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BAIS Buzz

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Message from the Director

Dear BAIS Families,

We are coming down the home stretch of **Book Month**! Today our Mystery Reader was **Ms. Fatoumatta Jobe**, former BAIS teaching assistant and loved by many of our students. **Ms. Sainab** continues to do a wonderful job with Book Month. We conclude with the Illustrator's Tea next Friday. **Beach Day** has already been scheduled for **Friday, June 4** with the Tamala Resort, so let's all make sure we complete our reading goals!

After School Activities will start again a couple of weeks after we return from Winter Break, so be looking for announcements about that.

On Sunday, November 29, Mr. Jerry Darko will arrive for a two day visit to BAIS. Mr. Darko is our candidacy consultant with the International Baccalaureate Office. This is a very important visit in our candidacy stage with the IB. Mr. Darko has been tremendously helpful so far, and we are eagerly looking forward to his visit.

Our guests from Alabama have had a wonderful visit with our students and teachers. Please read the comments from **Ms. JP Hemingway** and **Ms. Beth Dille** inside the Buzz.

Finally, next Thursday, November 26, is Thanksgiving Day. In America it is traditional to gather with family and friends for a traditional meal and to reflect on all of the things that we have to be thankful for. I know that I am always thankful for the tremendous opportunity it was for me to come to BAIS in 2024. I am so thankful for the school and everyone in our community. For those of you who celebrate, I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving. Please remember that school will dismiss at 12:00.

Have a great weekend!

Robert Harper, Director

Upcoming Events

Throughout November
Book Month Continues

Thurs. Nov. 26
Thanksgiving Holiday
12:00 dismissal

Fri. Nov. 27
Illustrator's Tea

Nov. 30-Dec. 1
International Baccalaureate Consultancy Visit

Fri. Dec. 11
School Closes for Winter Break

BAIS
BANJUL AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

From Our Guests

We truly have loved our time. The students have been such an authentic and special representation of the BAIS community with their curiosity, warmth and willingness to answer our hundreds of questions! We have learned that BAIS faculty and staff are doing far more than teaching academics. They are helping students understand what it means to be thoughtful and positive representatives of their families, their school, and themselves.

Of course, we have loved our outings to Abuko Nature Reserve and the experience at Ida's Home Cooking and Tanjie Market, but when we think about the memories we will carry back to Birmingham it will be those like watching Mr. Sekou magically transform fourth and fifth grade energy into music, the conversations with Sara and Teju as we were shuttling from place to place, and getting to hear about the lives and parts of what make each faculty member so special. We loved watching the 6-8 graders' anatomy presentations and seeing the preschoolers enthusiastically dump out toys during cleanup time! These are the moments that have given us a glimpse into the heart of BAIS and made this experience so meaningful, and we have found much our school communities have in common.

The faculty hospitality has made us feel welcome, and we have learned so much from them, even in this short time. We are incredibly grateful for their generosity and, especially, for the time they have given us to share ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another. We are already looking forward to a teacher exchange in the near future and know that every single teacher at BAIS would be loved by our community back in Birmingham. We look forward to the possibility of welcoming BAIS students to Altamont and one day returning to The Gambia with students from Altamont. A genuine and authentic partnership is forming, and we hope this is just the beginning!

Thank you, BAIS, for welcoming us, sharing your community with us, and making this experience so meaningful.

Beth Dille and JP Hemingway

Book Month Update!

BOOK MONTH UPDATE – WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Our Book Month activities continue to blossom, and we are excited to share that we have now recorded over 900 reading hours! 🎉

This includes our whole-school daily DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time, as well as the elementary students' whole-class reading sessions. A wonderful achievement as we get closer to our 1,000-hour target!

Our Book Month Butterfly is blooming beautifully, with students continuing to add flowers as they celebrate the books they have read.

Mystery Reader: We were delighted to welcome our 4th and final Mystery Reader, **Ms Fatou Jobe**, a former BAIS staff member. Thank you, Ms Fatou, for sharing the joy of reading with our students!

MS & HS Library Trip: Our Middle and High School students will visit Kanifing Municipal Library on Wednesday, 25th November.

Illustrators' Tea: We look forward to our Illustrators' Tea next Friday! More details about the event will be shared shortly.

Thank you to our students, teachers and pare

nts for continuing to make Book Month such a wonderful celebration of reading. Let's keep those reading hours growing!

Ms Sainab.

Staff Spotlight...Ms. Amal Alfa



A Little about Me! – Amal Alfa

I was asked to share a little about myself, so here it goes!

I am currently the longest-serving faculty member at Banjul American International School (BAIS), with over 39 years of teaching experience, 37 of which have been at BAIS (formerly BAES).

I was born in The Gambia, where I completed my elementary education before leaving at the age of 12 to attend boarding school. My educational journey took me to Lebanon, the UK, and eventually the United States, where I earned a BSc. in Computer Science and Mathematics from the University of Evansville, Indiana. I later pursued an MA in Education from the University of Bath in the UK. After completing my studies, I returned to The Gambia to care for my elderly parents, and I have remained here ever since.

My teaching career began quite unexpectedly. When people ask how I became a teacher, I always say, **"I landed in teaching by accident"**—and then fell in love with it!

In 1988, the directors of BAES approached me to ask if I would be interested in teaching computer literacy and helping develop the school's computer literacy curriculum. I thought, why not? Before that, I had taught computer programming to adults at a technology school in the United States. Little did I know that this opportunity would mark the beginning of my K–12 teaching career at BAES/BAIS!

After my first year teaching IT, the school director asked if I would be interested in teaching middle and high school mathematics. Of course, I accepted! I have always loved mathematics, particularly Algebra. Since then, I have renewed my contract year after year, continuing to teach mathematics to I while working closely with colleagues to integrate technology into the curriculum.

Over the years, I have also had the privilege of serving as the Internal Coordinator for four of BAIS's accreditation terms. In 2016, I attended the ECIS Teacher Training Programme at the University of Cambridge, an excellent professional development opportunity provided by BAIS. I have also participated in numerous mathematics and technology conferences, which have helped me refine my teaching strategies, broaden my knowledge, and continually enrich my lessons.

My goal as a teacher has always been to inspire my students to develop a genuine love for mathematics. One of my greatest joys is seeing a student's eyes light up when they finally understand a new concept or discover that something they once found difficult is actually within their reach. Equally rewarding is hearing from former students about how my

teaching has helped them in their further studies and careers. Those moments make everything worthwhile!

Beyond the classroom, I am a proud mother of two BAES alumni, who are now successful adults, and a grandmother. My children have fond memories of their years at BAES and often credit the wonderful teachers here with helping shape them into the people they are today. In many ways, BAES has been an important part of not only my professional life but also my family's story.

When I am not teaching, I enjoy reading, traveling, and watching movies or listening to music..

Looking back on my journey, I believe it is my passion for education, my love of mathematics, and the support and opportunities I have received along the way that have kept me at BAIS for all these years. What began as an unexpected opportunity turned into a lifelong passion and a very rewarding career.

If I had the chance to do it all over again, I wouldn't change a thing!

The Fajara Club Christmas Market

Food ★ Craft ★ Gifts ★ Family ★ Fun

Join us for a magical holiday experience at our annual Christmas Market, where the spirit of the season comes alive!



12th & 13th Dec 2026

8am - 8pm

FREE ENTRANCE

ONE DAY VENDOR FEE D1,000

TWO DAYS VENDOR FEE D1,800

ONE DAY DOUBLE TABLE VENDOR FEE D1,800

VENDOR BOOKINGS & ENQUIRES (+220) 87 2946475

From Dr. Kim

Building Reading Fluency, One Book at a Time!

K–3 students recently visited Dr. Kim's office to select a variety of "just right" books for their new reading bags! Each student chose books at their reading level to help build fluency, accuracy, and confidence. These book bags will be used at school to provide students with regular opportunities to practice reading independently. Time spent reading books that are neither too easy nor too difficult is essential for developing strong readers. The more time students spend reading connected text at an appropriate level, the more they strengthen automatic word recognition, reading expression, and comprehension. Our goal is to provide consistent, meaningful time in text so that every student continues to grow as a confident, fluent reader. Check out the pictures below!!

~Dr. Kim





From the German Embassy

Upcoming Show at Penchami Hall

The show is performed by the Bright Stars and made possible with the German Embassy as main sponsor. The play explores themes tied to the upcoming elections, including basic democratic principles, the rejection of violence, and the importance of voting for women, youth and minorities. It also tackles challenges such as tribalism, all in the Bright Stars' trademark humorous style. The play will be performed mostly in English, with some passages in local languages.

Dominique Buchholz





November 2026

STUDENT NAME _____ **Class** _____

PARENT CONTACT Name: _____ **Phone** _____

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Choose Portion Size:**
   - **Small - 250 Dalasi**
   - **Large - 300 Dalasi**
2. **Choose how you will order:**
   - ***Tick here to order all the lunches for this month.***
     Full Period : 14 lunches (Total cost: **Small = D3,500 OR Large = D4,200**)
   - ***Tick here to order lunches by the day.***

     By the day:
     1. Tick the days desired in the chart below
     2. Multiply x D250 (small) or D300 (large).
     3. Write in here: **Total # lunches: ____ x Cost per portion _____ = D _____**
3. **Get money and form to BAIS OFFICE**

November 2026	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Nov 2 - 5	• *Tick to order.* Creamy Baked Ziti W/ Veggies Dessert: Fruit Salad	• *Tick to order.* Fish in Batter W/ Roasted Potatoes & Veggie Dessert: Fruit	• *Tick to order.* Spaghetti With Creamy Tomato Sauce Dessert: Fruit	• *Tick to order.* Chicken Tagine with Rice & Vegetables Dessert: cake
Nov 9 - 12	• *Tick to order.* Shepherd's Pie Dessert: Fruit Salad	• *Tick to order.* Grilled Fish with Butter-Lime Sauce With Rice Dessert: Cake	• *Tick to Order.* Creamy Mushroom Chicken Penne Pasta Dessert: Fruit	• *Tick to order.* Fish Benachin Vegetables W/ Bissap Sauce Dessert: Cake
Nov 16 - 19	• *Tick to order.* Spaghetti Bolognese Dessert: Fruit Salad	• *Tick to order.* Grilled Chicken W/ French Fries & Veggies Dessert: Fruit	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ *Faculty PD* *Noon Dismissal* ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	• *Tick to order.* Beef Stew W/ Rice & Veggies Dessert: Fruit Salad
Nov 23 - 26	• *Tick to order.* Beef Ragu W/ Tagliatelle Pasta Dessert: Fruit Salad	• *Tick to order.* Chicken Kebab with Potato Salad & Dessert: Fruit	• *Tick to order.* Margarita Pizza Mixed Salad Dessert: Ice Cream	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ *Thanksgiving Holiday* *Noon Dismissal* ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

H.S. Field Trip to Abuko Nature Reserve






WILDLIFE CARE
& RESCUE TEAM
WELCOM
ABUKO NATURE
RULES & REGU
TAKE NOTHING WITH YOU B
LEAVE NOTHING BEHIND BU
RESPECT OTHER VISITORS
RESPECT THE ANIMALS
FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY
NEVER STRAY FROM THE FO
DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS

