

August 19, 2024 2024-25, Issue 1

# BAIS BUZZ

## Message from the Director

Dear BAIS Families,

Greetings to everyone in the BAIS community, and welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I don't have the words to convey how thrilled I am to be here and to be a part of this wonderful family. Thank you to all of you for making me feel so welcome!

As you probably already know, the first day of school is next Tuesday, August 27. Students should be dropped off starting at 7:30 and before 8:00. They should report to their homerooms when the bell rings. On Monday, August 26, we will have New Family Orientation from 9:00 to 10:30. This is a wonderful opportunity for new families to visit the campus and meet their child's teacher and all of us here in the office.

I want to thank Ms. Leah John and all of our maintenance and custodial staff who have worked so hard to get our campus ready for opening day. You will probably notice some new construction; a new music room and learning support office are currently under construction and should be completed soon.

Robert Harper, Director

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## Upcoming Events

### Mon., Aug. 26

New Family Orientation, 9:00-10:30

### Tues. Aug. 27

First day of classes.

### Wed., Sept. 11

Faculty Professional Development...12:00 dismissal

### Mon., Sept. 16

Prophet's Birthday Holiday

### Fri, Sep 27, 11:45am-12:15pm

Celebration of Learning. All parents invited to attend!

### Fri. Sept. 30

MAP Testing begins

### October 1

Book Month begins!



### Mission Statement

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## New to the BAIS Family

I want to introduce new members of the BAIS community for 2024-25. In the coming newsletters, they will have the opportunity to tell you more about themselves. Please join me in welcoming them. They are all very talented in their respective areas, and I believe they will all be excellent additions to our family. We are very fortunate to have each of them.

### **Mr. Sang Jain...Science**

To some of you, Mr. Jain needs no introduction. He previously taught at BAIS some years ago, and we are delighted that he has returned to join us. He will teach AP biology, physical science, physics, environmental science, health, and middle school science. Mr. Jain is especially knowledgeable about field trip opportunities here in The Gambia which will enhance student learning in the sciences.

### **Ms. Daniel Shulkin...Special Needs Coordinator**

Ms. Shulkin joins BAIS from California. She will direct our newly created special needs program. Ms. Shulkin will assist teachers in identifying students with special needs and will assist teachers in developing strategies to meet the needs of those students. She will also work one on one with some students. The Office of Overseas Schools of the U. S. State Department recently has identified expanding educational opportunities for children with special needs as a top priority for their office. Funding for Ms. Shulkin's position is supported in part by a grant from that office. We are so grateful to the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Mission here in Banjul for their strong support of our school.

### **Ms. Angie Epifano...Art**

Ms. Epifano is a doctoral candidate in Art History with Yale University. She is an expert on African art and has been living and studying in The Gambia and Senegal for some time. She also will be doing her student teaching in social studies as she completes work on her teacher's certification in that area. In addition, she will also assist with college counseling. You can read more about Ms Epifano here: <https://arthistory.yale.edu/people/angie-epifano>

### **Mr. George Shyngle...Physical Education**

Mr. Shyngle comes to us highly recommended from Marina International School, where he has taught physical education since 2018 and was a teaching assistant for 4 years before that. Mr. Shyngle has taught PE to all ages and also has experience running high school sports programs, which he will continue to do here at BAIS. Mr. Shyngle is excited about the opportunity to expand our after school sports program and other after school activities.

### **Ms. Sainab Njie...Library/ESL/Teaching Assistant**

Ms. Njie comes to BAIS from Manchester, UK, where she has been an elementary teaching assistant for the last three years. Ms. Njie holds a bachelor of arts degree in English from St. Mary's University in Canada and also has experience working with special needs students. Ms. Njie will be the teaching assistant for grades 4-5 and will assist with the library. She will also provide ESL support.

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## Message from the BAIS Board of Directors

Dear Association Members,

Welcome back! All of us at BAIS are excited about the start of our 40<sup>th</sup> year! Please remember that all parents are members of the BAIS Association and are invited to attend open sessions of the Board.

Fady Ghanim, Board Chair

## Parent/Student Handbook

Student & Parent Handbooks will be sent home to families. The handbook can also be seen on the school website by following this link:

<https://www.baisgambia.org/images/reports/1811611023559318f2f8ce7379e7aee587cd23081a.pdf>

All of our policies and procedures which parents and students should be aware of about a variety of topics such as attendance, dress code, technology, and other important topics are found in our parent student handbook. Please remind students especially about our policy regarding phones. As in the past, elementary students are not allowed to bring phones to school. MS and HS students who bring phones must either leave them with their homeroom teacher during the day or keep it silent in their school bag. Using a phone without a teacher's permission in class or at a school gathering is not acceptable.

## PTO

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) plays an important role in our community. We always want to encourage parents to become part of the PTO. If you would like to be involved, please send me an email at [director@baisgambia.org](mailto:director@baisgambia.org), or just stop in and visit with me at school.

## Current Enrollment (tentative)

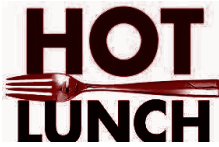
Pre-K = 10  
 Elementary = 45  
 Middle School = 10  
 High School = 10  
 Total = 75

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## August & September 2024

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: 17 lunches (Total cost: Small = D3,400 OR Large = D4,250)

- 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**

| Aug/Sept 2024 | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday   |
|---------------|---|---|--|--|
| Aug 27-30     | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆<br><b>Summer Break</b><br>☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br><b><i>order</i></b> Fish in Batter, French Fries, Salad & fruit         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Chicken Croquette<br>French Fries, Salad & fruit     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Beef Benachin, vegetables & fruit            |
| Sept 02-05    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Beef Bourguignon<br>Mashed Potatoes & fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Margarita Pizza<br>Mixed Salad & Ice Cream                              | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Crispy Chicken with Avocado & Tomato salad (& fruit) | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Potato, bell pepper and cheese wraps & fruit |
| Sept 09-12    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Chicken curry with rice<br>Chocolate Cake   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Grilled Fish in creamy sauce<br>Vegetables<br>Mashed Potatoes (& fruit) | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆<br><b>Faculty PD Noon Dismissal</b><br>☺<br>☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Spaghetti Bolognese (& fruit)                |
| Sept 16-19    | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆<br><b>NO SCHOOL</b> ☺<br>☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Fish Curry<br>Couscous & fruit  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Fried Noodles w/ Beef, Vegetables (& fruit)          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Chicken Wrap, Plantain & fruit               |
| Sept 23-26    | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Fish Benachin<br>Vegetables & fruit         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Grilled Chicken, French Fries, Salad & fruit                            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Meatballs with mashed potatoes & fruit               | <input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Tick to order</i></b><br>Margarita Pizza<br>Mixed Salad & Ice Cream   |

**Please contact Ms. Leah for any Hot Lunch inquiries and allergy information (7744477)**

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## New Staff Spotlight

### Ms. Danielle Shulkin



Hello BAIS Families! I am excited to be here at BAIS and to soon meet all of our lovely students and families. After arriving in the Gambia for the first time last week, I have been enjoying getting to know the area, trying out some local foods, and getting my house in order (with HUGE help from Leah John and the Maintenance Staff!). Now, I get to prepare for one of my favorite (and most exhausting) days of the year: the first day of school!

New beginnings like the first day of school can bring up many different feelings in children and adults alike—feelings of excitement, trepidation, motivation, sadness, nostalgia, etc. Throughout my years of teaching at public and private schools in New York City and San Francisco, and as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Panama, I have experienced all of these emotions and more. I remember my first day of teaching clearly; I was a fresh college graduate who had moved to NYC only 2 months previously and I was about to start teaching 8th-grade Humanities at a public school in Manhattan. As unfamiliar students began trickling into my classroom, I grew suddenly nervous. *What if they don't like me? What if I forget what I'm supposed to do? What if they start yelling and don't listen to a word I say? Who's in charge here?!* Realizing that I was the one in charge was simultaneously comforting and alarming.

Luckily, I had a knowledgeable, experienced co-teacher to lean on for support. Despite my youth and naivete, she always recognized my ideas and validated my teaching instincts. Having a mentor like this allowed me to develop confidence in my own skills as both an educator and a mentor to my students. My foundational years in teaching built upon the classroom learning I had undertaken as both a university student at the College of William & Mary and as a master's degree student at St. John's University where I was able to deepen my understanding of Special Education and neurodiversity. I have been blessed to have incredible mentors along the way who have illuminated the path forward while allowing me to create my own journey, and I hope to be that type of mentor for your children.

Stepping into the new role of Leader of Learning Support is an exciting challenge that I take on with gusto (as well as all those first day feelings!). I look forward to partnering with the BAIS families and faculty to ensure *all* students are appropriately challenged, seen, and valued, and I hope to learn from and with you all along the way.

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