



January 22, 2016

Volume 9

Issue 18

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.

Professional Development Day January 27th, school finishes at 12:00.

PTO monthly meeting will be held at the Village Wednesday, January 27th at 5:45. Anyone interested in volunteering is welcome to join us.

The next PTO event is the Movie Night on Friday, February 5th. Join us as we play The Good Dinosaur on the big screen. The school doors will open at 6:00 p.m. Admission for the movie is 50 D per student. There is no charge for Parents and Children under the age of two. Also, BAES students can invite up to two guests to join them that evening. Food and drinks will be sold separately. Be on the look-out for ticket sales forms. We will be collecting money and distributing tickets next Friday at both the Assembly and end of school day. As a reminder, All children must be accompanied by an adult in order to be able to attend. Thanks and hope to see you there.

From Our Board Chair:

Happy New Year BAES Parents and Students!

I hope everyone had an enjoyable winter break and a smooth transition back to school. I admit it took my family a few days to get going again. Can we already be halfway through the school year?

There are a lot of exciting things happening at BAES. In addition to all the preparations taking place for the musical Annie Jr. and our accreditation visit this spring, we have been hard at work recruiting a new school Director for the 2016-2017 school year. After months of searching I am pleased to announce that we have hired Caleb Steindam for the position. Mr. Steindam comes to BAES after finishing his Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) in Curriculum and Instruction at Loyola University in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to beginning his Ed.D., Mr. Steindam was the Primary School Coordinator for the American International School of Freetown, which also uses an AERO standards-based curriculum. At Loyola, Mr. Steindam served as a Teacher Educator on courses such as Constructive Learning Environments, Culturally Responsive Instruction, and Educational Policy for Diverse Students. He has extensive classroom teaching experience in cross-cultural and multilingual academic environments. Let's all extend a warm welcome to Caleb Steindam when he joins our BAES community next year!

Though we are excited to have found our new Director, it sadly brings us one step closer to Sharon Sperry's departure. Ms. Sperry has done a fantastic job raising the academic standards of our school (have you checked out those new smart boards?) She puts her heart and soul into everything she touches and she will be sorely missed. Fortunately we will benefit from Ms. Sperry's stewardship for a few more months. Please take a moment to thank Ms. Sperry for her service to our school when you next see her.

I'd also like to thank Board member Marc Shaw and the entire Search Committee for vetting a number of qualified candidates. The committee was comprised of Board members, teachers, staff, and students, who ensured that all voices were represented in the search for our new Director. I am honored to be part of this team that is so dedicated to ensuring BAES's continued success.

Best wishes,

Amy Walla
BAES Board Chair

Thanks PTO: Cooking class got to use the new pots and bowls that the PTO purchased. It made cooking class much easier. I know that kindergarten has also used them. THANKS PTO and ALL BAES PARENTS, your contributions really matter.

Fire Drill: Last Friday we had a fire drill and the students did very well. If there is ever a real fire etc. we will be sure to let you know that day. However, if your child comes home and says we had a fire at school today or a bomb it was most likely just a drill. We hope that we will never have a fire at BAES, or a demonstration but it is import for us to practice regularly so that if any thing does happen it is an automatic response and everyone knows what they need to do. If you are on campus when one of our drills occurs please follow the teachers or custodial staff's directions and go where you are told to be. We appreciate your cooperation.

International Luncheon: On February 17 as part of our International week during reading month we would like to hold an international luncheon. We are asking parents to contribute a dish from their home country. The dish should serve 15-20 people. There is a sign up sheet below. We really appreciate your contribution and the chance for our students to experience dishes from around the world as BAES represents approximately 20 nationalities. Please have your dish at BAES by 12:00 on the 17th of February. Please turn your slips into the office by Friday January 29th so we have an idea.

Accreditation: Teachers are just completing the section on curriculum for the self-study today. They will now go back to all the other standards and update them and make sure that they are ready to go by the end of the month. There have been many changes to BAES in the last 18 months and we want to make sure that the visiting team is aware of these changes. As parents you had the opportunity to give input to the accreditation process both last year and this year through the survey we did. Unfortunately we did not have a lot of parent participation this year.

Just a reminder: BAES is the only fully accredited school in The Gambia. There are five major accrediting agencies:

- Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges
- New England Association
- Southern Association
- Western Association
- Council of International Schools (located in UK)

Although all of these agencies have different protocols they all expect schools to complete a self-study and have a team visit.

These accrediting agencies do not only look at the school's curriculum but at all other aspects of the school, this makes the visit unique from inspection visits at British or Australian Schools.

The Team will look at:

- Mission and Philosophy
- Governance and Leadership
- School Organization and Staff
- Curriculum
- Student Life and Student Services
- Finance
- Facilities
- Health and Safety
- Most important is improvement-planning, do we have a plan for moving BAES forward over the next seven years? Are we looking at the future of BAES and how will we make it brighter?

When the team arrives in April they will already have reviewed our self-study thoroughly. They will come in as "critical friends" to see if what we say in our self-study is what is actually occurring at BAES. It is important for parents to know that the visiting team is made up of all volunteers. BAES covers the costs of travel, accommodation and meals but there is no payment made to any of the team members. This is why it is important for BAES to send their own volunteers. Last year Madame Joof and Mrs. Morrill both volunteered, this year Mr. Good will go to another school as a team member.

Have a great weekend!

Sharon

I am willing to contribute a dish from (Name country)_____

on February 17, 2016. I will have my dish at BAES at 12:00.

Parent's Name(Please print):_____



Lots Happening at BAES- Please put these dates on your calendar. Please note that a few days such as French Assembly and Math/Science day have changed since the original was made.

Important Dates

January	What is happening at BAES?
January 27th	PD Day School finishes at 12:00
January 29th	Grade 4/5 Assembly 8:00am
January 30th	Board Meeting and Training
February	What is happening at BAES?
February	Reading Month
February 5th	PTO MOVIE NIGHT
February 8-11th	Writing Prompts Grades K-9 Narrative and Expository
February 17th	International Day
February 18th	Gambian Independence NO SCHOOL The President might call Friday off and in that case there will be no school on Friday. Please watch TV listen to the radio or ask your staff. If the President does not officially call Friday we will have school!
February 22 nd	Last After School except for "Annie"
February 26th	Author's Tea/Poetry Reading 8:15am
February 26th	Board meeting 2:00
March	What is Happening at BAES?
March 18th	MS Assembly 8:00am
March 18th	Board 2:00pm
March 24th	French Assembly 8:00am School finishes at 12:00
March 24th	"Annie" 6:00 Ocean Bay

March 25 th - April 3 rd	Spring Break
April	What is happening at BAES?
April 4 th	School resumes at 8:00am
April 22 nd	PreK Assembly
April 22 nd	Math/Science Day
April 22 nd	Board 2:00pm
April 23-April 30 th	MSA Visiting Team is here for the Team Visit
May	What is Happening at BAES?
May 3 rd	PD noon dismissal
May 1-20	MAP Testing
May 16 th — 20 th	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 20 th	PE Assembly
May 25 th -29 th	Long Weekend May 25 th is Africa Liberation Day
May 30-June 2 nd	Writing Prompts
June	What is Happening at BAES?
June 8 th	Moving Up Day Grade 5
June 9 th	Moving Up Project Presentations Grade 5
June 15 th	Student-Led Conference Students come only when they have their conference with their parents/guardians
June 17 th	Board meeting 2:00pm
June 21 st	Field Day
June 22 nd	Graduation and Leaving Ceremony. School Finishes for the year directly after the ceremony
June 22 nd	After Graduation and Leaving Ceremony Summer Holidays begin.