

SPOTS



NEWSLETTER

Vol. 19 Issue 8 / January 7, 2017

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MONTH AT A GLANCE

(K-12 All School Event; **PS = Primary School**; **ES = Elementary School**; **MS = Middle School**; **HS = High School**; **DAAPA**; **MESAC/EAC**) We encourage parents to check weekly as occasionally dates or times may change.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	WEEKEND
JANUARY 2016					
8 PS/ES Day 4 MS/HS Day 1	9 PS/ES Day 5 MS/HS Day 2	10 PS/ES Day 6 MS/HS Day 3	11 PS/ES Day 7 MS/HS Day 4	12 PS/ES Day 8 MS/HS Day 5	13 14
The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia hosted by SEN/DAA Counselors 7:00 pm / DAA Aud PS/ES External ASA sign-ups 7:30 - 9am in the PS/ES cafeteria. MS Winter MAP Testing MS B/G Soccer v GWA @ DAA Var G Soccer v UAS @ DAA MS B/G BBall v ASD @ DAA Girls Tennis v ASD @ ASD	MS Winter MAP Testing Var B Soccer v UAS @ DAA JV B/G BBall v ASD @ DAA Boys Tennis v ASD @ ASD	5th Grade Overnight Adventure Parent Meeting 8:00am PSES Conference Room	HS Parent Coffee Morning: University application process and PSAT MS Winter Concert 7:00 pm DAA Auditorium MAP Testing for Grades 3-4-5 begins MS MAP Testing JV B/G Soccer v ACS @ DAA JV B/G BBall v ACS @ DAA Boys Tennis v GWA @ GWA Jr. EAC B/G Track and Field DAA @ GWA	V B/G Soccer v ACS @ DAA MS B/G BBall v GWA @ GWA V B/G BBall v ASD @ DAA Girls Tennis v GWA @ GWA	JV B BBall Invitational @ ACS MS, JV & V Cross Country hosted by ACS @ ACS Helipad Park JV B/G Soccer v ASD @ ASD V B/G Soccer v ASD @ ASD JV G BBall Invitational @ GAA Girls Tennis v ACS @ DAA Boys Tennis v ACS @ DAA
15 PS/ES Day 9 MS/HS Day 6	16 PS/ES Day 10 MS/HS Day 7	17 PS/ES Day 1 MS/HS Day 8	18 PS/ES Day 2 MS/HS Day 1	19 PS/ES Day 3 MS/HS Day 2	20 21
MS B/G BBall v DC @ DC V B/G BBall v ACS @ DAA PS/ES ASAs begin	PS Parent Coffee Morning Strategies to handle child anger, frustration and fear with Ms. Tanya Fakhoury, Emotional Intelligence Specialist		IB I Exams Grade 11 MS B/G BBall v ACS @ DAA	PS Sports Day Grade 5 Step-up Day	

GEMS - DUBAI AMERICAN ACADEMY

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ALL SCHOOL NEWS

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OFFICE

Dear DAA Families,

Let me begin my message this week by wishing you all a very happy New Year. As I mentioned in my message earlier this week – the email that included a letter from Sir Christopher Stone and DAA's Summary Statement for January – I hope you all enjoyed pleasant winter holidays with your families. Your time together as a family matters and will help your children learn to live well-balanced lives, which we perhaps need to re-prioritize in the fast-paced world of 2017. (As I write that sentence, I suddenly have the lyrics of Harry Chapin's "Cats in the Cradle" running through my mind – now I suspect some of you will, too!)

As I move into the final six months of my tenure as DAA's superintendent, I spend a great deal of time thinking about DAA's future. As I have shared before, I am tremendously proud that DAA is not a school that rests on its laurels or inspections results – indeed, we probably err on the side of too much modesty at times. We have always endeavoured to measure ourselves against the top-performing American international schools in the world, not only against other schools in Dubai or the UAE. I have had the privilege over the last seven years of working with an exceptionally dedicated staff – teachers and school leaders who care deeply about your children and who go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure their success. None of us is perfect, but the care and commitment of the people who work at DAA is difficult to match.

On that note, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those individuals in leadership roles who will be moving on from DAA at the end of the current school year: Matthew Wilding (Deputy Head of School), Scott Schaffner (HS Principal), Kit Wilding (ES Assistant Principal), Laura King (PS Principal), and Emily Rentsch (Athletic Director). In myriad ways these five people have made a difference, and I would like to thank them publicly for their work. I know that each feels proud of what he or she has accomplished and has a deep commitment to this community. All are moving on to new opportunities next year, and I'd like to wish them godspeed on their personal and professional journeys.

Parents worry when great teachers and school leaders move on from DAA, but I would like to reassure you that this school's future is very bright. It brings me great pleasure to introduce DAA's 2017-18 Leadership Team to you. They are exceptional educators and I know they will sustain the effort, care, and values that make DAA unique.



Tammy Murphy
Head of School

Tammy will join DAA in August 2017 after spending the last 12 years in California as the superintendent of both Ross and Montecito Union School Districts. Originally from the East coast, she spent most of her 32-year career in education at the Cherry Hill Public Schools in New Jersey. There she served as an elementary teacher and principal, middle school principal, and assistant superintendent of instruction for over 12,000 students and 19 schools. In each of these learning communities, she has focused on both academic achievement and character development. Most recently at MUS, she collaborated with a committed staff in helping MUS to be recognized as one of five US schools honored as an International Habits of Mind School of Excellence. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, a Master's Degree in Educational Administration and has completed extensive doctoral coursework in Educational Leadership all at Rowan University. Engaging and collaborative, Tammy thrives on her daily personal interactions with all members of the community, but especially with students. She hopes they find a career they are as passionate about as she is about hers. She is excited to join DAA's exceptional staff and to support and build upon our culture of kindness and academic rigor. Tammy will be joined by her husband, Ron, who is currently a middle and high school Spanish teacher, and their son, Cole, who will be in eighth grade at DAA.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OFFICE, continued



Ben Voborsky
Deputy Head of School

Ben has been appointed GEMS Dubai American Academy Deputy Head of School for 2017. He joins DAA from GEMS American Academy in Abu Dhabi where he held the position of K-5 Elementary Principal. Prior to joining GEMS, Ben served as an Elementary Principal, a K-12 Special Education Coordinator, and an Elementary Teacher in American Curriculum and American Overseas Schools around the world. Ben holds a Bachelors from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, a Master's in Special Education from University of Southern Queensland, and a Certificate in Advanced Graduate Studies in Advanced Educational Leadership from University of New England in Maine. His focus when developing schools has been on systems thinking, school culture, innovation, inclusion, and the professional learning of teachers. Ben is passionate about continuous school improvement and creating the best educational experience for each student. He is an active Council of International Schools and Middle States Association Evaluator. Ben will be joined at DAA by his wife, Sarah, who is a SEN and ELL teacher, and their son in the elementary school. Their daughter will attend Little GEMS and will join in another year. A native of Wisconsin, Ben and his family call Nakusp, British Columbia, home.



Marc Starr
High School Principal

Marc joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2013. Prior to joining DAA, Marc was the IB Coordinator and university guidance counselor at The Academia Britanica Cuscatleca (British School) in El Salvador, a position he held for seven years. Marc has been involved with the IBO in many different capacities, including as a school visitor on authorization teams, an IB consultant examiner in both History and TOK, and as a workshop leader. Marc has also taught in Kuwait. Originally from British Columbia in Canada, Marc has a BA in History and Geography from Simon Fraser University and a Masters degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Victoria. He is joined in Dubai by his wife, Eugenia, who teaches in the primary school, and their two youngest children. Their oldest son, who is an IB graduate, currently attends the University of British Columbia. When not in Dubai, their time is divided between Canada and El Salvador.



Paul McMahon
High School Assistant Principal

Paul has worked at GEMS Dubai American Academy since 2010. Prior to becoming Assistant Principal, he served as DAA's IB Coordinator and taught IB History and Theory of Knowledge at DAA. Previously, Paul has worked in politics, media, and public policy and has delivered and delivered courses in Politics, Media and Public Relations. Paul holds a BA in History and Politics and a Higher Diploma in Education from University College Dublin, a Maitrise from the Universite de Paris, Sorbonne in International Relations and an MA degree in Journalism from Dublin City University. Paul has also earned a MSc in Educational Management and Leadership from Manchester Metropolitan University. His research interests include Global Citizenship Education, effective Teacher Supervision and Evaluation, and Professional Learning Communities.



Jim Atkinson
IB Coordinator

Jim joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2013 as an IB Biology teacher. Previously, Jim was the Head of Science and Technology at the Colegio Anglo Colombiano in Bogotá, Colombia. Jim grew up in Australia where he developed his interest in the natural sciences along with education. His undergraduate degree is in Marine Science from Southern Cross University, Australia and has a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education from the University of Western Australia. Jim has a background in both the Australian and British National Curriculum as well as experience in the IB Diploma and Middle Years Programmes. Jim has recently completed a MA in International Education from Bath University in the United Kingdom. Jim's professional interests include holistic education, approaches to teaching and learning, and international mindedness. Jim is joined by his wife Mandy, who is DAA's PS librarian, and their two-year old daughter.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OFFICE, continued



Joan Wiens
Middle School Principal

Joan joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2007 as a Middle School Mathematics teacher. After two years in this role, she moved into the position of Assistant Principal and eventually the Principal role. Joan is from Saskatchewan, Canada, where she received her Bachelors of Education from the University of Saskatchewan. She taught in Manitoba, Canada for six years before moving to Kuwait, where she spent seven years teaching at the American International School. It was during this time that she started her Masters of Educational Leadership through Walden University, a degree which she later completed after moving to Dubai. Joan's professional interests include educational technology, assessment practices and strategies, and critical thinking and problem solving skills. Joan is in Dubai with her husband, who teaches high school math, and their son and daughter, who are both in high school.



Luke Spencer
Middle School Assistant Principal

Luke joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2013 where he taught middle school science. Luke moved into the Middle School Assistant Principal role in 2015. Before arriving to DAA, Luke taught in Queretaro, Mexico and in Omaha Public Schools teaching middle school science and high school physics. While teaching in Omaha, Luke's home town, he coached American football and was involved with the community. Luke holds a BS in Secondary Education from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a M.Ed in Education Administration from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Luke's interests in education deal with student motivation in learning, brain research, and 21st century skills. Luke enjoys DAA because of the diversity of the student body and the sense of community that exists. Luke is joined in Dubai with his wife Hayley, who teaches in the primary school. During the summer Luke splits time between Canada and the United States.



Roberta Wiens
Elementary School Principal

Roberta joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2002. During her time at DAA Roberta has served as a classroom teacher, an ELS teacher, the Early Years Coordinator, and as Assistant Principal. In August 2013 Roberta became the Principal of DAA's Elementary School. Roberta's professional interests include literacy instruction, supporting students with special learning needs, developing students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, and developing collaborative cultures. Prior to working at DAA, Roberta taught in international schools in Italy and Kuwait and in public schools in Canada. Roberta holds degrees from Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, Canada), University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada) and Walden University (Minneapolis, USA).



Jilene Murray
Elementary School Assistant Principal

Jilene joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2012. During this time, Jilene has served as third grade teacher and Technology Integration Specialist before moving into the Innovation Coordinator role. Prior to joining DAA, Jilene worked in Fulton County Schools and Atlanta Public Schools in various teaching roles, including primary and elementary school teacher and instructional technology teacher. Jilene holds a BS in Elementary Education from Indiana University, a Masters and an Ed.S from the University of West Georgia, and an Ed.D in Teaching and Learning from Argosy University. Jilene considers herself a lifelong learner, with a special interest in instructional technology, teacher leadership, and innovation. Jilene values the sense of community, culture of kindness, and passion for teaching and learning she has experienced at DAA. She strongly believes it is a place where everyone has a coach, a cheerleader, and a champion.



Nathalie Salameh
Primary School Principal

Nathalie joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2007. During her time at DAA, Nathalie has served as a classroom teacher, a team leader, and an Assistant Principal. Prior to working at DAA, Nathalie taught at an American School in Beirut for eight years. Nathalie holds a BA in Education and an MA in Educational Psychology (School Guidance) from The American University of Beirut. Nathalie's children are also members of the DAA community, attending both the primary and the elementary school divisions. Nathalie advocates for educating the whole child and strongly believes that each child deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Her professional interests include supporting students with special learning needs, approaches to teaching and learning, developing students' critical thinking and problem solving skills, and assessment practices and strategies.



Tooshna Gandhi
Primary School Assistant Principal


Tooshna joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2010. During her time at DAA, she has served as a classroom teacher, team leader, Early Years Coordinator, and learning support teacher. Prior to working at DAA, Tooshna taught at GEMS Wellington International School for five years. She has also taught in India for a number of years at St. Columba's School, New Delhi. She holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Delhi, India, a post graduate certificate in education from the University of Sunderland, UK, and is completing her masters degree in educational leadership from the University of Leicester, UK. Tooshna and her family have called Dubai home for more than twelve years, and both her children have been part of the DAA family since 2008, currently attending the high school division. Tooshna's professional interests include inclusive education, curriculum and assessment. She believes in educating from the heart, and also believes that schools are learning cultures that are built on respect, trust, relationships, and a growth mindset. Tooshna feels privileged to be a part of the DAA community where teachers, parents and students work towards making education a positive, dynamic, and progressive experience.



Aimee Fleming
Curriculum Coordinator

Aimee joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in 2009. During her time at DAA, Aimee has served as a high school teacher and head of department in physical education, health and IB sports science, and most recently as the K-12 curriculum coordinator. Prior to working at DAA, Aimee also worked as a teacher in the UK and New Zealand. Aimee holds a B.Ed and graduate diploma in teaching and learning specialising in physical education and geography. To supplement her journey as an educational leader, Aimee pursued a MA in educational leadership and administration, which she has just graduated. Aimee endeavors to lead with passion and good moral purpose that ensures the teaching and learning occurring in the classroom fills students with a sense of wonder, curiosity and enthusiasm. She believes and values that the unique and outstanding characteristics of DAA encourages students to pursue a lifelong love for learning, leading them to a bright and successful future. Aimee is a proud kiwi of New Zealand, although now happily married to a British Cypriot with whom she has two young children, Dubai is currently called home.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENTS' OFFICE, continued

 <p>Matt Backus IT Manager</p>	<p>Matt joined GEMS Dubai American Academy in August 2015 as IT Manager. Matt originally hails from upstate New York and holds a BS in Information Systems from Clarkson and an MA in Educational Technology from Michigan State. Matt has lived overseas for 17 years serving in various IT roles in international schools and most recently moved to Dubai from Zurich. Matt recognizes the importance of reliable and efficient technology in the 21st century educational process and is excited to bring his experience to DAA to maintain and improve the systems already in place. Matt is joined in Dubai by his wife who also works in international education at another school. During the summer Matt splits his time between the USA and Switzerland.</p>
<p>appointment pending Innovation Coordinator</p>	<p>Finally, DAA will soon appoint Jilene Murray's successor as Innovation Coordinator, although this appointment has not yet been finalized. This important leadership role concerns technology integration and the professional development of teachers. DAA created this role in 2015 after revising its mission and in response to the UAE National Agenda, which prioritizes innovation as a critical 21st-century cognitive skill. Its focus is on challenging DAA's teachers to move beyond their instructional comfort zones and to support their acquisition of new digital-age methods, strategies, and techniques.</p>

I am tremendously excited about what this new team will bring to DAA – they will provide fresh perspectives, new ideas, and a renewed energy to the school. They are committed and caring, which I am confident will sustain DAA's Culture of Kindness, its mission, and the professional ethic that has always made DAA unique among Dubai schools.

Thank you for your patience with this especially long message, but I think you will enjoy reading about the team that will lead DAA into the future!

Kind Regards,



Jim Hardin, Ph.D.
Superintendent / CEO

SPECIAL INVITATION – The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia

Dear Families,

DAA's Learning Support Teachers and Counselor Team will be hosting a free screening of the film, *The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia*, on Sunday, January 8th at 7:00 pm in the auditorium. The documentary has been described by reviews on Amazon.com as *uplifting accounts of the dyslexic experience from children, experts and iconic leaders, such as Sir Richard Branson and financier Charles Schwab.*

Following this 50 minute documentary will be an informal question and answer session featuring both DAA staff as well as community partners from The LightHouse Center for Wellbeing. Psychologists Dr. Saliha Afridi, DAA parent and managing director of the center, and her colleague Christine Kritzas, have graciously agreed to join us and share their clinical expertise during the question and answer session.

Please note this evening is geared to parents and high school age students.

We look forward to having you join us on the 8th.
DAA SEN and Counselor TEAM

PRIMARY POINTS (Kindergarten 1 - Grade 2)

Make sure to read the corresponding DAAPA NEWS section of this issue of SPOTS for all the latest Primary School parent sponsored events!

FROM THE PS PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Dear PS Parents,

The 2017 year has started off strong for our students. Many of our students have set New Year Resolutions, which they have taken quite seriously. It was fun to hear them talk about how they were going to make the 2017 a better year for themselves or those they love. It is impressive that even at such a young age, they are capable of doing such thoughtful goal setting.

ASA Student Pick-up Change: Jan 15th is the start of Trimester 2 ASA's. Please note there is a slight change in pick up for parents. Instead of the front lobby, parents are to go directly to the classroom where the activity is taking place to pick up their child at 3:30. This change is intended to create a more pleasant and smooth pick-up process for parents as well as to ensure the students are waiting in a calm, closely monitored environment while waiting. If a child is not picked up from the ASA location by 3:40, the staff will bring the student to the PS office where parents can pick up their child. Thank you for your efforts to be prompt in picking up your child at 3:30. **External ASA sign-ups** continue on Sunday, January 8th from 7:30am - 9am in the PS/ES cafeteria.

Learn Helpful Ways
To Handle Children's Anger, Frustrations And Disappointments

GOALS:

- Parents will be introduced to the EFG's of Parenting.
- Parents will understand why the quick fixes that we use will create aggression in children
- Parents will learn one of the most helpful ways to handle children's anger, frustration and disappointments.

Monday, January 16th
Time: 8:00 - 9:30am

Location: PS Conference Room

For Further Information Please Contact:
Mira Nasr
(M.Nasr_DAA@gemsedu.com)
DAA Primary Years School
Counselor (KG 1 + KG2)

Tanya Fakhoury Bio
Tanya Fakhoury is an accomplished Emotional Intelligence Specialist and a communication expert who works on empowering mothers in all areas of their lives. She mainly focuses on improving the parent-child relationship by teaching vital life skills and preventive tools rather than quick fixes. The Raising Emotionally Intelligent Children programme has been a labour of love for Tanya. After the birth of her daughter, she experienced depression and a nervous breakdown that led to her seeking help through coaching. Having undergone an emotional transformation, she applied everything she learnt to her own children, attended workshops, professional training and conducted extensive research. She was passionate to help as many families as possible. Initially, she conducted her training in the park for free, teaching nannies and mothers how to apply her techniques. After overwhelming feedback from the people she helped, she felt it had become her life mission and finally took the step to leave the security of her job of nine years. She acquired The Change Associates with her business partner, Rita Baki, to offer the course legitimately, licensed from the Knowledge and Human Development Authority, Government of Dubai. Tanya delivers her programme and coaching in both English and Arabic. Culturally in tune with the Arab community, she understands the complexities and cultural issues that occur. Tanya is qualified as an Emotional Intelligence Coach, Master NLP (NeuroLinguistic Programming) Practitioner, NLP Coach, EFT Practitioner and Hypnotherapist. She subsequently gave birth to her son using hypnobirthing. Tanya is also a member of the NGH (National Guild of Hypnotists) and IACT (International Association of Counseling Therapists). She has received awards of Excellence from Dubai TV network, EO organization and regular appreciation letters from the nurseries she works with. She is the Emotional Intelligent expert for Aptamil Milk (Danone) My Future Champion Academy as well as the parenting expert for Baby-Arabia. She writes for Hia Magazine and has appeared on television interviews in the Mother and Baby segment of MBC1's morning show.

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TANYATHECHANGE

PS Parent Coffee Morning

Please join us on January 16th at 8:00 for a fantastic learning opportunity to start the new year off on the right foot! Ms. Tanya Fakhoury will share strategies for helpful ways to handle your child's anger, frustrations and disappointments. Parents will:

- Be introduced to the EFG's of parenting
- Understand why quick fixes that we use will create aggression in children
- Learn one of the most helpful ways to handle children's anger, frustration and disappointment

Tanya is an accomplished Emotional Intelligence Specialist and a communication expert who works on empowering parents in all areas of their lives. She mainly focuses on improving the parent-child relationship by teaching vital life skills and preventative tools rather than quick fixes.

Upcoming Events:

- Jan 15 ASA's Begin
- Jan 16 Parent Coffee Morning:
"Helpful Ways to Handle Frustration, Aggression & Disappointments"
- Jan 19 PS Sports Day
- Jan 22 - Feb 2 KG1 Learn and Play Program Break, resumes Feb 5th
- Jan 29 - Feb 2 Parent Engagement Week (Details to be posted on your child's classroom blog.)

Best Regards,
Laura King and Nathalie Salameh, PS Administrative Team

ELEMENTARY ESSENTIALS Grades 3-5 *Make sure to read the corresponding DAAPA NEWS section of this issue of SPOTS for all the latest Elementary School parent sponsored events!*

FROM THE ES PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Happy New Year! It is so nice to see everyone back after the holidays.

We're off and running in 2017! Please read below for the details of our many upcoming events.

Attention 5th Grade Parents: We have two important parent meetings coming up soon which specifically relate to our grade 5 students.

1. First, let the **5th Grade Overnight Adventure** fun begin! Please join us this **Tuesday, January 10 at 8:00 a.m. in the ES Conference Room**, as we will be hosting an informational meeting for parents facilitated by a North Star representative. The agenda for the meeting covers the following:
 - trip explanation
 - timeline of events leading up to the trip
 - important deadlines
 - important forms

2. **Grade 5 Step-Up Day:** We will be speaking to grade 5 parents on **Thursday, Jan 19th at 8:00 a.m. in the Conference Room** in preparation for their transition to the Middle School in Sept. 2017. On **Sunday, Jan. 22nd**, we will invite the 5th grade students over to learn more about the Middle School by moving them through a rotation of MS elective classes. We look forward to these annual events and the opportunity to meet our incoming 6th graders and their parents.

We look forward to seeing you at both of these informational meetings.

A Note from our Librarians: "Our new library carpet has been installed and looks fabulous. We are ready to welcome classes back to the library from Sunday onward, but **we will remain closed to patrons before and after school until Wednesday, January 11**. This will allow us time to complete our task of unpacking books. Thank you for your patience during the past few weeks."

MAP Testing: The winter session of MAP testing for students in grades 3-5 will begin next week. Students take the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) tests in the areas of Math, Reading and Language Usage. These tests are used to determine individual instructional levels and to measure academic growth throughout the school year, and from year to year. MAP tests are unique in that they adapt to be appropriate for each child's level of learning. As a result, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude toward testing.

For more information, please click [HERE](#) for a MAP parent guide.

Tips to help your child to be ready for a good test experience:

- **Make sure that your child is well rested on school days. Children who are tired in class are less able to pay attention or focus on the demands of a test.**
- **Give your child a well-rounded diet. A healthy body leads to a healthy and active mind.**
- **Encourage your child to listen to directions and give every question their best effort.**

JR. EAC: Welcome back to our second season of JEAC sports. As most of you know it's Track and Field season. The first week of practice has been completed and we have a lot of enthusiastic student-athletes.

Please come and support your son/daughter at this up coming mini meet.

Grade 4/5 boys and girls track and field:
Wednesday January 11
DAA @GWA approximately 3:30pm

Buses leave DAA @3pm and return approximately 5:30pm

ELEMENTARY ESSENTIALS, continued

ES Musical Auditions for 5th Grade Students: For those students who have signed up, please be reminded that auditions will take place on Sunday and Monday from 3-5:30pm. Please visit <http://mysonpinocchiojrdaa.blogspot.ae/> for all the information. (Click on the tab on the right that says **My Son Pinocchio** for access to audition files, script, etc.)

Auditions will take place in groups of 8 students in the PS Music Rooms' doors Rooms 112/110. Still have questions? Contact Ms. Julie -- Rm. 261 or Ms. Fabrizio--in the PS Music Room j.lemoine_daa@gemsedu.com - j.fabrizio_daa@gemsedu.com

ASA's:

Internal ASA confirmation letters were sent home on January 5th.

External ASA sign-ups continue on Sunday, January 8th from 7:30am - 9am in the PS/ES cafeteria.

Additional information about External ASA program dates, times, costs, and contacts can be found on the [PS/ES External After School Activities Website](#). All providing groups will be at the sign up session to provide you with information about their program.

If you have any questions, please contact
Beth Swartz (External ASA Coordinator), e.swartz_daa@gemsedu.com or
Laura Sarmiento (Internal ASA Coordinator): l.sarmiento_daa@gemsedu.com.

Have a great week ahead!
Roberta Wiens and Kit Wilding



MIDDLE SCHOOL MESSAGES (Grades 6-8) *Make sure to read the corresponding DAAPA NEWS section of this issue of SPOTS for all the latest Middle School parent sponsored events!*

FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE

Welcome to 2017. We hope the holiday break was full of joy and happiness! With the new year ahead, we look forward to many great events here at DAA. We have started out the new year with a bang. The students had their first WWW meeting and the excitement in the air was electrifying! We ended the week with our first session of MAP testing.

MAP Testing

MAP testing will continue next week on Sunday, Monday and Wednesday. Please ensure that laptops are charged and ready to go for these days.

MS Winter Concert

We would like to invite all members of the community to join us on **Wednesday, January 11th at 7:00p.m. in the DAA auditorium for an evening of musical celebration!** Our students have worked extremely hard to prepare for this first formal performance of the year - we hope to see you there!

Grade 5 Step-Up Day

We will be speaking to grade 5 parents on **Thursday, Jan 19th at 8:00 a.m. in the Conference Room** in preparation for their transition to the Middle School in Sept. 2017. On **Sunday, Jan. 22nd**, we will invite the 5th grade students over to learn more about the Middle School by moving them through a rotation of MS elective classes. We look forward to these annual events and the opportunity to meet our incoming 6th graders and their parents.

MS Parent Coffee Morning

Our second coffee morning of 2016-17 will take place on **Wed. Jan. 25th at 8:00a.m.** in the Conference room. We hope MS parents can make it out!

Semester End

This is a busy time of the year for students and teachers alike as many tests, quizzes and projects will take place before the end of the semester. We encourage students as always to get the proper amount of sleep and eat a good breakfast before coming to school. If you need extra support from a teacher, please communicate with them and find a mutually appropriate time to work together.

JR. EAC:

Welcome back to our second season of JEAC sports. As most of you know it's Track and Field season. The first week of practice has been completed and we have a lot of enthusiastic student-athletes.

Please come and support your son/daughter at this up coming mini meet.

Grade 6 boys and girls track and field:
Wednesday January 11
DAA @GWA approximately 3:30pm

Buses leave DAA @3pm and return approximately 5:30pm



MIDDLE SCHOOL MESSAGES, continued

WWW Meetings

Week Without Walls is on full steam ahead. Students and parents will be receiving communication from their teacher trip leaders about behavior expectations, itineraries, packing lists, visa requirements, and much more throughout the next two months. For students traveling internationally, trip leaders will be giving students letters to help them attain their visas if it is necessary. Please remember to check the visa requirements of your child's passport. We will also be holding parent information meetings for individual international/overnight trips during the last week of January and the first week of February. Here you will receive the parent information packets, which will include emergency numbers and other essential pieces of information. Local trips will not hold parent meetings. Please find the date and the meeting location for your child's trip in the chart below:

WWW Trip	Leader	Meeting Room	Parent Meeting Date
Grade 6			
Kalba Camp	Ms. Milkeraitis	Room 38	Jan 29
Absolute Adventure 6	Mrs. Olson	Room 140	Feb. 1
Grade 7			
Philippines Sailing	Ms. Clegg	Band Room 12	Jan 25
Grade 7/8			
Absolute Adventure 7/8	Ms. Lapointe	Room 32	Jan 30
Cambodia	Ms. Eversteyn	Art Room 22	Jan 30
Sri Lanka	Mr. Hill	Room 134	Jan 30
Nepal	Ms. Cantu	Room 44	Jan 25
Grade 8			
Thailand	Mr. Susee	Room 110	Jan 30
Kenya	Mr. Gardner	Room 46	Jan 30

ASA - After School Activities are just around the corner. We will be having our signups during lunch in the MS commons on Sunday, January 8th and Monday, January 9th. Please take a look at the different [activities](#), also available on gemsdaa.com in the MS divisional links, that will be provided and encourage your child to sign up.

Warmest regards,
MS Admin
Joan Wiens and Luke Spencer



HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS (Grades 9-12)

Make sure to read the corresponding DAAPA NEWS section of this issue of SPOTS for all the latest High School parent sponsored events!

FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE

What just happened.....?

- **Around the classrooms.....**

Science grade 10: is everyone's height and wingspan the same? Students make hypotheses and experiment....



A winning **business class** came through the DECA challenge which is an annual challenge aimed at high school students globally. It is sponsored by companies such as Coca Cola and IBM and challenges students within a seven day period to tap in to their entrepreneurial spirit and find an innovative new use for an everyday item that is often discarded.

Past challenges have included trying to find an innovative new use for cardboard, newspaper and rubber. This year's DECA challenge was to try and be innovative with plastic bottles. There were 10 teams comprised of 40 sophomore students taking part from the Intro to Entrepreneurship classes.

Each idea was showcased in the auditorium and after student voting, the winning team was 'Bottle Buddy' – an idea that involved turning plastic bottles in to a sprinkler like system, to help in various scenarios. The winning team was: Jad Kamel, Hasan Ejaz, Rufat Mirzayev, Mohammed Abdel Salam and Maya Moustafa.



Art students researched the similarities and differences between the Arabic Bedoin tribes and that of the African Maasai tribes. Students went on to design their own figure looking at the style of artist Alberto Giacometti and taking inspiration from the clothing of the different tribes. The statues are made from wire, newspaper and Mod roc.

- **CAS corner**

This is just a reminder that all HS students should be documenting any Creativity, Activity & Service on Managebac on a weekly basis. Information on the requirements for each grade can be found at the following site: tschumperlin.net

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS, continued

CAS Student Spotlight

I would like to bring to your attention the work of two of our seniors that created and led a CAS project last school year. Please see the excerpt below for a portion of the Aims & Goals of their Project. Congratulations to Lorena and Sabrina Areosa for their efforts

Lorena and I feel strongly about the teacher's children being in the nursery and at times not having the luxury that other kids may have of going home right after school or spending their days at home and understand that they spend their entire day in the nursery. Additionally, we feel strongly about having a sense of community between the High School and Elementary School and recognize that a "sense of community" between the two does not currently exist, or at least evidently exist. Lorena and I, with this knowledge, want to combine our strong feelings about the school and nursery, with our love for children and my passion for sports with her passion for children psychology to make a difference in the nursery. Our main goal is to improve their daily activities, excite their regular routine with fun, exciting and varying energetic activities filled with learning opportunities. We also hope to become a friend to each and every single one of the children that may make their playing time or learning time more enjoyable. Our aim is to create a positive impact on the children in terms of their educational growth, social growth, emotional growth, and confidence and plan to do so through creative sessions that contribute to the development of the afore mentioned developmental processes that young children go through, which will be beneficial to their education, emotional and social development and character as a whole.

What's about to happen....?

- **Grade 9 MayWeek international trips to be announced shortly**
The 9th grade international trips for May Week are being planned and will be revealed to 9th graders and their parents early in the 2nd semester.
- **Student IDs needed for exams later this month**
All HS students will need to carry their ID cards to school everyday, and this will start at the beginning of HS Exams. The new turnstiles are expected to be working & students will not be allowed to enter the gate without their ID. Grade 9 & new students will receive IDs shortly. All other DAA students were given ID cards last year & need to use them. If a student has lost an ID card, they need to pay 50 AED to the cashier and fill out this form to get a new one: <https://docs.google.com/a/gemsdaa.net/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScsdDU0ZW2WDTfTlrpOB-uTHZ9MpXO5pKY2CZdh2LEHNtELXw/viewform>

The link is found under the request tab on the homepage of our Community Portal:
www.gemsdaa.com

- **Common Sense Media:** Help Students Spot Fake News

See you on campus!
Scott Schaffner and Paul McMahon,
Your HS Admin Team



ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES



EAC

Emirates Athletics Conference

SEASON 2 SPORTS & ACTIVITIES:

- Varsity Basketball Boys Coach Mr Bruan & Girls Coach Mr Rodgers
- JV Basketball Boys Coach Mr Ghosn & Girls Coach Ms Bonner
- MS Basketball Boys Coach Mr Grant & Girls Coach Mr Fugile
- Tennis (JV & V) Boys Coach Ms Eversteyn & Girls Coach Ms Olson
- Varsity Football Boys Coach Mr Murry & Girls Coach Mr Willett
- JV Football Boys Coach Mr Cloete & Girls Coach Ms Grant
- MS Football Boys Coach Mr Mike & Girls Coach Ms Lapalme
- Cross Country (MS, JV & V) Coaches Mr Tschumperlin, Ms Keesling and Mr Gardner

UPCOMING MATCHES

Soccer : January

January: Sunday 8th	MS Soccer Boys and Girls v GWA @ DAA
January: Sunday 8th	Varsity Soccer Girls Only v UAS @ DAA
January: Monday 9th	Varsity Soccer Boys Only v UAS @ DAA
January: Wednesday 11th	JV Soccer Boys and Girls v ACS @ DAA
January: Thursday 12th	Varsity Soccer Boys & Girls v ACS @ DAA
January: Saturday 14th	JV Soccer Boys and Girls v ASD @ ASD
January: Saturday 14th	Varsity Soccer Boys & Girls v ASD @ ASD

Basketball : January

January: Sunday 8th	MS BBall Boys & Girls v ASD @ DAA
January: Monday 9th	JV BBall Boys & Girls v ASD @ DAA
January: Wednesday 11th	JV BBall Boys & Girls v ACS @ DAA
January: Thursday 12th	MS BBall Boys & Girls v GWA @ GWA
January: Thursday 12th	Varsity BBall Boys & Girls v ASD @ DAA
January: Friday 13th	JV BBall Boys Invitational @ ACS
January: Saturday 14th	JV BBall Girls Invitational @ GAA
January: Sunday 15th	MS BBall Boys & Girls v DC @ DC
January: Sunday 15th	Varsity BBall Boys & Girls v ACS @ DAA
January: Wednesday 18th	MS BBall Boys & Girls v ACS @ DAA

Tennis

January: Sunday 8th	Girls Tennis v ASD @ ASD
January: Monday 9th	Boys Tennis v ASD @ ASD
January: Wed 11th	Boys Tennis v GWA @ GWA
January: Thursday 12th	Girls Tennis v GWA @ GWA
January: Saturday 14th	Girls Tennis v ACS @ DAA 10am
January: Saturday 14th	Boys Tennis v ACS @ DAA 12pm

Cross Country

January: Friday 13th	MS, JV & V Cross Country Hosted by ACS @ ACS Helipad Park
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ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES, continued

HIGH SCHOOL EXAMS & SPORT TRAININGS: Please note that with High School Mock exams coming up, sport training sessions held by coaches are not compulsory. We understand that this is a time where students should focus on their studies and exam preparation. However, we encourage students to keep communication open with their coaches and to inform them if they will not be at training. In saying this the EAC finals are scheduled for the 20th and 21st January. We ask student athletes to prepare in advance to make sure that they can commit to the EAC finals.

SEASON 2 MESAC (Middle East South Asia Conference)

All Junior Varsity and Varsity athletes and Senior Fine Arts participants! It's just around the corner, at the start of February! Coaches are busy making their **final selections which are due no later than Tuesday 10th January** for the best team to represent DAA at this event. If your child is selected, a travel letter will be sent home explaining costs of flights and visa requirements. For all international trips, please remind your child to send their coach a copy of their passport photo page so that flights can be confirmed. Remember, it is the responsibility of parents to source the correct visa for students to travel.

Locations & flight details of MESAC tournaments for Season 2:

- **Varsity Basketball** **American Embassy School, India**
 - Depart Dubai 9th Feb EK516 @ 10.05am. Arrive New Delhi 14.45pm
 - Depart New Delhi 13th Feb EK 511 @ 10.35am Arrive Dubai @ 1.00pm
 - Total Cost: 1980 AED
- **JV Basketball** **Dubai American Academy, UAE**
 - Teams arrive on the 1st Feb
 - Teams depart on the 5th Feb
 - We need to host 80 students, so please be prepared to open up your homes
 - Total cost: 60AED
- **Tennis** **American British IB World School, Oman**
 - Depart Dubai 8th Feb WY606 @ 12.25pm. Arrive Muscat 13.40pm
 - Depart Muscat 12th Feb WY605 @ 10.20am. Arrive Dubai @ 11.35am
 - Total Cost: 765 AED
- **Varsity Football** **American Community School, UAE**
 - Depart DAA 8th Feb at 3.30pm
 - Depart ACS 11th Feb at 8.00pm. Arrive back to DAA approx. 10.00pm
 - Total cost 60 AED
- **JV Football** **American School of Dubai Academy, UAE**
 - First Day of Competition 2nd February
 - Final Day of Competition 4th February
 - Total cost 60 AED
- **Cross Country (JV & V)** **American British IB World School, Oman**
 - Depart Dubai 9th Feb WY606 @ 12.25pm. Arrive Muscat 13.40pm
 - Depart Muscat 11th Feb WY623 @ 18.35pm. Arrive Dubai @ 19.50pm
 - Total Cost: 765 AED
- **Senior Fine Arts** **American School of Doha, Qatar**
 - Depart Dubai 2nd February EK 849 @ 16.50pm. Arrive Qatar 17.00pm
 - Depart Qatar 6th February EK 852 @ 11.50am. Arrive Dubai @ 1.55pm
 - Total Cost: 820 AED

ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES, continued

Please remember that it is a MESAC requirement that all squad participants in all activities be prepared to house visiting athletes. This season **we are hosting Junior Varsity Basketball**. Nashmia Saleem will be asking DAA team parents to open their homes to house athletes from ASDoha, ABA Oman, ACS, Abu Dhabi and AES, India. There are 80 athletes to house from the **February 1st - 5th 2017**. Thank you to parents who have already contacted the school and offered beds. Nashmia Saleem is the lead coordinator of housing. Please contact her directly nashmia.saleem@gemsdaa.net for any questions or concerns.

STAY IN TOUCH - DAA LEOPARDS!



Twitter Follow us @DAALeopards



Instagram Follow us @DAALeopards

Please continue to check our DAA Athletics Website @ www.gemsdaa.com for up to date information, match schedules and upcoming tournaments. Go to the home page and click on 'Athletics'

There are links to all calendars with Matches and MESAC Tournaments for the year!

I encourage all parents, students and teachers to come and support our Leopards both on and off the sporting field!

Emily Rentsch

Proud Athletic Director | Dubai American Academy



Menu Week 2: January 8-12

WEEK 2

SUNDAY CHINESE

Sweet & Sour Veg			
Sweet & Sour Fish		PASTA	Penne with Vegetable Sauce
Green Gut beans		SOUP	Minestrone
Vegetable Fried Rice		SALADS	Lentil Potato

MONDAY MEXICAN

Mexican 3 Beans			
Chicken Fajita		PASTA	Pomodoro Fusilli
Grilled Marrow Cubes		SOUP	Mushroom
Tomato Rice		SALADS	Russian Pasta

TUESDAY AMERICAN

Veg Burger			
Beef Burger		PASTA	Creamy Corn & Carrot Fettuccine
Green Peas		SOUP	Lentil
Potato Cubes		SALADS	Red Slaw Waldorf

WEDNESDAY EMIRATI

Arabian Bean Stew			
Breaded Chicken Tenders		PASTA	Mac 'n' Cheese
Broccoli Forest		SOUP	Cream of Broccoli
Potato Wedges / Biryani Rice		SALADS	Coleslaw Oriental

THURSDAY ARABIC

Lebanese Vegetarian Stew			
Shish Tawook with Grilled Veg		PASTA	Spaghetti Arabiatta
Cauliflower		SOUP	Vegetable
Peas Rice		SALADS	Chickpea Sweet Corn



Gluten



Dairy



Egg



Tree Nuts



Peanuts



Soya



Shellfish



Fish