

BAIS Buzz

Message from the Director

Dear BAIS Families,

October arrives next week, and that means it's **Book Month!** Our librarian, Ms. Sainab, has provided lots of information about Book Month. Please read all about it in the Buzz. She did such a wonderful job with Book Month last year and brought many fresh ideas to our celebration.

MAP testing continues on Monday. Please continue to make sure that your children get plenty of sleep each night and have a good breakfast before they come to school.

After School Activities will begin this week. Registration forms have gone out in the WhatsApp groups. Please sign up as soon as possible.

Halloween will be here soon! This is always a fun BAIS community event. More information is inside the Buzz.

Please see the news from the Business Office inside the Buzz, especially the item about bank transfers. We need either the name of the student or the invoice number indicated on the transfer.

Finally, in the coming weeks I will be sharing exciting news borne from my own 50th high school reunion back in August at The Altamont School in Birmingham, Alabama (<https://www.altamontschool.org/>). Altamont is one of the elite college prep schools in the Southeast, and their Head of School, Mr. Cecil Stodghill, is a dynamic leader who shares a passion for exploring how our two schools might collaborate in the future. We will have a joint announcement about that in the near future, so stay tuned!

Have a wonderful weekend!

Robert Harper, Director

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Upcoming Events

Mon.-Fri., Sept. 29-Oct. 3
Map Testing 6-8

Wed. Oct. 1
Book Month Begins

Thurs. Oct. 2
After School Activities Begin

Wed. Oct. 8
Professional Development Day
12:00 dismissal

Sat., Nov. 1
Halloween Party



Staff Spotlight

Mr. Sekou van Heusden



I completed my Bachelor in classical percussion at the Conservatory of Amsterdam, and went on tour with various orchestras, including the Dutch, German, and European Union youth orchestras.

During my studies, I spent two years as a percussionist at the State Opera of Nuremberg, gaining invaluable experience as a working musician in the world of opera.

I completed my Master's degree in the Orchestral Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music, studying with musicians from the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera. At the same time, New York City was the perfect place to expand my horizons and learn from some of the most regarded musicians in the world. I kept expanding my knowledge on West-African music culture by studying with internationally renowned master drummer M'Bemba Bangoura from Guinea and master dancer and choreographer Vado Diomande from Ivory Coast.

In 2024, I founded my own artist collective: Sekitos Tribe. Together we create a fascinating blend of traditional and modern music and dance, respecting the history and artists that came before us, as well as exploring new experimental ways.



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Map Testing Continues Monday



What is MAP?

NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Tests are administered at BAIS twice a year, in the fall and the spring. NWEA MAP Growth is a standardized achievement test which measures what students know and informs what they're ready to learn next by using a computer adaptive test that adjusts to the ability and knowledge of the student. MAP data allows schools to differentiate and adjust instruction for individual students, groups of students, or entire classes based on results of the assessment. Your child's teacher can use the results of the NWEA MAP Growth assessments to better understand your child's individual needs and to help him/her progress in the assessed area. Because the assessment is a growth measure, it can track the growth of the student between testing events and over multiple years of testing.

Starting September 22nd to October 3rd, Kindergarten to Grade 12 students will be taking MAP Growth tests. These are not timed tests and students are given all the time they need to complete tests. Parents new to BAIS may know little about MAP so I am providing some information on what MAP is, why we use it, and how to read your child's results. That information is below in a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

The Most Important Two Takeaways:

- MAP scores are **only one 'snapshot in time'** of your child's progress; they do not outweigh teacher observations or the semester report card but give additional external evidence and data about progress for the child, the family, the teacher and BAIS.
- Two scores are given – Growth and Achievement; **growth is the more important** since our goal is for all children to be improving their skills over time.

[MAP GROWTH FAQs](#)

[MAP Growth Fact Sheet](#)

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the BAIS MAP Coordinator, Amal Alfa or your child's teacher.

*Amal Alfa
MS-HS Math Teacher
K-HS IT Teacher & IT/MAP Coordinator*

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October is Book Month at BAIS!

As always, the purpose of Book Month is to support students of all grade levels in becoming active, enthusiastic readers by encouraging and celebrating reading for pleasure, both at home and at school. Throughout the month, we organise a variety of special events and programs designed to promote a love of books and inspire a passion for reading, writing, and illustrating.

Below are the details of our many Book Month activities. Most events simply require faculty support, encouragement, and participation, while a few may also require parent or family involvement. Please take a moment to review the information and see how your continued support can make this year's Book Month a success.

Together, as a school community, we can inspire students to find joy in reading and create lasting memories through fun, engaging activities.

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

There are many ways you can support our Book Month and help make it a meaningful experience for your child. Here's how you can get involved:

- **Stay Informed:** Review the information below to know what's planned throughout Book Month.
- **Get Involved in the Illustrator's Tea:** Ask your child about the book cover design they'll be presenting at ***The Illustrator's Tea on Friday, October 31*** (see details below), and support them in preparing for it.
- **Encourage a Reading Culture at Home:** Boost your child's excitement by talking about what you're reading, revisiting your favorite childhood books together, or reading alongside them. Your enthusiasm can be catching!
- **Motivate Older Students:** For middle and high school students, consider offering fun reading challenges or small incentives to encourage participation in Book Month activities.
- **Volunteer:** Sign up to be a mystery reader or guest reader, or share ideas, connections, or book recommendations that could enhance classroom activities and help make this year's Book Month a success.

ONGOING PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

School-Wide Reading Challenge/Reading Logs

Each grade level will be given a weekly goal of non-required reading minutes that will contribute to a school-wide reading goal:

Weekly Goals (Individuals)

- PK - Grade 1: 100 mins
 - (20 mins per day M-F, weekends count as extra minutes or makeup time)



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- Grades 2 - 5: 150 mins
 - (30 mins per day M-F, weekends count as extra minutes or makeup time)
- Grades 6 & Up: 225 mins
 - (45 mins per day M-F, weekends count as extra minutes or makeup time.)

School-Wide Goal = 1,000 hours!

Drop Everything & Read (D.E.A.R) Time

Surprise D.E.A.R. Time in November!

Every day in November, we will surprise students with a **D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read)** time, announced over the intercom. Here's what to know:

- **When:** The reading time will be announced randomly each day—students won't know when it's coming, but teachers will!
- **What to do:** When the announcement is made, drop everything and read for 10 minutes.
- **Be prepared:** Students are expected to always have a book with them, especially when heading to their specials.
- To help make this year's ambitious reading challenge more attainable, we'll be counting both D.E.A.R. time and faculty reading minutes in our weekly totals. Faculty, be sure to have a good book on hand, and don't forget to log your reading time!

Let's embrace the fun of reading at any moment!

Mystery Readers

Once a week in October, elementary students gather in the library from 8:00–8:15 a.m. for a special read-aloud during morning circle, led by a surprise “Mystery Reader.”

Students are given three clues ahead of the reading and try to guess the reader's identity before the big reveal. Past Mystery Readers have included middle and high school students, current and former faculty and staff, parents, and community members.



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Reading Logs for October

Students will soon receive their reading logs to track their independent reading. Here are the key points to remember for this:

- **What counts:** Only personal reading done by choice (not required reading, homework, or class assignments).
- Reading logs will be collected every Friday morning following the Mystery Reader session. Please remind students to bring their reading logs to school each Friday throughout October.
- **Rewards:** If we meet our school-wide goal of **1000 hrs** we'll plan something special—last year, it was a super fun day at the beach!



Local Library Visits

To celebrate Book Month, we'll be visiting local libraries in the Greater Banjul Area for fun reading and craft sessions. We want to make October a month full of great stories, creative crafts, with lots of learning and laughter along the way!!

Get Caught Reading/Listening

We encourage teachers, families, and students to enjoy reading or listening to audiobooks in a variety of fun and relaxing places. Create a cozy reading nook at home, grab a book, snuggle up, and dive into a great story! Parents, don't forget to snap a photo and send it to Mr. Harper, Ms. Amal, or me so we can feature it in the weekly BUZZ and the BAIS Yearbook

SPECIAL EVENTS/IMPORTANT DATES

Dress Like a Book Character Day : Friday, October 31st

We want to celebrate the joy of reading in a fun and creative way by inviting students to come to school dressed as their favorite book character. Costumes can be made using items you already have at home, old clothes, craft supplies, or household items. No need to buy anything new. This is a great opportunity for students to use their imagination and bring loved characters to life. Costumes will be showcased during the CoL Buddy Activity

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School-wide display: This October, students will help grow our **Reading Tree**. Each week during library time, they can add the books they've read to a tree display in the playground.

Illustrators's Tea : Friday, October 31st

of Minutes Read To Be Announced in COL

Students are invited to create and submit an original book cover design for their favorite book. All entries will be proudly displayed in the library hallway and featured during our special Illustrator's Tea.

To wrap up Book Month, we're excited to welcome a book illustrator. Our talented artist brings stories to life through their artwork. They'll share how they turn words into vivid illustrations, spark imagination, and enhance the magic of storytelling through visual creativity.



Edible Book Festival

As part of the Illustrator's Tea, students are invited to take part in the optional Edible Book Fe(a)st. This fun and creative activity challenges participants to make something edible inspired by a book title, author, or character. It's a playful way to bring favorite stories to life through food! Or, you might simply want to share some delicious treats with the BAIS community as a fun way to celebrate the end of Book Month!



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There will be a chance to view and photograph all the entries before they become the snacks served at the end of the Illustrator's Tea. While sweet treats are always fun, healthy and savory book-inspired snacks are strongly encouraged to balance the variety of options.

Many thanks for your support!

Miss Sainab

Halloween is Coming!

 **BAIS Halloween Party!** 

Mark your calendars! The BAIS community is invited to a spooktacular Halloween celebration on **Saturday, November 1, from 6:00–9:00 PM.**

 **What's in store?**

- Trick-or-Treating 
- Haunted House 
- Scary Movie 
- Food & Beverages for Purchase  

 **Tickets:**

- Tickets will go on sale in **October**.
- **100 dalasis per child.**
- Each BAIS student may invite up to **2 friends** who do not attend BAIS.
- We kindly ask that all tickets be purchased **ahead of the event**.

Come ready for chills, thrills, and lots of fun—costumes encouraged!

Mary Jobe

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Saturday Soccer

Attention all soccer players! Saturday Soccer starts again tomorrow. Younger players will go from 9:00-10:00, and older players from 10:15 to 11:15. Players should bring a water bottle and should also wear sunscreen. Parents are also welcome to come and join in! Older players may also bring friends from other schools. See you tomorrow!

From the Business Office

Tuition invoices were sent out a couple of weeks ago. Please remember to reply back to Ms. Leah to acknowledge receipt if you have not already done so.

Also, this is very important...when paying by bank transfer, **please put the child's name or invoice number** for reference on the transfer.

Sometimes we are asked how we determine the exchange rate we use for parents who wish to pay in dalasi. We set the exchange rate once every quarter, in August, November, February, and May. To determine the rate, we use the xe.com currency exchange website. We take the rate that is listed there, round up to the nearest dalasi, then add one dalasi. This helps to protect the school from any currency fluctuation during the quarter.

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September 2025

STUDENT NAME _____

Class _____

PARENT CONTACT Name: _____

Phone _____

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose Portion Size:

Small - 200 Dalasi

Large - 250 Dalasi

2. Choose how you will order:

Tick here to order all the lunches for this month.

Full Period : 19 lunches (Total cost: Small = D3,800 OR Large = D4,750)

Tick here to order lunches by the day.

By the day:

1. Tick the days desired in the chart below

2. Multiply x D 200 (small) or D250 (large)

3. Write in here: Total # lunches: _____ x Cost per portion _____ = D _____

3. Get money and form to BAIS OFFICE

Sept 2025	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Sept 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Grilled Fish served W/ Mexican Rice & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Spaghetti W/ Creamy Tomato Sauce & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Creamy Mushroom Chicken Penne Pasta & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fish Fingers, French Fries with Salad & Fruit
Sept 8-11	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Tagliatelle With Truffle Mushroom Sauce & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fajita (Grilled Chicken & Bell Pepper Wraps) & Cake	★★★★★★★★★ <u>Faculty PD Noon Dismissal</u> ★★★★★★★★★	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Pasta in Creamy Tomato Meatball Sauce & Fruit
Sept 15-18	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fish Benachin & Vegetables with Bissap Sauce & Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Chicken Brochette with potato Salad & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fish in Batter with Roasted Vegetables & Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Beef Bourguignon With Rice & Fruit
Sept 22-25	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Creamy Mushroom Chicken W/ Mixed Pasta & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Beef Burger, French Fries W/ Cucumber Salad	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Chicken Tagine with Rice & Vegetables & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Margarita Pizza Mixed Salad & Ice Cream
Sept-Oct 29-2	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Grilled Fish with Rice & Butter-lime Sauce & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Spaghetti Bolognese & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Crispy Chicken W/ Baked Vegetable Salad & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Beef Stew W/ Rice & Veggies & Fruit

Grade 4/5 Conquers the MAP!



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KG Library Time



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HS Learns About the Atom



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