



The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa Newsletter August 2012

Dear Parents, Students and Friends

Karibuni sana! A warm welcome back to the new school year. A special welcome to all new students and families. We are sure that you will enjoy being part of our school community and we look forward to helping you settle into school life over the coming weeks. We trust that everyone was able to enjoy some relaxing vacation time with friends and family over the holidays, and for those who observed Ramadan we trust that the Eid ul-Fitr celebrations were a fitting celebration.

Our congratulations to the recent DP graduating class. Interim results (before remarks etc) show that the students on average scored 31.2 marks (out of 45) which was above the world average of 29.3 and 1.8 marks higher than last year. Special congratulations to Aleem Mawji who top scored with 42. We are pleased with the overall improvement shown this year which is a reflection of the hard work by both students and staff.

There is no substitute for hard work. Anders Ericksson, a psychologist at Florida State University, conducted an extensive investigation into what creates outstanding performance. Ericksson's research found that the highest correlation with ability was the number of hours they had practised. The correlation between practice and ability was very high. The top performers had, by the age of 20, practised for 2000 hours *more* than those in the middle and 6000 hours more than the bottom achievers. Ericksson further found that there were no exceptions to this pattern. Nobody reached the elite group without extensive practice. Practice hours were the only factor which explained why some people excelled and were better than others. Malcolm Gladwell, in his book *The Outliers* also makes the same observations. Therefore, the adage, 'Practice makes perfect' rings true and is an important reminder to our students at the beginning of the year that hard work matters!

Parents, students and visitors will have noticed a number of changes that have occurred at school over the holidays. The final two residential blocks just require finishing touches and are now inhabited by Diploma students bringing the total number of residential students to 170; renovations to the old cafeteria and staff Professional Development Centre have begun and will result in a new 70 person seminar room, video conferencing room, resource areas and offices; security measures are being reviewed and tightened; the pool lights are now fully operational; and a number of other maintenance upgrades have occurred around the campus. An upgrade to the Amphitheatre is also being finalised with work due to begin in the coming months. More details as they develop.

Best wishes for a most successful year ahead.

Rob Burrough
Head of Academy

New Staff

As a result of roll growth (we now have 695 students at the Academy), the creation of extra positions due to extra funding from various sources, and some teacher resignations, we have been able to appoint a number of new staff. These include:

Mos Somji	Head of Operations
Joanne Gogulescu	SS HoD Humanities
Susan Abuto	SS Humanities
Charles Gumba	SS Science
Vlad Gogulescu	SS Literacy / ESL
Wenceslaus Masinde	SS Drama
Chrispus Mwakundia	SS French / Kiswahili
Rukiya Cochu	JS Language Coordinator
Kristine Leabres	JS Teacher
Malik Abubakar	JS Swim/PE
Veronica Telford	JS Reading
Sehr Tejpar	SS Teaching Fellow
Chase Taylor	SS Teaching Fellow
Jane Warutere	SS Teaching Fellow
Alwyn Makuba	SS Teaching Fellow / Teacher (PE)
Nassoro Nyuni	SS Teaching Fellow / Teacher (French / Kiswahili)
Rukshona Sinavbarova	SS Teaching Fellow (Tajik)
Graeme Telford	Finance
Arif Dhanji	Bursar's Office
Jimnah Kimani	SS VP Administrator
Kennedy Wawenga	Residential Supervisor
Khadija Dohry	GAP Student Intern – Admissions
Jake Prysxlak	GAP Student Intern – Physical Education

We congratulate each of them on their appointment and we wish them every success during their time at the Academy.

Student Successes

Kenya Music Festival – Winners!! Congratulations to all those Academy students who participated in the national competitions in Meru last month.

The Aga Khan Academy Small Choir was placed first and is now the proud holder of the Nation Media Group Trophy; Year 6 singer Sameer Shah won all three of the solo classes he entered creating a Kenya Music Festival record as the first participant to win three solo sections. In the Operatic Aria section, Academy singers took first, second and third places. Sameer was first, Michelle Ashitsa 2nd, and Patrice Mutiso 3rd. Mishal Lalani, Justice Kahindi and Fiona Achieng came second in their respective classes as did the vocal trio of Mary Favour, Fiona Achieng and Justice Kahindi. In total, our singers gained 4 firsts, 5 seconds and 1 third place from the thirteen classes they entered.

Football Trip to Spain Two Junior School boys' football teams enjoyed a successful trip to Barcelona over the holidays, competing in the Barcelona Cup, an event which hosted over 1500 players. The A team won two games and lost in the quarterfinals whilst the B team won one game. Special thanks to coaches Mr Anthony Ndungu and Mr Benson Wafula, and the eight adults who accompanied the team.

Notices

Enrichment Programme As advertised previously the Academy is replacing the old 'Clubs' programme with a new and expansive 'Enrichment' programme which is structured as an extension to the schools' academic programme. Students select from a range of Expression, Action and Service options.

Features of the school-wide Enrichment Programme include:

- Greater opportunities for junior and senior students to interact
- Increased programme flexibility which translates into students being able to engage in activities across the whole year and in multiple activities.
- Evidence of students' progress and success will be monitored through their personal portfolios at all stages of learning.
- **Junior School** activities are offered on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 2.45 - 4:00 pm. (An exception will be those students who participate in the whole-school Orchestra and Choir which may finish at 5.15pm on Mondays and 5.00pm on Fridays). Students will be required to participate in a minimum of 2 activities.
- **Senior School** activities are offered five days a week. There will be 2 Enrichment time blocks each day (1) from 2:45 - 4.00pm, and (2) from 4.00 - 5:15pm.

Depending on selections made students may finish school at 2.40pm on some days and 5.15pm on others. Over the academic year MYP Students will be required to participate in at least *two* activities (or *one* if it runs for the whole year) from each cluster, i.e. Action, Expression, and Service. DP students' minimum participation is to fulfil their CAS requirements. Study/Academic Support will be available each weekday to cater for students who, for example, participate in a 4pm activity, or wait for siblings, or simply wish to take the opportunity to undertake extra academic study when not engaged in another Enrichment activity.

- The swim programme will remain as previously scheduled.
- Faculty professional development training has changed from Mondays to Wednesdays from 3.00 – 4.30pm.
- Senior School assemblies will move to Friday afternoons.
- Most inter-school fixtures now occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- The bus timetables will include departures at the usual times of 3.00pm and 5.30pm.

Due to the complexities involved in planning, coordinating and implementing this new programme, students will make their selections this coming week with activities beginning the week starting 10th September.

School Fees Our thanks to those families who have paid the first fees instalment. For each academic year the school fees are due by the beginning of August, November and March. Please note that our fees are calculated on an annual basis but are divided into three equal instalments for ease of payment.

We acknowledge the impact that our fees increases will have on families who are also struggling to balance their own budgets. Families with financial hardship are able to approach the Finance Department to discuss their particular situation. Financial Aid continues to be available for families in need.

Year Book 2011 – 2012 Students who have paid for this wonderful and colourful summary of last year are able to collect their copy from the Principal's PA in the Junior School or Senior School. Families who have not purchased a copy are able to buy one from the Bursar's Office for 1000Ksh. First come, first served. Our thanks to Mrs Ryan and the other members of the Year Book Committee for their hard work in producing this fine publication.

AKA,M Car Stickers Parents are able to collect this year's car stickers from Reception.

Coming Events

Swim AGM All parents are invited to the AGM to be held **Monday 3rd September** at 6pm in the Junior School Library. The meeting will include the election of the new committee.

Parents Association AGM All parents are invited to the AGM to be held **this Thursday 30th August** starting at 5.15pm in the JS Library. From 5:15-5:45pm refreshments will be served and from 5:45-7:15pm the formal meeting will be held. A brief report by the chairperson will be followed by the election of the new committee, an explanation of the fees increases by the Head of Academy, and a general Question and Answer session. Our sincere thanks go to Mrs Shahinoor Visram, the current chairperson, and the rest of the current committee for their commitment and hard work over the past year. Mrs Visram is stepping aside this year which means that there will be an open vacancy for the chairperson position.

Twelfth Night Auditions Year 7 – 9 students audition for Shakespeare's Twelfth Night production this week.

DP2 Art Exhibition is open for viewing until Wednesday this week (29/8/12) on the Mezzanine Floor, Senior School Library.