

INNOVATIONS

The Sheikh Zayed Private Academy for Girls

April 2017

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents,

As the future young leaders of this great nation, lifelong learning and critical thinking are essential skills if our students are to be fully prepared to be competitive globally. Chronic absence from school will impact learning and fundamental literacy and numeracy skills will not be sufficiently developed to support the rigor required in the High School years and beyond. As gaps in learning increase it becomes more difficult to catch up putting individual students at a disadvantage.

While overall attendance has improved in the last year, the first few weeks of Term 3 have seen a decline especially in our senior years. This is disappointing as end of year assessments will soon be upon us. Please be reminded that the school attendance target is 95% and many grades are falling below this. Please refer to the attendance provided in this newsletter for your reference. We ask parents to support the school in ensuring your child is arriving punctually every school day as shown on the published ADEC calendar. Holidays and appointments should be scheduled outside of school time.

Thank you to all parents who have responded to one of the recent surveys sent home. This feedback helps us to identify what we are doing well, and to respond to feedback in the areas we can improve. We know that parent involvement in school has a positive impact on a child's education. The recent parent engagement survey received 234 responses, a return of approximately 22.5%. 81% of respondents indicated that they had attended a school event this year either frequently or occasionally. Communication via SMS and email were the most popular forms of communication. There were suggestions made for future events such as a career fair which we recently held as well as additional parent sessions focusing on student wellbeing. Our team are planning ahead to ensure we continue to offer a wide range of events at various times of the day to ensure we have maximum involvement.

We look forward to seeing you at one of the upcoming events in May. Please refer to the school's website <http://zayedacademy.ae/girls>, school newsletters or SMS reminders for further details.

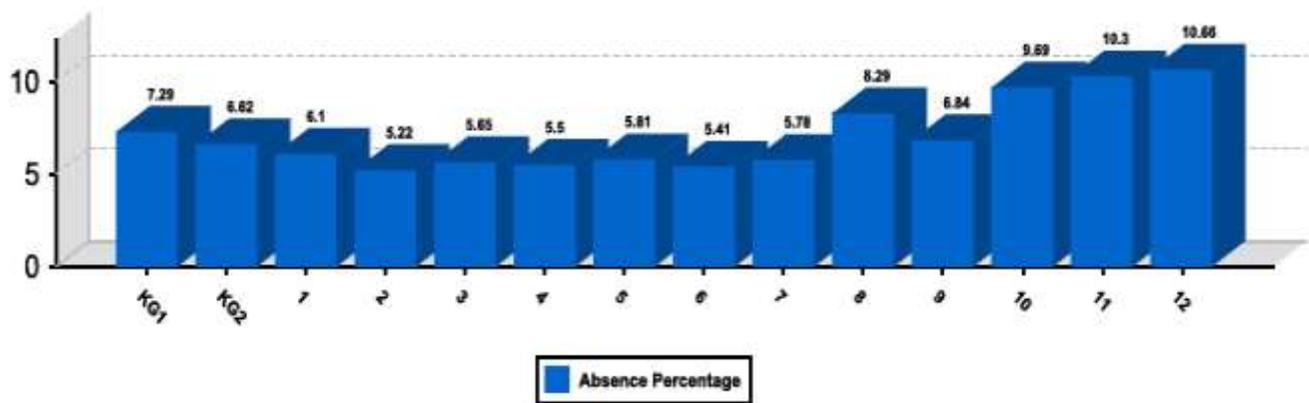
Kind regards

Lisa Hewitt

Principal

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Upcoming events in May

We look forward to welcoming you to one of the upcoming events

KG – Grade 5 performances May 9th – 23rd

Hag Al Lailah celebration KG1 – Grade 5 students May 11th

Parent thank you in the Parent Centre (K-12 parents) May 11th

Literacy night (K-5) May 16th

Grade 12 Graduation* May 24th

School will finish for all students at 12:30pm

Ramadan school hours will be published as soon as confirmation is received.

With best wishes for the month ahead

NEWS FROM ELEMENTARY

In response to the overwhelming positive feedback regarding Math Night, SZPAG will hold another family event, Literacy Night, on May 16th from 4:30-6 pm. The focus for this event will be on how to maintain both Arabic and English literacy skills over the summer; it has been reported that students can lose up to two months of academic progress during the long break. We are prepared to share some of our innovative reading solutions with families so that we can collectively combat what we call “the summer dip.”

Our K-5 Literacy Night will be held in classrooms in both the EC and Elementary buildings. Teachers have prepared creative and stimulating ideas and take-away strategies for some reading and writing summer fun. Please be on the lookout for your invitation and send in your RSVP. We look forward to sharing another learning focused event with you!

Tracie Hamilton

Head of Elementary

NEWS FROM ELEMENTARY

To enhance our learning that we had been doing in Math, Ms Karen came to the 2LS classroom with a challenge for the students. The students were asked to make Lego buildings, but once they were built they had to count the area of each side and write the area on a post it note. This was challenging due to the different sizes of the Lego blocks. Students learnt that two small Legos make a whole larger Lego. They then used this knowledge to count the area of each side of their building. When all the buildings were completed we placed them together to make our very own 2LS Lego city. The students were highly engaged and thoroughly enjoyed the Lego learning challenge.

Students writing about their Lego experience

First Ms Karen came in our classroom. She told us that we are going to use Lego, but not just play Lego, we would learn area with Lego. My building was the first city building. I felt so proud when we finished our city. It was amazing. We all felt so proud that we made an amazing city and we learnt to count area! Raya

Ms Karen came into our class. She helped us to make a tall building. We counted the area of the building. I felt happy because I love Lego. Eid



NEWS FROM SECONDARY

Dear Parents,

Thank you to those of you that attended the Parent Conferences held in the first week of Term 3. Meeting your daughter's teachers is an important aspect of ensuring that you have all the necessary information to help support your daughters academic progress here at SZPAG and I would encourage all of you to attend the conferences held every term.

Term 3 is now in full swing and the Secondary building is a hive of activity. The students from Grade 8-11 have been introduced to their curriculum choices for the next academic year and are currently in the process of making these important decisions about the courses they will study next year.

The Grade 12s have only a few more weeks of school before they begin their examinations. This is a difficult time for students as they often find the pressures of finalizing the course requirements weigh heavily on them. All the staff at SZPAG wish them well in their revision and preparation for finals.

This month, we would like to showcase the work being carried out in the English department.

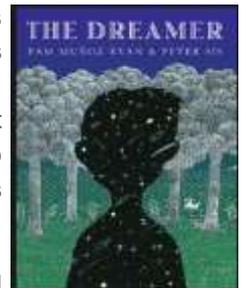
Gayle Marshall

Head of Secondary

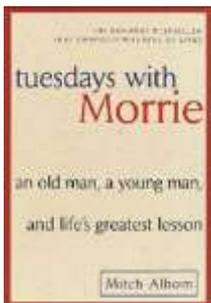
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

This has been an exciting year in English across the Secondary School. We have just wrapped up our English playwright units at the end of Term 2 and many grades are currently moving on to short story units. The English Curriculum is currently in the process of being refined, so look forward to positive changes in the upcoming school year. The theme of this article is different types of education that we need in our lives.

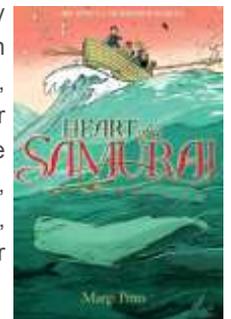
This year, Grade 8 completed a study of the historical fiction novel *Heart of a Samurai* by Margi Preus, which follows the true adventures of a curious boy from Japan who is swept from his homeland and into the unknown. Through this study, students explored many concepts, such as prejudice, family, travelling, and the challenges of unfamiliarity. They extended their learning with projects that allowed them to make the pages of the book come alive. The student work below depicts how one student demonstrated her understanding of the novel by using textual evidence to recreate a scene. The 3D model shows the main characters of the text discussing music and art inside the Captain's quarters of a ship. The students all enjoyed the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in this unique way.



Another theme of *Heart of a Samurai* is the value of inquisitiveness in education and in life. The students witnessed as Manjiro, the main character, had the world opened up to him through his curious nature. As the students get older and develop their own interests, hopefully their own inquisitiveness will reap the same rewards.



Now, moving away from Middle School to focus on High School, our Seniors are currently reading the memoir *Tuesdays with Morrie: An old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson* by Mitch Albom. They are enjoying the chance to delve into a different type of education: the education of human relationships. Through this study, the girls are learning lessons on friendship, family, materialism, ageing, love, death, and forgiveness. Paradoxically, they are focusing on an old man dying in order to learn how to live with compassion, empathy, and understanding. Hopefully, as they graduate and begin to navigate through adulthood, they will take some of these valuable lessons with them, and will also realize that the crux of their education has been not only to teach them reading, writing, and arithmetic, but perhaps even more importantly how to be empathetic citizens of their community, and how to properly value the lasting significance of human connection.



SZPAG EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (ECAs)

The Sheikh Zayed Private Academy for Girls provides a wide variety of extra-curricular activities to our students. We offer many supplementary educational programs in both Arabic and English subjects. Our teachers focus on giving students the opportunity to explore core academic subjects with a focus on STEAM, which represents Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math. In addition, there are programs which offer additional study support, community service opportunities, and educational leadership roles.

Many after school activities offer cross curricular credit and experience that develop our student minds, bodies, and brains all at once. Students have had the chance to travel, debate with students from around the world, utilize planning skills to attend self-reliant camping and hiking trips, compete against other students in sports contests, write, draw, create jewelry and other pieces of fine art, and fundraise to support charitable causes and campaigns.

This year the ECA program expanded by offering activities that evolved across the K-12 spectrum by developing solid staff collaboration and organization. This allowed students with identified specific interests to have the opportunity to continue exploring and expanding their knowledge base of preferred interests, such as Art and Design I for Early Childhood students, Art and Design II for Elementary students, and Art and Design III for Secondary students. Teachers blended their service this year across the schools to share their talents and experiences with students of all ages, not just the age group they teach.

This has strengthened the service delivery and increased participation in all activities school wide. Finally, the ECA program added the new Teacher Assistant program for High School students. This offers our students experience supervising and leading younger age students under the guidance of an experienced teacher. It also provides community service hours towards graduation. This portion of the program has resulted in a spike in participation from our Secondary students, and has allowed them to contribute to their school community in a positive and productive way.

In the Early Childhood and Elementary buildings, the most popular clubs have been Relaxation Techniques and Innovators Club. These club both can boast of registrations of nearly 100 students in the terms they are offered. Relaxation Techniques is offered at three levels, Relaxation Techniques I for Early Childhood students, Relaxation Techniques II for Elementary students, and Relaxation Techniques III for Secondary Students. This program is focused on healthy activities and exercises to assist in destressing and relaxing after the long school day. Innovators Club is also offered at Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary levels. These students participate in mentally challenging high level critical thinking activities and culminate by participating in a city wide competition.

ECA's are offered three days (Mondays—Wednesdays) at SZPAG and require parental permission to attend. Students can switch clubs every term to take full advantage of the variety of activities we offer. We are proud to continue to provide educational excellence beyond the classroom with the plethora of programs offered by our outstanding staff. We look forward to continued evolution and growth of such innovative and academically rewarding clubs for years to come.

FROM THE STUDENT WELLBEING TEAM

PISA TEST TO COMMENCE FOR 15 YEAR OLDS

We are pleased to announce that ADEC has selected SZPAG to represent the UAE by participating on the PISA, Programme for International Assessment, examination on May 2nd and May 10th.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. In 2015 over half a million students, representing 28 million 15-year-olds in 72 countries and economies, took the internationally agreed two-hour test. Students were assessed in science, mathematics, reading, collaborative problem solving and financial literacy. The PISA-based Test for Schools provides school-level estimates of performance and information about the learning environment and students' attitudes gathered from student questionnaires.

What Can Students Expect the Day of the PISA Test?

PISA uses multiple-choice testing as the primary feature of its assessments because it is reliable, efficient, and supports robust and scientific analyses. It is important to note that multiple-choice questions in PISA have a variety of formats, including highlighting of a word within a text, connecting pieces of information and making multiple selections from drop-down menus. We are also scheduled to take the paper pencil reversion of the PISA exam on the extended second day. In addition, typically up to one-third of questions in a PISA assessment are open-ended. Students also answer a background questionnaire, providing information about themselves, their attitudes to learning and their homes. Our girls are expected to sit for one hour segments with out interruptions. Break times are 5 minutes in length.

If your daughter is 15 years of age and/or in the 10th grade, she will sit the PISA exam on the dates mentioned above.

How Can I Help My Daughter Prepare for the PISA Exam?

- Make sure your daughter has a good, healthy breakfast before school on the dates of the exam.
- Arrive on time to school as the exams are in the morning
- Bring necessary materials: pencils, ruler, erasers, calculators.
- Encourage them to do their very best as PISA tests Reading, Science and Math

NEWS FROM STUDENT WELLBEING

Elementary School

During April, Elementary has focused on collaboration. Being able to work as a team in class and outside of school is a very important skill to learn. The students have been learning different ways to work in groups even with many different personalities. With the End of Year Celebrations approaching, our students have worked hard as a group, collaborating to make a fabulous performance for our parents! We can't wait to see how they turn out!

High School

Homeroom groups have been working together on creating a presentation for their peers highlighting the importance of sustainability. 6RS presented a short video and a skit which taught the audience about reusing materials. 7DW used a presentation to highlight the importance of avoiding the use of plastic as it can stay on earth for millions of years before it can be decomposed. We hope to see our students making informed decisions to help create a sustainable environment here at SZPAG and beyond.

As our Grade 12 students are getting closer to their final exam, we all notice the level of stress they are going through. To help them succeed below are some tips to help our students to manage and release exam stress

How to manage exam stress

- Learn to recognize when you're stressing out. ...
- Avoid comparing your abilities with your mates. ...
- Eat right. ...
- Sleep well. ...
- Exercise. ...
- Quit the bad habits. ...
- Panic is often triggered by hyperventilating (quick, shallow breaths). ...
- Steer clear of any exam 'post-mortem'

On 13th April an awards assembly was held for students and staff to celebrate academic achievement and service to the community. Awards received included “

“High Honor Roll”

“Honor Roll”

“Hard Worker”

“Citizenship”

“Exceptional Code of Conduct”,

**“Cherish the Community”
“Promoting National Identity”**



هل تعلم بأن قوانين حزام الأمان تغيرت في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة؟

نحن في أكاديمية الشيخ زايد الخاصة للبنات فرحين لسماع بأن دولة الإمارات قد استحدثت قوانين جديدة لحزام الأمان وذلك بهدف حماية جميع راكبي المركبات.

وعليه، فإن على جميع راكبي المركبة وضع حزام الأمان بالشكل الصحيح، حيث أظهرت الأبحاث ما يلي:

• وضع حزام الأمان ينفذ حياة الركاب.

• 50% من الحوادث المميتة سببها عدم وضع الركاب لحزام الأمان.

مالذي يمكنك فعله لضمان سلامة طفلك؟

• التأكد من وضعهم لحزام الأمان أثناء ركوبهم المركبة الخاصة بك أو أي مركبة.

• وضع حزام أمانك أولاً، ثم تأكد بأن جميع من معك من الركاب يضعون حزام الأمان.

• تحدث مع طفلك عن سبب وضع حزام الأمان و دوره بإنقاذ حياة الركاب.

• استخدم مقاعد الأطفال المناسبة للرضع ولأطفالك الصغار.

نشكر لكم جهودكم المبذولة وشاركتكم لنا بنشر الوعي بأهمية وضرورة وضع حزام الأمان

ديبي لابن – مساعدة مديرة مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة



Did You Know That Seat Belt Laws Are Changing In The UAE?

At SZPAG, we are excited to hear that UAE are bringing in new seat belt laws to protect all people who travel in vehicles.

Everyone in a car must wear an approved seat belt at all times. Research shows that:

- Wearing a seat belt saves lives,
- Of total fatal accidents, approx. 50% of people were not wearing seat belts

What can you do to help keep your children safe?

- Ensure they wear a seat belt whenever they are in a car or other vehicle
- Wear a seat belt yourself and ensure all passengers wear one as well
- Talk to your child about why we wear seat belts and how they save lives
- Use approved car seats for babies, and young children



Thank you for being partners in educating all people on the importance of wearing a seat belt.

Ms Debbie – Assistant Head Early Childhood

القراءة.. مَنْ منا لا يدرك أهمية القراءة، فهي حياة تتجدد مع كل كتاب تقرأه، وهي نور يبدد ظلمات الجهل، بل هي سياحة في أرجاء الكون الواسع لا قيود فيها للزمان أو المكان. هي سباحة في بحور العلم والمعرفة، ووسيلة اتصال مع الآخرين على الرغم من اختلاف اللغات والثقافات والبلاد. هي وطن من لا وطن له. هي هوية الإنسان، ومصدر فخره وعزه. من هذا المنطلق كان الاهتمام بها كبيراً، ومن هذا المنطلق انبثقت حملة "أبوظبي تقرأ" والتي تهدف إلى تشجيع الطلبة على القراءة باللغة العربية، وتحفيزهم على التمسك بالقراءة باعتبارها إحدى أهم الوسائل التي تساعد على إثراء معارف الطلبة، وتوسيع مداركهم، علاوة على تعزيز مهارات التواصل لديهم باستخدام لغتهم الأم بما يسهم في تعزيز هويتهم الوطنية والثقافية.

ونحن في الأكاديمية أيضاً نحرص على تحقيق هذا الهدف من خلال حث إثراء المكتبات بالكتب النافعة، وتخصيص حصص للقراءة والمطالعة، وإقامة معارض الكتب لتسهيل عملية وصول الطالب إلى الكتاب. كما نحث طلابتنا على المشاركة في مسابقة تحدي القراءة سنوياً، ويزداد عدد المشاركين في كل عام مما يدل على نجاح المدرسة في تعزيز أهمية القراءة في النفوس، ولكن هذا الهدف لن يتحقق ويؤتي ثماره إن لم يكون ولي الأمر قدوة للابناء، لذا فإننا ندعوكم لدعم هدفنا من خلال تخصيص وقت لمشاركة القراءة مع الأبناء بحيث تصبح القراءة نشاط ممتع تشاركه الأسرة أسبوعياً وليس واجباً يفرض على الطالب من قبل المدرسة. اتركوا لأبنائكم اختيار الكتب التي يرغبون بقراءتها ولكن شاركوهم متعة القراءة وابنوا معهم جسور التواصل والنقاش، كونوا قدوة لهم في حب المطالعة ليقبلوا عليها راغبين لا مكلفين.

إن القراءة فِطْرَةٌ، فالإنسان مَجْبُولٌ على حُبِّ التَّعْلَمِ والمعرفة، ولكنها تحتاج إلى من يثريها وينميها في النفوس.

اقرأ ... فَإِنَّ قارئَ اليومِ ... كاتبُ الغدِ.

أميرة صلاح

رئيسة القسم العربي

جائزة عون للخدمة المجتمعية

يتقدم فريق برنامج الايادي المعطاءة بالشكر الجزيل لأولياء الأمور الكرام والطلبة وكل من ساهم في دعم مسيرة البرنامج الخيرية، حيث توج هذا العمل بفوز الاكاديمية بالمركز الأول على مستوى أبوظبي في جائزة عون للخدمة المجتمعية التي ينظمها الهلال الأحمر بالتعاون مع مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم، كما فازت المعلمة رائدة شفيق بالمركز الأول عن فئة المشرف المتميز، وكل من الطالبة لطيفة حمدان المزروعي بالمركز الأول، والطالبة عوشة محمد الكعبي بالمركز الثاني فئة الطالب المبتكر. وبهذا تتأهل الأكاديمية للتصفيات النهائية على مستوى الدولة.



مسابقة تحدي القراءة العربي

قيل لأرسطو: كيف تحكم على إنسان؟ فأجاب: أسأله كم كتاباً يقرأ، وماذا يقرأ؟

وقال الشاعر:

أعز مكان في الدنيا سرج سابح وخير جليس في الأنام كتاب

إن الكتاب هو الجليس الذي لا ينافق ولا يمل ولا يعاتب إذا جفوته ولا يفشي سرك. الكتاب نافذة نتطلع من خلالها إلى العالم. ولذلك فالكتب هي ثروة العالم المخزونة وأفضل إرث للأجيال والأمم.

ومع مسابقة مبادرة " تحدي القراءة العربي "، التي أطلقها صاحب السمو الشيخ محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم، نائب رئيس الدولة رئيس مجلس الوزراء حاكم دبي التي انطلقت تصفيات المرحلة الثالثة في دورتها الثانية يوم السبت 29/4/2017، فبلغ عدد المشاركين أكثر من " 250 " مائتين وخمسين طالباً من مختلف إمارات الدولة الذين اجتمعوا في مدرسة البحث العلمي، ليتم اختيار " 70 " سبعين طالباً من بينهم، ليتأهل في نهاية التصفيات "10" عشر طلاب من جميع إمارات الدولة، ليتم اختيار الفائز الأول على مستوى الدولة ليكون الممثل الرسمي لدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة لينافس على المركز الأول مع أوائل الدول العربية على لقب بطل التحدي.

وقد كان لأكاديمية الشيخ زايد الخاصة شرف المشاركة في هذا التحدي، والفوز على مستوى منطقة أبوظبي التعليمية وتأهلت للمرحلة الثالثة الطالبتان:-

مهرة خالد الشحي من الصف الحادي عشر.

فريدة محمود جابر من الصف التاسع.

نتمنى لهن الفوز والمشاركة مع العشر الأوائل على مستوى الدولة. ونتمنى للأكاديمية شرف الحصول على المركز الأول وتمثيل دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة في هذه المسابقة.

قسم اللغة العربية

We are *Listening...*



PARENT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2017

COMING SOON...



100% confidential, speak freely and tell us what's **GREAT** and what can be better about your school!

In partnership with external experts, YouGov, a final summary is shared with schools for improvement planning

Thank you for participating and providing your valuable feedback.



Your voice *matters!*

