



The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa Newsletter February 2012

Dear Parents, Students and Friends

An analysis of the Term 1 reports shows that our DP1 and DP2 cohorts are currently performing at a higher level than the groups did at the same time last year. This is good news as we head towards the coming IB examinations, and demonstrates that the initiatives and high work rate by both students and staff are having a significant effect. We have noted however, that a number of the Year 7 students are still adjusting to the demands of the MYP programme. We expect these students to improve over the rest of the year. We have also analysed the DP1 results to see whether there are any differences between the IGCSE and MYP students. Whilst there are some individual differences, overall there is no significant difference in performance between the two groups.

Much academic research has been undertaken to determine what are the key factors in students' learning. Professor John Hattie in his Best Evidence Synthesis research analysed over half a million studies and found that teachers contribute about 30% to student achievement. Approximately 50% comes from the student's own motivation, prior knowledge, cultural capital and dispositions. These in turn are influenced by the student's home activities, family resources, early childhood experiences and culture. Effective teachers make efforts to draw upon the 50% that students bring so that the teachers' contributions become much greater when connected to students' lives. The IB inquiry-based, student centred curricula helps teachers to make these connections. Of course, parents and guardians also have a significant role to play in providing positive learning environments, experiences and resources. Working together students, parents and teachers can maximize the learning experiences and achievements of every student.

Over the last month a range of activities have featured in school life. These include Junior School field trips; MUN in Nairobi; inter-house competition; music concerts; service activities; the annual African IB workshops for staff hosted here and in Nairobi; a number of visitors to the Academy including AU and Aiglemont staff, Indian journalists, the Hyderabad Academy lead teachers, Head and SMT, University of Concordia staff; the

marketing trip to Tanzania; distribution of the Term 3 fee invoices; yesterday's Senior School Sports Day; and the well-attended Year 1 Open House last Friday. Our thanks to all those staff and students who contributed to the above programmes and successes.

Best wishes for the month ahead.

Rob Burrough
Head of Academy

Highlights of the last month

Highlights of the last month include:

Teaching and Learning

- Year 10 Personal Project Reports – Students have handed in the final report. All the students met this deadline due to the tenacity and clarity of the Coordinator. The Personal Project Exhibition occurs this coming week. We are using the occasion to invite 10 other schools and use it as a marketing event.
- Year 6 students' diagnostic tests for Year 7 Transition were carried out last month. Report analysis plus other indicators will allow for a holistic view of the learner before acceptance into MYP in August
- Year 7 Parents' Information Evening for parents new to the MYP was held.
- AKA,H and Khartoum International Community School visited JS classrooms and met with local staff
- Year 4 overnight camping trip to Kaya forest to explore biodiversity and conservation efforts in local habitats and tropical ecosystems took place
- Year 6 Trip to Nakumatt – students explored marketing strategies and techniques targeting consumers, i.e product placements, special offers, price wars etc
- Year 1 field trip to Khosla Farm: learning experiences were around how living things grow, the banana plantation and the different stages of life
- Year 5 trip to places of worship undertaken, exploring themes common to all - sacrifices, forms of worship, prayer objects.
- IB Workshops completed at the Academy: DP Language and Literature, DP CAS, DP History, MYP Sciences, Making the PYP Happen in the Classroom, PYP Teaching and Learning, PYP Assessment, and PYP the Exhibition .
- Whole School staff professional development undertaken in Action Research, Listening and Language across the curriculum
- Community Outreach seminars to government schools were offered in Technology Integration in Teaching in Low Cost Environment and Constructive Feedback.

Student Life

- Senior School Sports Day – a great time was had by all yesterday with much enthusiasm and some excellent individual sporting achievements
- MSMUN -16 students from Grades 8 and 9 attended the Middle School Model United Nations forum in Nairobi.
- DELF exams - There has been a 100% pass from the 55 students who sat the DELF examinations under the aegis of the French Ministry of Education through Alliance Francaise de Mombasa.
- The Green Gang conservation group, along with residential students and in partnership with The Aga Khan Foundation, planted trees at the school from seeding grown at the Academy. The students played with the Ngoloko students and interacted with their parents and the school committee members. The Green Gang Club has received appreciation for this gesture from the school, for helping their community preserve the environment.
- We now have 151 residential students. 27 new students were admitted into the residential programme in January, 20 of whom are Year 6 (including 4 Tajik students who will join the programme mid February). By mid-February we should have a total roll of 657 students.
- Dorm Captains: The process of identifying 10 new Dorm Captains has started.

Finance

- The 3rd Fee installment invoices were distributed
- Medical Insurance for the residential students has been finalised with Jubilee Insurance

Administration / Maintenance

- A decrease in internet speed connections due to increase in bandwidth usage is causing problems for staff and students - particularly with IT assisted teaching and learning activities
- Bus replacement process is nearing completion for submission to AU
- The RCF school bell system was finally commissioned after months of research and consultancy between the maintenance and IT teams. The system is presently working as per requirements but still requires upgrading of hardware.

HR Activities:

- We welcome Mrs Sorrayah Verjee to the Finance Department, and Mrs Judy Wanjuki as Junior School Secretary.

Notices

ISA Test Results We hope to receive final data from ACER later this month then be able to share the general information with parents, and release the individual data to parents.

School Fees A reminder that school fees are due in August, November and February. The third installment notice was sent out last month. Please note that our fees are calculated on an annual basis but are divided into three installments for ease of payment. Parents with difficulties are welcome to discuss financial issues with the Head of Finance. A voluntary Parents Association subscription of 200/- per term for the 2011 – 12 academic year was also sent out with the latest Fees notice.

Parent Email Addresses A number of parents are still to advise the Admissions Department of their new or changed email addresses. Please contact Jane Okello at the school or email jane.okello@akam.ac.ke.

French Film Night Year 10 students will be attending a special screening of the movie *Vipère au poing* (in French with English subtitles) this Thursday, 9 February at Nyali Cinemax. See separate Senior School email notice for further details.

Science Trip to Haller Park The Year 8 science class is undertaking a field trip to Haller Park this Thursday 9 February as from 8:00am to 3:00 p.m. In Science, the students are currently studying ecology, which includes making them aware of their interdependence with the world. Students also learn to appreciate how they can affect local ecosystems and how local ecosystems can in turn affect them. In addition, students will be observing and analysing the rehabilitation of the Bamburi quarries and its impact on the environment i.e. economic, social, ethical, political and environmental.

Coming Events

February	8	Personal Project Exhibition
	12 – 18	DP1 to Nyali Beach for Canadian University Fair
	14 – 18	EAMUN
	15 – 17	Residential Expedition
	20	Half Term break
	23	DP2 Mock Examinations begin
		Year 7 Parents Evening

