

BAIS BUZZ

Mission Statement

The Banjul American International School is an accredited international school providing a meaningful, rigorous American curriculum in a global context. In partnership with the local and international community, we empower students to become enthusiastic, creative, lifelong learners who value integrity, cultural diversity, and global responsibility.

Message from the Director

Dear BAIS Families,

This is the second-to last *BAIS Buzz* of the 2017-2018 school year, with less than three weeks of school remaining! This coming week will be the final 5-day week of the year (less than 5 full days with 12:00 early dismissal on Wednesday). Next week we have holidays both Monday (June 11th–Lailat al-Qadr) and Friday (June 15th–Koriteh). This will be followed by the final week of the year, ending with a half-day Thursday, June 21st.

We have many exciting and important events in these final weeks including the End-of-Year Party, End-of-Year Ceremony, Student-Led Portfolio Conferences, and much more. Please read all the information in this newsletter and take careful note of the upcoming events to the right on this page.

This has been an incredible school year, and I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of our extraordinary teachers, staff, students, and families for your dedication and wonderful work on behalf of our school. We're looking forward to a phenomenal final few weeks of the school year!

Caleb Steindam, Director

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Upcoming Events

Tue, June 5, 4:30pm

Board Meeting in Library

Wed, June 6, 12:00pm

Early Dismissal (Teacher PD)

Thu, June 7

Last Day of After-School Activities

Fri, June 8, 11:00am-11:45am

Humanities Project Presentations

Fri, June 8, 11:45am-12:15pm

Class Share CoL (all classes)

Fri, June 8, 5:00-8:00pm

End-of-Year Party at *The Village*

Mon, June 11

Holiday (no school)–*Lailat al-Qadr*

Wed, June 13, 2:15-3:15pm

End-of-Year Ceremony

Thu, June 14

Student-Led Conferences for 3rd Trimester Portfolios (no class)

Fri, June 15

Holiday (no school)–*Koriteh*

Thu, June 21, 12:00pm

Last School Day – early dismissal



Student-Led Portfolio Conferences

Third trimester portfolio conferences will be held on **Thursday, June 14th**. This is a special opportunity for BAIS families to celebrate the students' accomplishments over the course of this school year. For these **student-led** conferences, the homeroom teacher will be there to support the students as needed, but will play a minimal role in the student's presentation. We will send standards-based narrative report cards the following week with further detail about each student's learning and accomplishments this trimester.

Remember that **children do not come to school on the portfolio conference day except to attend the conferences with their parents and teachers**. We will send portfolio conference schedules to all families by email this week. These schedules show the designated time for your child to present their portfolio to their parents/caretakers in their homeroom classroom. It is important to be on time for your conference so you can make full use of this important time with your child. Please meet with your child's specialist teachers (Ms. Leah, Mr. Badjie, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Daniel) before or after the student-led conferences. Contact your child's homeroom teacher directly if for any reason you are unable to attend the conference at the scheduled time.

End-of-Year Party

The Student Council is excited to announce that the **End-of-Year Party** for all BAIS students and families will be this **Friday, June 8th**, from **5:00 to 8:00pm** at **The Village** complex in Kololi. Food will be provided for all BAIS students using funds raised this year at the Halloween Party and other Student Council events, and there will be food and drinks available for parents and other family members to purchase at The Village. Parents or other caretakers should plan on attending with your children, as BAIS staff cannot take responsibility for supervising all children at the party. Students will receive invitations with more details about the end-of-year party this week. We're excited to see you there!

End-of-Year Ceremony

We will host our **End-of-Year Ceremony** on the **BAIS central lawn** on **Wednesday, June 13th**, from **2:15 to 3:15pm**, to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of BAIS students throughout the 2017-2018 school year. This will serve as the final hour of the school day next Wednesday, and all BAIS family members are encouraged to attend. The ceremony will feature the presentation of student awards including the President's Awards for Educational Excellence and Achievement, American Citizenship awards, and BAIS Character Education awards. Grade 4 will deliver short speeches about the character values that they expect to need in middle school, and Grade 5 will deliver moving-up speeches about the impact they want to have on the world and a person who inspires them. Middle and High School students will present reflections on this year's Service Learning Project. We will be honored once again by the presence of **US Ambassador C. Patricia Alsup** who will deliver opening remarks and present the student awards.

New Teachers for 2018-2019

We are very fortunate that most of our tremendous teaching staff has chosen to return to BAIS for the 2018-2019 school year. We are also excited to welcome to new teachers to the BAIS family, Natalie Touray and Kelly McAllester, who will both be on the primary school teaching team.

Ms. Natalie Touray will be our **Grade One** teacher next year. Natalie qualified as a teacher in 2004 having previously worked in the legal profession. She spent 2007 - 2009 in The Gambia working for V.S.O as a trainer of teacher trainers in the North Bank Region and lived in Kerewan. She married a Gambian and on returning to the U.K, she earned her Masters in Education and had two children who are now 5 and 7 years old. Natalie worked with adults in education before returning to primary education at the beginning of 2015. She is passionate about learning and in her spare time enjoys yoga and reading.



Ms. Kelly McAllester will teach **Grades Three and Four** next year. Kelly grew up in New Jersey and Illinois before moving to Washington, DC to attend Georgetown University. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in International Relations with a focus on Education Policy and a certificate in African Studies. After graduating, Kelly earned her teaching credentials with the Capital Teaching Residency. She taught third grade at a DC public charter school for two years and is currently in her third year teaching fourth grade at a private school in DC. She is looking forward to exploring The Gambia with her soon-to-be husband, Blaine, and joining the BAIS community!



Board Corner

We had a solid turnout and strong participation from the BAIS Association at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Friday, May 18th, with 36 Association members in attendance. **Brenda Anna Kwambana-Adams, Niania D Touray,** and **Cian O'Siochain** were elected to serve on the Board of Directors for 2-year terms, joining **Stephane Banna, Martin Antonio,** and **Doreen Farnitano,** who are continuing on for the second year of their terms on the Board.

Our first **meeting** of the new Board, and our final Board meeting of the 2017-2018 school year, will be **Tuesday, June 5th,** at **4:30pm** in the **BAIS Library.** Association members are always welcome to attend the open sessions of the BAIS Board.

Service Learning Project

Congratulations to all BAIS students, teachers, and families who contributed to the success of our Service Learning Project this year, and huge thanks to Scott Hemsey and Njogu Touray for their leadership on the project. Enjoy these photos from the Service Learning trips to Makumbaya Lower Basic School on Wednesday, May 23rd, and Thursday, May 24th. You can find more photos on the BAIS [website](http://baisgambia.org/gallery/) at <http://baisgambia.org/gallery/>.



