



ABA PTA OPEN MEETING

8 OCTOBER 2018

ABA Parent Teacher Association

Open Meeting Monday

8 October 2018

PTA Room

Members Present:

Michelle Doyle

Marwa Ahmed

Jennifer Williams

Sherna Cooper

Inaam Naboulsi

Jinane Helou

Abiodun Akomolede

Minita Sampat

Rebecca mitchell

Olga Akhtyamova

Lubna Taha

Nadia Naber

Alison Al-Maskari

Terry Dontis

Tony Karam

Rubina Shaikh

Nehha Ahuja

Melanie Pitcher

Dana AlBasha

Diana El Bizri

Reem Alshaikh

Jane Sharma

Omega Hilbron

Shanoona albarwani

Zareena Parveen

Kate Horsburgh

Sara Alasfoor

Attendees from PTA Executive Committee:

Lama Samman	Chair
Meeta Khira	Co-Vice Chair Elementary
Anjum Khan	Communications Liaison
Paula Colaco	Treasurer
Bokamoso Kumwenda	Elementary Secretary
Hiba Kamal	Secondary Secretary
Dina Wahib	Elementary New Parent Coordinator
Alaa Mohamed Ali	Secondary New Parent Coordinator
Nandita Shukla	Co-Chair ECE & Elementary Parent Representative
Evelyn Hon	Secondary Parent Representative
Laila Al Mawali	Logistics Coordinator
Rund Fanek	Elementary Activities Coordinator
Elaheh Karimi	Secondary Activities Coordinator

Absentees from PTA Executive Committee:

Theresa Rabie	Vice Chair Secondary
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Hend Farouk

Co-Chair ECE & Elementary Parent Representative

Meeting opened at 7.40am

Welcome

Meeting opened by Lama Samman; welcomed parents and faculty present.

Treasurer's Report

Paula presented the Treasury Report; noting a current balance of RO 15, 197.036 as per 30th of September 2018

Items To be Settled are;

- Mother Language Program Books : 3000-501.8-543.201-15.5= 1939.499
- Folding tables PTA : 550 OMR
- Gr 12 Satin Stoles for Graduation : 264 OMR
- PTA Upholstering 9 Chairs: 81 OMR

Final Finance: 12,362.537 OMR

PTA 2018/2019		Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Jun 2018 - Jun 2019				
Report Month:				
As per:				
Balance	Balance Brought Forward	15,562.012	15,772.012	15,197.036
I. PTA Pledges				
PTA Pledges	Arabic abooks from Waleed (3000)		(543.201)	
	4 Drums Middle School (243)		(200.000)	
	19 Tables Folders for PTA			
	Shades			
II. Event Income				
	1st Nov Event 1 - Spooktacular Evening			
	2nd Nov Event 2 - Flea Market		59.000	
	11-15th Nov Event 3 - National Day PoP Up Shop			
	3rd Dec Event 4 - Santa's Workshop			
	6th Dec Event 5 - Winter Fest			
	22nd Feb Event 6 - Flea Market			
	7th Mar Event 7 - Spring Fest			
	24th Apr Event 8 - Parent Art Exhibition			
	26th Apr Event 9 - Flea Market			
	23rd May Event 10 - Summer Fest			
	Event 11 -			
III. Other Income				
	purple tshirt		4.000	
	calender (300)	210.000	(160.000)	276.500
IV. PTA Expenditure & Running Costs				
	PTA Room Groceries		(11.275)	
	PTA Room Supplies			
	Cleaning Sofas			
	Chairs			
	End of Year Gift for Trindade			
	Flowers for Staff Appreciation			
	Snacks for Staff Appreciation			
	Name Plate for JP			
V. Allocation/Spent of Fund				
Total Incoming		210	339.5	
Total Outgoing		0.000	(914.476)	
2018/2019 Balance		15,772.012	15,197.036	

Fund Requests

PTA fund requests are for teachers to request PTA money for their various projects and activities.

Five fund requests were brought forward in the first round of PTA Fund Requests.

1. Artificial Grass Near the Drama Court

Request from: Wayne Derrick Serves: all age groups. Cost: approx. 500 OMR

Why?

Safety in the playground... This could be a joint PTA/ Elementary Student Council project. This would make a huge difference for the students running and playing in this area. (especially football).

2. Playground Toys for Elementary

Request from: Grade 1 kids- Angela Langlands Serves: All Elementary Cost: approx. 484 OMR

Why? We (Mark, Tahsin, Riley, Marwan, Alex, Sam, Yousaf, Hamza, Adam, and Zak) would like money for some toys. We want to get outside toys like: badminton, tennis rackets, a whiteboard with markers, basketball with 2 nets, footballs, American footballs, skipping ropes, painted running areas for tracks or climbing, and a parachute Grade 1s and 2s who play on the Drama Court. We also want to get a locking toy box to keep our toys safe. We would also love a few fans hanging from the ceilings to keep us cool when it's hot.

3. Board in the Secondary Library

Request from: Courtney Park Serves: all Secondary Cost: 500 OMR

Why? A collection of board games, card games, etc. to be kept in the secondary library for students before and after school or during breaks. Teachers could also book to use them with classes in the library for special occasions or rewards.

A call for donations for games will be put in the Newsletter. Specific games will be needed for the Library.

4. Green Spaces in School

Request from: Ian White Serves: Entire Community Cost: 500 OMR

Why? This is to promote and encourage sustainable consumption and production in the school. The idea is the garden space will be, in part, designed and maintained by the students. It will be connected to an eco-themed event in November and the hope is that everybody will have something to add to the garden.

Our aims from the project

- Promote sustainable consumption and production
- Promote low water consumption
- Curricula connections to animal and plant biology, ecosystems
- Highlight the biodiversity of Oman
- Wherever possible, engineered by students, staff and parents
- Built from reused/ re-purposed materials
- Promote connections to science, technology, engineering, art and math - Visible to, and accessed by, all the school community.

5. Misting Fans for Playground

Request from: Cassi Agee

Serves: Elementary

Cost: approx. 500 OMR

Why? There has been so much recent research showing the endless benefits (physical, social emotional, academic) of children playing outside. With the heat in Oman the children are not getting this opportunity until the weather cools down. Misting fans will significantly lower the temperature.

Resolution:

Misting fans are not the solution in such a wide and open space and may cause more humidity. The children will get wet and then go to class where the AC is on. Misting fans are only effective if you are directly in front of them.

All other items would be voted upon at the next Open Meeting. This will allow time for more information, including relevant measurements, quotations and specifications, to be gathered and presented regarding each request.

ABA Faculty:

Simon Taylor – ABA Superintendent

Simon began his remarks by reminding parents of the Superintendent's Forum coming up and encouraged parents to attend. He will talk about the goals for the year, the DP results and the Project.

Simon talked about child protection. He highlighted that Donna Tula, the head of Student Support Services will be giving a talk about Child Protection on the 11th October 2018. She would be giving an update on what other international schools are doing and other government driven best practices and policies.

Some of the measures ABA has put in place are; having everyone wear their identification badges while on campus, more cameras have been installed around campus and more safety drills than in previous years.

How do we respond, as a school, when there's suspicion of abuse in school? What do we do? How do we handle it? What about at home? How does the school handle it? How? These are the questions we need to ask ourselves and though sensitive, they need to be addressed in partnership with recruitment agencies, accreditation bodies, the FBI and Interpol. Current statistics make it clear that there is need to ensure better regulations are put in place to protect children.

Another measure which was initially prompted by accreditation requirements, was to have anyone working in the school get a police clearance. This includes outsourced workers from OIG, the catering company, tutors and volunteers. In the case of volunteers, the specific details are being worked out as to who exactly needs police clearance. It is currently defined as "parents being alone with children" need police clearance.

There was a question: What is the Omani Law regarding child protection and police clearances?

Simon said that in the last 18 months there have been more efforts being made to ensure child protection.

One suggestion was given for the potential problem faces during field trips (Parent alone with children in a shop or location away from the teacher), having parents pair up or more than one parents, and accompany the children. It's a concern that these police clearances cost money that some may not be willing or able to pay. This could have serious and negative impact on the volunteer programs in the school.

Simon acknowledged this; a balance has to be made. Ultimately, he stressed, that as the Superintendent, he was responsible, and needed to be comfortable with the measures the School was taking to ensure the safety of the children.

Having attended a Child Safety workshop during the past weekend, Donna Tula's talk would be very beneficial for both new and old parents. Simon encouraged the parents present to attend.

Simon Walker – High School Principal

Simon began his talk with reporting that last week's the Grade 11 and 12 parent's coffee morning was well attended and he thanked parents for their participation. From last year, feedback about the coffee mornings was that parents who could not attend had no way of knowing what was discussed. As a solution, a summary of the morning will be in the Newsletter to update absent parents.

Next coffee morning for grade 9 and 10 parents will be on the 10th October in the Middle School common room.

There was an assembly the previous day, and one 10th grader performed freestyle football and showed how he has improved and self-motivated. Simon went on to say that discussing the student's progress and motivation, was a launch pad to talk about intrinsic motivation with the students. That the best predictor of success in life is not so much their high school results but rather their attitude. Simon will put a link to a Times article about this in the Newsletter.

PTA Secondary committee will meet with High School faculty on the 31st October 2018

The grade 9 Freshers Ball is scheduled for Thursday 5-7:30pm.

Kathleen Bowin – Middle School Principal

Kathleen began by sharing that she met with an HRP the past week for Grade 7, and have decided that they would meet on a monthly basis with Grade 6, 7 and 8 HRPs to focus on Middle School events.

The 1st Middle School event will be a Sports Day on Thursday 18th October. This will be a student led event and as soon as she has information from the students, she will pass it onto the parents. Kathleen mentioned that she has given the Middle School students 3 days on the calendar to organize their events. 14 February 2019 and in May just before Ramadan. The guidelines are that it should not be longer than 3 hours and not go past 8 pm.

There will be other events but these 3 are the one that the kids will have full ownership of.

Last week were ISAs.

Next week there will be a lock down practice. Kathleen emphasized that these drills were not to scare anyone, but to get the children prepared if anything should happen.

23rd October will be Middle School Assembly. Nabs, The “Arab Adventurer “will come in and speak to the students. Kathleen encouraged parents to suggest interesting people who would be willing to come in and speak to the children. She even encourages parents to suggest themselves if they were willing; children need to see that parents are learners too.

Lastly, she made comment on the Middle School Common room name change. Singling out 6th Graders puts them at a disadvantage when they enter into 7th Grade because they suddenly find themselves without a place. She noted that Middle Schoolers needs a place to be and negotiate their various relationships. The process has begun to designate a place for the Middle School students, a common room and a larger area where they can do this.

Kathleen mentioned that she has the desire to create an area for the Middle School and then later for the Elementary when the older kids leave to the new campus.

There was a discussion about children’s use of cellphones during breaktimes and during other time of schools. Parents were adamant that devices should be banned from school. However, Kathleen pointed out that there were legitimate reasons that would warrant the need for children to have devices at school. The matter needs more discussion for a workable solution to be reached.

Simon raised the concern that students come to the Admin building to call their parents within one minute of being dismissed and this creates some problems in Admin. Another concern is that while waiting, students want to get out of the heat and wait in the Admin building. This is problematic because not all the children can be accommodated in the building. As a general rule, kids who are still waiting at 2:30 may come into the Admin to wait.

Kathleen wrapped up her remarks by acknowledging that we all want what’s best for the children and that conflict should not be avoided but rather helps us understand where each other is coming from.

Paul Brace – Athletics Director

Paul quickly talked about the October ASAs for Elementary; season one will be coming to an end at the end of the month and the Season 2 sign-ups will be open immediately afterwards, with no transition. Paul reminded parents about the signup procedure and encouraged parents to be ready to sign their children up as soon as its been opened to have the best chances for getting a place for their child.

MPSL is also starting for the Elementary school. The started with Skittle Ball last week. More MSPL information will be made available by Ms Jack.

There was a swim meet on the weekend involving about 180 swimmers. Paul thanked parents for volunteering and for their support. He mentioned that even though there was a power cut during the meet, everything went smoothly.

The Arts: The Aladdin production, involving Middle and High School children is coming at the end of the month. 29th and 30th October

Muscat League: Involving U12-U19 6 – 12th Grade. Paul reminded that when athletes go away for sports events, the host sets times, and we don't have any control of that. The time it takes to get to the tournament is dependent on traffic, the time the hosts finishes the school day etc. so he implored parents to be patient with regards to pick up and drop off times.

MESAC – This year ABA will be hosting 260 children. There is difficulty in finding accommodation for all of these kids. Out of the 50 families needed to host, there are currently 22 signed up. The tournament starts in 2 weeks and there is great need to find more host families. Paul asked the parents present to consider hosting kids during that weekend and outlined that there wasn't much to do as a host; drop off the kids at school, pick them up, give them dinner and drop them back at school. The visiting kids at from Grade 8-10.

Booster club will also need support during that weekend. An email from the Booster Club will send more information shortly.

Sam Cook – Elementary Principal

Sam reported she didn't have much to say except that the Goal Setting Conferences will be taking place next week; the 16th and 17th October. The 17th will be a no school day for Elementary. The on-line sign up emails would be sent later on today.

Upcoming Events

Spooktacular

Spooktacular is on Thursday, November 1 2018. Clauss Niazi, who is taking the lead in organizing the event, briefly explained that the Trick or Treat Lane will run from the Admin, through Grade 4,5,6, area through to the Drama Court (slight adjustments to this route may be made) for kids to trick or treat and get candy.

Tickets will go on sale on the 23rd October 2018, more information will be sent out in the Newsletter and through the HRPs.

The biggest need right now is Doors. Clauss explained that sponsoring a Door means decorating a table or spot in a child friendly theme, steering away from witches or ghosts. She encourages parents to volunteer and sponsor a door and help make the event a success.

This event is also beneficial for Middle and High School students as it involves a number of school clubs and groups.

To get involved or to sponsor a door– contact trickortreat@abaoman.org

More information will be available in the newsletter.

Tuesday Talks and Travels

Elaheh went through the upcoming Tuesday Talks and Travels. She reminded that the first CPR Training is on the 22nd and 23rd October. And the payment for these trainings is to be done in the finance office. Confirmation has been sent to the participants of the October, January and February classes. The time for these will be 7:30 and will start on time. Participants are asked wear comfortable clothing, to bring with them a mat for on the ground exercises and pen and paper for taking notes.

She went on to explain the events scheduled for November; namely, Breakfast with the Sidab ladies as well as a tour of their facilities.

Initial sign-ups for the Breakfast at the Sidab House was done after the meeting. Maximum of 20 people can attend.

December events included Bandar Khairan Boat Trip.

Flea Market and Bake Sale

The first Flea Market is on November 2nd and table registration is open and the list is managed in the Accounts office.

Winter Music Fest

Lama introduced the upcoming Winter Music Fest: One Beat, One Heart One ABA, scheduled for December 6th 2018, from 6-8pm. She invited singers, musicians, bands and choirs to contact the send their audition clips or sound bites to Hend. Embassies will be invited to showcase their cultural performances, with live music. The event will be a picnic event, with BBQ on the ABA Pitch. This Music Fest aims to celebrate the different festivals and celebrations that happen during this time of year.

Booster Club

The Booster Club will be having Strike, Spike, Score on the 18th October during break time. Tickets are 500 Baizas. Kids have the opportunity to win Vox movie tickets and get excited for the upcoming MESAC Volleyball tournament.

Spirit Day – coming up on Thursday where will be BBQ, ice-cream sales and concession stands and this involves all the children as they come to watch the games. Signup sheet for volunteers will be available next week.

MESAC Awards Night on the 30th October 2018. Tickets will be on sale for 3 Rials from the 22nd of October. These can be bought either from Admin, or from the Booster Club MESAC concession stands. More information will be in the Newsletter.

The Booster Club will be collecting gently used sports gear. This will be sold and the proceeds will go back into the community and anything that is not sold may be donated to the Tanzania Team to take with them when visiting Tanzania.

Expressions of Thanks and Close

Final announcements from Admin:

- parents are encouraged to join the ABA Facebook Page, sign up can be made via the QR Code made available.
- Parents whose children use the cafeteria are encouraged to sign-up for the Cafeteria cash cards.

Lama thanked attendees and closed the meeting.

Next Open meeting: November 5th 7.40 am.