

October 3, 2025 2025-26 Issue 6

BAIS BUZZ

Message from the Director

Dear BAIS Families,

It's October, and that means it's **Book Month** here at BAIS! The information from **Ms. Sainab** is included again in this week's Buzz. We are so fortunate to have Ms. Sainab, who brings such energy and creativity to this celebration. Thank you also to **Mr. Jeremy Ogusky**, for being our first Mystery Reader! Also, please remember our reading goals for the month, and please encourage your children to read so that we can meet those goals. Once again, we will celebrate meeting our goals with **Beach Day** near the end of May!

MAP testing concluded this week. Results will go home with the first quarter report cards. Thanks so much to **Ms. Amal** who always does such an amazing job administering the MAP Test.

After School Activities began this week. I especially want to thank the **U.S. Marines** from the **U.S. Embassy** who came and organized flag football. We are always so grateful for the Marines and the way that they often volunteer and interact with our students. I believe they will once again organize our Haunted House at Halloween. Thanks so much, Marines!

Speaking of Halloween, as previously announced, our **annual Halloween party** will be **Saturday, November 1**. This is always a fun BAIS community event. More information is inside the Buzz. Thanks again to **Ms. Mary Jobe** for organizing! If you would like to volunteer, please contact Mary.

Please remember that this Wednesday, October 6, is another Professional Development day. Students will be dismissed at 12:00.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Robert Harper, Director

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Upcoming Events

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

Thurs. & Fri., Oct. 23-24
BAIS Holiday
No school

Fri., Oct. 31
Quarter 1 Ends

Sat., Nov. 1
Halloween Party



Staff Spotlight

Ms. Amal Alfa



Hello BAIS Families,

I was asked to share a little about myself, so here it goes! I am currently the longest-serving faculty member at BAIS, with over 37 years of teaching experience—35 of those years right here at BAIS (formerly BAES).

I grew up in The Gambia but left for boarding school at the age of 12, studying in Lebanon, the UK, and later in the USA. I earned a BSc. in Computer Science and Mathematics from the University of Evansville, Indiana, and an MA in Education from the University of Bath in the UK. After my studies, I returned to The Gambia to care for my elderly parents—and have remained here ever since.

My teaching career began quite unexpectedly. When people ask how I became a teacher, I always reply, *“I landed in teaching by accident—and then fell in love with it!”* In 1988, the BAES director then called me and asked if I would be interested in teaching computer literacy and help develop their computer curriculum. Before that, I had taught computer programming to adults in the US, so I thought, *why not?* That marked the beginning of my K–12 teaching journey at BAES.

After a year of teaching IT, I was invited to teach middle and high school mathematics—a subject I have always loved, especially Algebra. Year after year, I renewed my contract, teaching math while also working with colleagues to integrate IT into the curriculum. Over the years, I’ve also served as Internal Coordinator for four accreditation terms, attended the ECIS Teacher Training Program at the University of Cambridge, and participated in numerous technology and math conferences, all of which enriched my teaching and professional growth.

My goal as a teacher has always been to inspire a love of mathematics in my students. Some of my happiest moments are when I see a student’s eyes light up after understanding a new concept—or when alumni reach out to say how my classes helped them later in their studies and in defining their careers.

Beyond teaching, I am a proud mother of two BAES alumni (now successful adults) and a grandmother. My children have fond memories of their years here and often credit their teachers at BAES with helping shape them into who they are today.

When I’m not in the classroom, I enjoy reading, traveling, and cooking.

As I reflect on my journey, I realize that my passion for education and the constant support I’ve received along the way are what have kept me at BAIS all these years. If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn’t change a thing.

Warmly,
Amal A. Alfa

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)



- 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.



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

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' 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!



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

Saturday Soccer

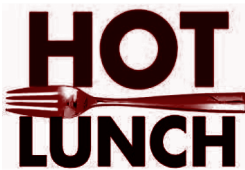
Attention all soccer players! Saturday Soccer continues tomorrow. Younger players will go from 9:00-10:00, and older players from 10:15 to 11:15. Players should bring a water bottle and should also wear sunscreen. Parents are also welcome to come and join in! Older players may also bring friends from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



October 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 : 14 lunches (Total cost: Small = D2,800 OR Large = D3,500)

- Tick here to order lunches by the day.**

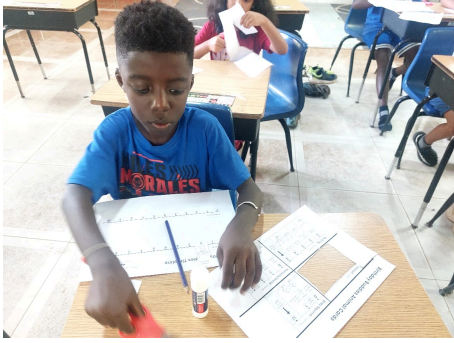
By the day:

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

October 2025	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Oct 6 - 9	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Butter Chicken W/ Rice & Vegetables & Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Pasta in Creamy Tomato Meatball Sauce & Fruit	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ Faculty PD Noon Dismissal ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Creamy Mushroom Chicken W/ Mixed Pasta & Fruit
Oct 13 - 16	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Chicken Fried Rice with Vegetables & Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Beef Burger, French Fries W/ Cucumber Salad & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Spaghetti with Tomato Sauce & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fish in Batter With Roasted Potatoes & Veggies & Fruit
Oct 20 - 23	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Beef Casserole W/ Broccoli Mixed with Pasta & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Chicken Tagine with Rice & Vegetables & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Tagliatelle With Truffle Mushroom Sauce & Fruit	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ NO SCHOOL ☺ BAIS Holiday ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Oct 27-30	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Fish Benachin & Vegetables with Bissap Sauce & Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Crispy Chicken W/ Baked Vegetables Salad & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Spaghetti Bolognaise & Fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Tick to order</u> Margarita Pizza Mixed Salad & Ice Cream

Grade 3 Scientists At Work!



Mystery Reader!



Kindergarten Collaboration!



ASA Volleyball



