



ABA Parent Teacher Association

Open Meeting Monday

8 April 2019

PTA Room

Members Present:

Vanessa McCarron

Alison Al-Masskari

Reem Alshaikh

Sara Alasfoor

Tatsiana Kaldayeva

Melanie Pitcher

Clauss Niazi

Theresa Rabie

Elaheh Karimi

Patricia Sol Ceschi

Attendees from PTA Executive Committee:

Lama Samman Chair

Jankie Sampat Vice Chair Secondary
Meeta Khira Co-Vice Chair Elementary
Anjum Khan Communications Liaison

Paula Colaco Treasurer

Bokamoso Kumwenda Elementary Secretary

Nandita Shukla Co-Chair ECE & Elementary Parent Representative

Evelyn Hon Secondary Parent Representative

Laila Al Mawali Logistics Coordinator

ABA Staff Attendees

Simon Taylor

Jasmin Wadsworth

Meeting opened at 7.45am

Welcome

Meeting opened by Lama Samman; welcomed parents and faculty present. She went through the upcoming PTA dates events, highlighting the PTA AGM and the last two Tuesday Talks and Travels. Tickets are currently on sale for the Parent Art Exhibition. The final Flea Market is scheduled for May 3rd and Eid Market, similar to Santa's Workshop, will be on May 20th.

Summer Fest will be on May 23rd, this will be an Omani Culinary Experience Iftar.

Booster Club:

Vanessa gave an update on Booster Club events. ABA did not participate in MESAC Season 3 due to differences in school holiday dates in Doha.

Upcoming Booster Club events: Ice Frenzy (24 April) and The Coaches Appreciation Lunch, scheduled for the 25th April. More information will be sent out through the HRPs and in the Newsletter.

Vanessa also gave the Booster Club financial update. She also informed the parent community students chosen to represent ABA will be given a Vipers kit bag – these are for MESAC participants and they cannot be bought (not part of available Booster merchandise). The Booster club is also looking into providing participation badges for students chosen to represent ABA.

The Booster Club will continue its sponsorship in the MPSL Program. The water bottles were very popular and the participants have increased. As a result, 200 water bottles will be made available for next year.

The MSSL program – new shirt design for next year.

There are plans to have the Vipers logo painted on the Gym wall and the MPH. Quotations are being gathered for the same.

Vanessa presented the calendar events for next year and the scheduled MESAC events for next year that ABA will be hosting.

Treasurer's Report

Paula presented the Treasurer's report, noting a balance of 16 583.843 OMR.

PTA Structure

The current PTA committee assessed the current PTA structure and came to the realization that the "2 campus" structure did not work well. Many people had very little to do, in particular, the Secondary group. After discussing the matter, the suggestion is to have an "event lead" system. People will join PTA as leaders of events (ICF, Santa's Workshop etc.).

The process of discussion with the greater ABA community will begin in due course.

Board Elections:

Lama began the Board Election orientation by asking parents if they received the information sent out regarding the Board Elections. Board Election packs are available with Jasmin in the Admin and this year, as per the directive from the Ministry, there are 6 vacancies. She proceeded to go through the same information sent out: the nomination criteria, the ABA Board Election Committee Frequently Asked Questions as well as the Board of Directors information presentation.

Following the AGM on the 1 May, the "Meet the Candidates" presentations will begin and the ballots will open immediately after that.

Voting will continue until Wednesday, May 8th, 14:30. The opening of ballots counting of the votes will be done with a representative of the MOE present. Announcement for results is announced on the same day, and to the greater community on the next day, Thursday 9th May.

A question arose about the two members of the Board that are appointed by the British Embassy; are they always ex-ABA parents and does this affect their level of interest within the committees. Lama responded by informing parents that these members are held to the same level of responsibility and as voting members, they are required to operate the same level and standard of work regardless of whether or not they are parents in ABA. Additionally, the chairpersons are agreed upon by the Board, based on their experience.

Another parent raised the importance of getting people to vote during the election and suggested that perhaps the Admin was not the most strategic place to have the ballots. It was agreed that due to the weather and for reasons of privacy, the Admin was the best place to have the voting as has been done in previous years. Regular reminders will be sent out to parents.

Another parent suggested the School send out last minute reminders to parents as this could be helpful in getting more parent to participate not only in voting but attending meetings as well.

There was discussion about the “no canvassing” clause and Lama and Simon Taylor explained the during the last Board meeting it was on the agenda to further clarify what “canvassing” entailed but this was not done.

Simon explained that the role of the Board is primarily strategic and looks to the future of the school, the long term. He emphasized that the people running for the Board should be able to look holistically and be able to work with others to steer the School in the best direction.

Lama explained that the Election Committee has the authority to reject an application if there is obvious canvassing; as per the policy. This is based on proof of canvassing.

Simon shared his experience while at another school where the power struggled within the board negatively affected the school.

There was a question about the Election Committee; who selects them, how many members are there and have they been in the Committee before. Lama explained that the Election Committee is started by the PTA Chair. This year, there was a random selection of the PTA members that will be on the Committee. The election Committee comprises of 2 PTA members, parent-staff member – Jasmin, a board member – Mukhtar and PTA Chair.

Due to negative past experiences, the 2 members of the EC from the PTA will be kept anonymous until the AGM on May 1st. Lama explained that the role of the EC is to facilitate the smooth running of the elections, preparing and getting everything ready for the elections; making announcements, promoting the elections, organizing the voting and then counting ballots in front of the MOE representative.

The only person who has previously been on the EC is Jasmin.

Expressions of Thanks and Close

Lama ended the meeting.

Next Open meeting: May 13th 7.40 am.