



March 24, 2016

Volume 9

Issue 27

### ***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.**

**French Assembly:** Special Thanks to Madame Joof and the students who presented the French assembly today.

**"ANNIE"** Annie will be held tonight at Ocean Bay. The buffet will only be available to those who have purchased tickets ahead of time. We hope that all BAES families will be able to attend this exciting performance. We want to thank Mrs. Sanyang for her incredible direction of this performance. This program has involved over 60% of BAES students! BAES HAS TALENT!!!

### **Special Thanks to Everyone Who Has Assisted Us With The Annie Production.**

Special Thanks to MP Trading who loaned us the antique radio and street lamp.

**Have you seen the walls???** Please stop in and see the amazing walls both inside and outside BAES. Many thanks to Ms. Leen and Mr. Touray for this amazing legacy.

**Reports:** Reports were sent home to all students whose financial obligations for trimester one and two were completed. Individual letters we sent home to parents with outstanding financial obligations. If you have any financial questions please make an appointment with Ms. Leah. If you have any academic questions please make an appointment with your child's teacher.

**Spring Break:** We hope everyone has a wonderful spring break and you return at 8:00am well rested and ready for 55 very busy final days of the school year.

## ***A Letter from the BAES School Board***

March 24, 2016

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty and Staff -

As we head into Spring Break, the Board would like to update you on some of the changes taking place at BAES.

In our January letter, we announced the selection of Mr. Caleb Steindam to replace Sharon Sperry when she retires at the end of this year. Thanks to Director Sperry and everyone who took time out to welcome Mr. Steindam during his visit to BAES in early March. Mr. Steindam left well prepared to lead our school next year.

Several teachers will also be leaving BAES at the end of this year. Ms. Jen, Ms. Savage, Ms. Morrill, and Mr. Good have enriched our community and we wish them all the best in their new endeavors. Ms. Leen will bid farewell to BAES at the end of March. The beautiful murals that now adorn our walls will remind us every day of her talent for inspiring our children's creativity. PTO President Jennifer Greathouse has

generously agreed to take over the art program until the end of the year. We can't wait to see what our kids will make next.

Though we are sad to say goodbye, we are excited to introduce the amazing teachers who will be joining us for the 2016-17 school year:

Mr. James Keeghan is a Year Three teacher at the International Academy in Amman, Jordan. He received a bachelor's degree in Primary Education from the University of Sydney in Australia. Mr. Keeghan is an inquiry-based educator with a background in Special Education and a passion for sports.

Ms. Stacy York currently teaches Year Five at the International Academy in Amman, Jordan. She received a bachelor's degree in Primary Education from the University of Sydney in Australia. Ms. York enjoys drama, choir, technology and sports.

Ms. Elin Jacobson heads a charity in Bijilo called READ – a library for Gambian children and adults. She has previously taught grades one through six in Sweden and The Gambia and has experience in Special Education. Ms. Jacobson has a master's degree in Education from Orebro University in Sweden.

Mr. Scott Hemsey teaches Middle School Math in Chicago, Illinois USA. He has a Master of Arts in Teaching. Mr. Hemsey also has experience teaching the International Baccalaureat Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) and English Language Learners (ELL) in South Korea. He enjoys writing, art and sports.

Ms. Leah Woldman currently runs an experiential program focused on the creative arts and literacy for more than 30,000 children in Chicago, Illinois USA. At BAES she will be dual-hatted as the Art Teacher and Librarian. Ms. Woldman has a Master of Arts in Youth Educational Development. She has experience teaching ELL in South Korea and has a passion for art, writing and sports.

We are also thrilled to welcome back our returning teachers Ms. Alfa, Mme. Joof, Ms. Sanyang, Mr. Jain, Mr. Wright, and Ms. Malikova. They have been the backbone of our school and are a tremendous resource. We are grateful to Director Sperry and Mr. Steindam for recruiting such an excellent team to guide us through the next few years. Final class assignments will be announced closer to the start of school.

The Board will have a total of three seats to fill at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on May 31. Board Member Mary Visser McKay is leaving us at the end of March to pursue a career opportunity in the UK. The Board appointed Joan Vives Tomas, Director of Operations at the MRC and previous Board Member, to fill the vacancy until he can stand for a formal vote at the AGM. In addition to Mary's seat, Haytham Hassan and Sandra Amalfi will be coming to the end of their terms in May. The contribution Haytham, Sandra, and Mary have made to the BAES Board has been invaluable and they will be greatly missed. We encourage anyone who is interested in serving to submit your name and a short bio to the Board Chair at [acawalla@gmail.com](mailto:acawalla@gmail.com). Please consider volunteering for this important opportunity!

In order to recruit and retain a high quality faculty and meet anticipated operating expenses, the Board made the difficult decision to implement a modest tuition increase for the 2016-17 school year. Tuition for Pre-K will increase by 3%, grades K-5 by 5%, grades 6-8 by 7% and grades 9-12 by 9%. We will once again benefit from a generous grant by the U.S. State Department, which will help to offset the income the school derives from tuition and fees.

And last, but not least, preparations are nearing completion for our accreditation visit April 24-29. Director Sperry, teachers and staff have been working hard to ensure the visit goes smoothly. We are optimistic that all they have done to elevate our academic standards will result in a favorable assessment by the accreditation team, thus preserving BAES's status as the only accredited school in The Gambia.

I hope you will agree we have a lot to look forward to! We wish you and your family a pleasant Spring Break and we will see you back in April.

Best Regards,

Amy Walla  
BAES Board Chair

- ❖ **What's happening at BAES next?**
- ❖ **March 25<sup>th</sup>-April 3<sup>rd</sup>: Spring Break**
- ❖ **Please remember that school resumes April 4<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00am.**

Have a great weekend!

*Sharon*



**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**

March 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>"Annie"</b> 6:00 Ocean Bay
March 25 <sup>th</sup> -April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Spring Break
<b>April</b>	<b>What is happening at BAES?</b>
April 4 <sup>th</sup>	School resumes at 8:00am
April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Pre-K Assembly
April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Math/Science Day
April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Board 2:00pm
April 23-April 30 <sup>th</sup>	MSA Visiting Team is here for the Team Visit
<b>May</b>	<b>What is Happening at BAES?</b>
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	PD noon dismissal
May 1-20	MAP Testing
May 16 <sup>th</sup> —20 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	PE Assembly
May 25 <sup>th</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup>	Long Weekend May 25 <sup>th</sup> is Africa Liberation Day
May 30-June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Writing Prompts
<b>June</b>	<b>What is Happening at BAES?</b>
June 8 <sup>th</sup>	Moving Up Day Grade 5
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Moving Up Project Presentations Grade 5
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Student-Led Conference Students come only when they have their conference with their parents/guardians
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Board meeting 2:00pm
June 21 <sup>st</sup>	Field Day
June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Graduation and Leaving Ceremony. <b>School Finishes for the year directly after the ceremony</b>
June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>After Graduation and Leaving Ceremony Summer Holidays begin.</b>