for future writing.

Now we are working on decorating our class for Christmas while strengthening important skills: counting, sorting, patterning, fine motor skills, attention, focus, and independence.

Hello from Kindergarten,

We've had a great month of learning. We continued our fun, fantastic fabric unit in science by exploring what various fabrics are made from. Did you know that burlap is made from the jute plant, silk is made from silkworm cocoons which have to be boiled before you can make thread from them, and that your nylon raincoat is made from oil!?! We also evaluated the different properties of fabrics to decide for which type of clothing they are best suited. (Ha, ha – "suited"– get it?) We tied this into our math studies by making several bar graphs to organize the information.

Speaking of math, in this past month we wrapped up our unit on position and sorting. We had to spend a little extra time on it, because while we were pretty good at sorting and classifying objects, we found it was a bit more difficult to explain in words the sorting and classifying "rules" we were using. We have now moved on to graphing and patterns. We have learned that graphs are a useful tool for organizing information so that it can be easily understood. We have practiced using and making three types of graphs: real graphs, picture graphs and bar graphs. We are currently working on understanding, recognizing and extending patterns.

In RLA, pre-assessments and laying foundations has been the name of the game. The Land of the Letter People curriculum is quite impressive all around, but Ms. Jen is very impressed with its thorough and methodical approach to early literacy. We have been training our ears and brains with phonological awareness activities, we have been getting in the habit of searching out printed words in our surroundings, we have completed an initial review of the letters of the alphabet, and we have started learning some "Everyday Words": words that are used every day when people speak and write.

Grade 1

Grade one are **READING ROCKSTARS!** This trimester we have had a large focus on reading and writing. As you can see from the pictures students are have been engaged in a variety of literacy lessons. These include (but not limited too) literacy centers, read alouds with guest parents during library time, buddy reading with grade 2/3 students every Monday and our October assembly where students wrote , illustrated and presented stories to their parents. I am so proud of the growth I am seeing with our students. Stop by and read a book to us!
Ms. Maggie Savage



Grade 2-3

Grade 2/3 performed two class plays recently for Grade 1 and parents, while learning to identify characteristics of a fable and a tall tale. In "The Foolish Little Hare", students recognized that the moral of the story was that we should not always believe everything we hear. The tall tale, "Febold Feboldson Saves Nebraska from Drought" included a scene in which Febold (the fellow on the horse) caused a whole river to evaporate! This coincided nicely with our latest science unit on water that included evaporation and condensation experiments. The children guessed correctly that after all that evaporation, it would be sure to rain! We are now turning our focus to social studies, looking at the unique cultures of the early peoples of the Northwest Coast of North America. In reading, we are concluding a class novel, "The Whipping Boy", that has been quite challenging, but enjoyable. The children are noticing many similes along the way and writing their own predictions about what might happen in the next chapter. One note of thanks to Kelechi's parents for providing a movie of "The Whipping Boy". At the end of the movie, several shouts of "Bravo!" were heard!



Grade 4-5

This lively group is very busy on a variety of projects and learning to work well together. Most of our run-ins are solving themselves and we are good at supporting each other.

In Math we have realized the importance of multiplication tables not only in divisions, but in fraction equivalences or in working out percentages of numbers. Most students can now rapidly work out multiplication and division by 10 or multiples of 10, by "shunting" the decimal point. We have worked extensively with decimal numbers and their place values, as well as adding and subtracting them. We have learned to understand MOA (movement of arc) as related to the measurement of the Earth's circumference in degrees, minutes and seconds. Students in science and math have worked with measurements in cm/mm, cm², mm² as well as inches and feet.

We have been enjoying and reading The Egypt Game after Number the Stars. Just as the latter initiated some research into a background of WW II, we are now delving into ancient Egypt and enjoying research of gods, pharaohs and hieroglyphics. We are understanding the inner world of a lone girl in a new environment and have written many short pieces of analysis of this rich text. Students are beginning, with prompting, to understand the time sequence of the novel and its ever-changing narrative point of view. They are appreciating the author's deliberate contrasting of mundane profane objects with those sacred to ancient Egypt.

We are still working through our nutrition unit and recently completed our second investigation on yeast as an indicator of sugar content. All appear to enjoy getting their hands dirty and seeing the yeast react with the sugar. They are becoming "food smart" and can better understand food labels.

We have also started a social studies unit that will take us through map reading and the history of cartography and early mapping. This will be related to the AERO period of 1500-1800 and to the host country and region of West Africa. Students have enjoyed finding absolute locations on globes and world maps and we are beginning to work on map reading. Students blew me away with their observations of Vermeer's "The Astronomer" in which they picked up on much of the painting's content.

Ewan Good

French K-9

Bonjour from the French room.

Middle school works on collecting information for future class projects.

In G6-7, we are busy collecting information to be able to write about the physical description of a region or an area. We are learning words like mountain, river, valley, sea, and desert and their location on a map.

In G8-9 we are shopping! Names of shops, money, size, colors are all gathered for future projects. Each of these themes brings lots of class discussions especially in comparing practices in different cultures.

G4-5 students are learning the different standards of speaking in French (polite/ slang/ familiar). When asking about someone's name, they can use: Comment tu t'appelles? Comment vous vous appelez? Tu t'appelles comment? Mon nom c'est Patrice et toi?

G2-3 is ending the first trimester in grand style as students present a short dialogue to the First Grade students. They ask each other about their names and age in an interesting way! Later, students will read aloud what they have written about a classmate. This is the final work that took lots of energy and determination. Students collected information from their chosen friend, and they wrote several drafts in French before coming up with this presentation.

G1 students are learning about pets from a red fish to a hamster! They practice talking about these special friends.

Kindergarten is wrapping up the unit on colors as they practice how to ask for pencils, books, markers in a specific color and as many as they want. (je peux avoir trois crayons bleus?)

Madame Joof French K-9

SCIENCE –Grades 6-9

Grade 6/7 students will be exploring the general properties of matter and the connections among them. Students discover the nature of materials that make up themselves and their universe. They will then study “physical and chemical changes” and will be able to discover the four phases that matter can exist in. Phase changes and their relationships to changes in heat energy are studied, and students learn to distinguish between a chemical property and chemical change.

Students will learn how to classify matter according to its makeup. As they learn about the various kinds of mixtures, they discover why solutions are different from other mixtures. Students also learn to use chemical symbols, formulas, and balanced equations to describe chemical reactions.

The students will then revise the previous topics in preparation for the first trimester examination.

Grade 8/9 students having a solid understanding of waves, will move on to study sound, beginning with a look at what it is and how it is produced. They will also study the properties, such as pitch, intensity and loudness. The students will also look at what happens when sound waves combine or are altered as in the Doppler effects. Students start to apply this knowledge as they study sound quality, the difference between music and noise, the many applications of sound—such as sonar and ultrasound, and how the body detects noise.

This will be followed by revision of the previous works in preparation for the end of trimester examination.

Mr. Sang Jain

Mathematics - Grades 6-9

In grade 6 & 7, students continue to work on the Numbers & Operations standard and started to explore the standard on Patterns, Functions and Algebra. Students are learning to: write and evaluate numerical expressions involving whole-number and exponents; write, read, and evaluate expressions in which letters stand for numbers (variables). They can now identify parts of an expression using mathematical terms (sum, term, product, factor, quotient, coefficient); view one or more parts of an expression as a single entity. To gain a better understanding, they learn to evaluate expressions at specific values of their variables. These can also include expressions that arise from formulas used in real-world problems. Students are reminded to always follow the Order of Operations when performing calculations. The degree of difficulty varies depending on the student's level in math. As they master certain skills, each student is given the chance to move on to higher level thinking skills related to these topics.

Students in grades 8&9 continue to build their ‘algebra’ skills by learning to solve problems using the different strategies from our math Toolbox. A great emphasis is placed on writing equations for given problems. They are asked to simulate situations in order to come up with an equation that can help solve some problems. The 8th and 9th graders gain practice in solving multi-step real-life and mathematical problems posed with positive and negative rational numbers in any form (whole numbers, fractions, and decimals), using tools strategically. They learn to apply properties of operations to calculate with numbers in any form; convert between forms as appropriate; and assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies. *For example: If a woman making \$25 an hour gets a 10% raise, she will make an additional 1/10 of her salary an hour, or \$2.50, for a new salary of \$27.50.* Students learned how to apply formulas in distance rate problems, geometry (perimeter and areas of rectangles, squares and circles), and using the Pythagoras Theorem to find the missing length in a right triangle. Students are encouraged to use critical thinking skills and made to practice problems that can help improve using such skills. The 9th graders also started working with matrices and adding and subtracting of the same size. Both groups also explored the coordinate system by graphing linear equations and creating function tables. Dilation, reflection, and translations of images are also investigated.

End of chapter assessments and quizzes to check for understanding continue to be given when needed. Math exploration continues in the middle school as we fine tune our mathematical tools and learn to become better problem solvers.

Mrs. Amal Abou- Alfa

Humanities 6-9

Students in Humanities are busy getting ready for our final exams coming up next week. In each class we are reviewing the novels we have read over the term, the major themes in the novels and the author's purpose in the novels. We are synthesizing what we have learned about South Asia and the major events and movements of the 20th century so that we can begin to find answers to our essential questions. The 6/7 class is writing persuasive speeches which take a team research project they completed about India and apply that knowledge to a problem in The Gambia that they think we as a middle school team might be able to tackle as our Service Learning Project in Term 2. While writing these speeches, we are learning how to use rhetorical devices such as repetition, restatement, and parallel structure. The eighth and ninth graders are also synthesizing what they have learned from close reading of the novels *Animal Farm* and *A Chronicle of a Death Foretold* and the author's techniques and using this knowledge to write an essay comparing and contrasting two speeches that transformed history: Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address. They have worked very hard to comb through those speeches for techniques that each man used to move his audience emotionally. Thus, for this term we will have several strong writing samples, a speech performance, final exams, and a culminating project with which to assess the students' achievement within the standards for Unit 1.

The Student Council is planning ahead and looking forward to supporting the upcoming PTO bake sale on November 26th as well as hosting a special table at the Holiday Bazaar on December 12th. As these will both be ways in which the Student Council will raise funds, they are also working out a plan and a budget outlining how they plan to spend funds. Part of the Student Council vision is to raise student morale, so they are looking for ways to serve the student body that will improve morale.

Pastoral Care is a team effort on the part of the middle school teachers. We are in the middle of the third unit in the year-long course. Teachers have been busy planning and teaching the middle school habits of successful teenagers, study skills, and health and family life.
Ms. Wendy Morrill

Physical Education PreK-9

Middle school have been working in groups of 3-4 creating and performing 2 minute routines with the goal to improve muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and aerobic capacity. They have also spent an entire week assessing themselves on these four areas of fitness.

Pre K 1&2 are mastering the different animal movements combined with tempos using skill cards and music and are currently being assessed.

Grades 2&3 children have practiced in groups of 3 triangles passing through kicking and trapping circuits at various stations and their skills are currently been assessed.

Grade 1 is sharpening their motor skills in throwing and catching using perforated balls and scoops. These lessons have been ones they enjoy a lot and they have been able to come up with a game using scoops and balls.

Kindergarten have recently entered lesson 13 an introduction (from the Spark PE Curriculum) to fitness which they find very challenging.

Mr. Stephen Wright

Art

During the past month the art room had to endure its fair share of very brightly colored cut outs, paint and even some glass stained windows. Any K-9 student can tell you Matisse was called a 'wild beast' because of the way he used color. The students took his lead and created some very colorful Matisse inspired art. The younger students enjoyed reading the book, Matisse, King of color and they especially had a great time listening to the story 'When Picasso met Matisse', a story that made the connection between Matisse and his friend Picasso, who's work we studied last year. The older students watched a documentary on Matisse's life and determined how Matisse's work has influenced almost any form of modern visual art.

The Kindergartners made a collage inspired by Matisse's 'danseuse creole'.



Henri Matisse



Jessie

The first graders were inspired by Matisse's Sorrow of the King and wrote their own story in class with Ms. Savage. They 'drew with scissors' just like Matisse did to visualize their stories. They are still working on their masterpieces.

The second and third graders used Matisse's famous painting of goldfish as an inspiration. They used a variety of painting techniques and cut outs to make their collages.



Henri Matisse



Zoe

The fourth and fifth graders are going crazy with colors and patterns as they used some of Matisse's earlier work 'Purple robe with anemones' as an inspiration. Their masterpieces are still 'under construction'.

Grade 6 and 7 were impressed with the glass stained windows Matisse created for the Chapel du Rosaire. They made their own collaborative version for one of the art room doors.



Henri Matisse



Grade 6-7

The eighth and ninth graders studied the fauvist movement and created fauvist portraits of people who inspire them.



Henri Matisse



Ndey – Portrait of Nelson Mandel



Estelle-Erika – Portrait of Oprah Winfrey

All students contributed to the Halloween decorations for the school's Halloween event.

Grade K-1 created witch legs and Halloween silhouettes while student's 2-9 created artworks inspired by the 'Day of the dead'.



In the next couple of weeks grade k-3 will explore the element of art 'color' while the older students get introduced to the first principle of design 'balance'.

Ms. Leen Permentier



Important Dates

November 17/18

November 20

November 21st

November 26th

November 26th

November 27th/28th/29th

December 3rd

December 4th

December 5th

December 10th

December 12th

December 18th

January 11th

MS Exams

Grade 2/3 Assembly

“Best Practices in Education” Conference

Report Cards are sent home electronically.

PD Day Noon Dismissal

Long Weekend (Thanksgiving)

Parent Teacher Conference

No School for Students

Board Meeting

Support Staff Luncheon

Holiday Program 6:00

Holiday Bazaar 2:00-7:00

½ day Holiday Begins

School ends at 12:00

School resumes at 8:00

Parent -Teacher Conferences - Thursday, December 3, 2015

Time	Nasiba Malikova	Jen Durgin	Maggie Savage	Vanessa Sanyang	Ewan Good	Wendy Morrill	Amal Alfa	Henriette Joof	Sang Jain	Leen Permentier	Stephen Wright
8:00 - 8:20	Nefichi Olikaju	Gaelle-Alexandra Nziki		Ethnan Pimundu	Amart Ceessay	Bintou Drammeh	Kyla Jallow	Abdulaziz Baldeh			
8:20 - 8:40	Manyata Sharma	Joelle Hamdan	Enoo Eburuke	Divine Olikaju	Eloise-Michelle Nziki	Ebenezer Pimundu	Bintou Drammeh	Kyla Jallow	Abdulaziz Baldeh		
8:40 - 9:00	Kavyansh Punjabi	Ruke Eburuke	Fernanda Leighton-Otero	Raef Hamdan	Eileen Harris	Georges-William Nziki	Ebenezer Pimundu	Bintou Drammeh	Kyla Jallow	Abdulaziz Baldeh	
9:00 - 9:20	James Morrill	Martina Garayeb	Ahmad Bazy	Jimi Clarke	Madeleine Leighton-Otero	Estelle-Erika Nziki	Abdulaziz Baldeh	Ebenezer Pimundu	Bintou Drammeh	Kyla Jallow	Kaining Jia
9:20 - 9:40	Tiana Bazy	Paula Garayeb	Ajani Clarke	Reem Al-Kaabi	Raya Farage	Abdulaziz Baldeh	Georges-William Nziki	Kaining Jia	Ebenezer Pimundu	Bintou Drammeh	Kyla Jallow
9:40 - 10:00	Judith Espinosa	Jessie Banda	Paul Nsega	Moza Al-Kaabi		Kyla Jallow	Estelle-Erika Nziki		Kaining Jia	Ebenezer Pimundu	Bintou Drammeh
10:00 - 10:20	Mona Al-Kaabi	Liliane Apaloo-Walla	Adham Hydara	Joseph Banda	Carlyon Jallow	Ahmed Drammeh	Esther Nsega	Georges-William Nziki		Kaining Jia	Ebenezer Pimundu
10:20 - 10:40	Yancy Price	Rajat Badhawan	Amira Lustenberger	Luca Apaloo-Walla		Kaining Jia	Ahmed Drammeh	Estelle-Erika Nziki	Esther Nsega		Abdulaziz Baldeh
10:40 - 11:00	Marielle Elhajj			Zoe Greathouse	Phirisa Inseemaung		Kaining Jia	Esther Nsega	Georges-William Nziki	Ahmed Drammeh	
11:00 - 11:20	David John	Audry Banna		Julia Vives Roca	Caitlin Greathouse				Estelle-Erika Nziki	Esther Nsega	Ahmed Drammeh
11:20 - 11:40				Kelechi Okebe	Aina Vives Roca				Ahmed Drammeh	Georges-William Nziki	Esther Nsega

