

BHS Monthly Newsletter --- Vol. 23 No. 2 --- 28 November 2019

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

October and November have been disrupted months for reasons I do not need to rehearse here, but let us hope for a bright future for the country. It has been a frustrating time for teachers, students and for you, but we shall do everything we can to make up for lost time by adding days or half days of lessons between now and March. Fortunately, for students in the Upper School and Upper Elementary, we have been able to take advantage of the Moodle platform and Teams on Office 365 which allows students to be set and carry out work online, and to be taught from the comfort of their homes. Where events have been cancelled, we shall attempt to reschedule these over the next month or two. If important school documents have not yet come out, we shall reschedule them to be published in the coming weeks. While it is unfortunate for children to miss school time, it is not irrecoverable and we shall all be working hard together in their interest in the months ahead.



Inevitably, after you were deluged with information in September, I have less to report now. Everybody is very busy, carrying forward initiatives, sitting on working parties, revising policies and devising together many ways to improve the school experience for our children. One change which has now been implemented is the establishment of a Senior Prefect Team to help the School's management and leadership teams run the School. It consists of a Head Boy, Rudy Zalzal, a Head Girl, Rochelle Chlala, and Deputy Head Prefects Karen Abi-Zeid Daou, Juan Pablo Ghantous Herera, Sharbel Gabriel Yammine, Alex Kanj and Anna Yaghi, all from Grade 12. They oversee 34 Prefects from Grade 10 to Grade 12 who have the responsibility of being good role models to younger students and of carrying out a range of duties at school. I expect much of them following their appointment after they had written letters of application and been interviewed by the Head of the Secondary Section and by me.

In terms of activities the introduction of Cricket has attracted 27 enthusiasts to date and all sports are being well-supported in both Upper and Lower Schools. The new multi gym and indoor sports court are being used and work on the football field has started. On



school campus in the years ahead.

the cultural front, Grade 4-6 students will be treated to a performance of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" by Octavian Georghiu and representatives of the woodwind section of the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra and, while International Day had to be postponed, it will now take place in the Spring and will feature countries from around the world in a spirit of diversity and tolerance.

In the course of this year, feasibility studies are taking place, or will take place, for a number of future, potential projects which are part of our five-year capital development plan. These include a study to examine the feasibility of covering the swimming pool, of introducing electrical ventilation to classrooms, of renovating Little House for the teaching of the Arts, and of reconfiguring the Arts and Craft Block to develop a technology centre. Obviously none of these will happen as projects immediately, but we are looking at them as part of the development of the

We are hoping to introduce two educational foreign trips in the coming months, one to France in April for students of the French language in the Upper School and one for a dozen Grade 11 students to Sidcot School, a Quaker School in Devon, in the South of England in May 2020.

Parents should note that we shall be introducing a consent form for photographs of your children in school publications. This will accompany the December invoices and, with your approval, enable children to appear in school magazines and other school literature. With regard to progress reports appearing on the school website, usernames and passwords have been sent to all parents. Parents should contact the Accounts office should they encounter any difficulty in gaining access to their children's reports. In mentioning the website, we are excited to inform the community that a new version will be launched in December. This will have seen a year's worth of research, training and development, and will be comparable to websites of international schools around the world.

For the moment, in spite of the uncertainty facing the country, there is much to do immediately and on a daily basis, not least the inspiring of a new generation to love learning, to work hard towards their goals and to take a healthy, active part in the school community in every way they can. They are our future.

JND Gray - I Serve

FROM THE VICE PRINCIPAL PASTORAL

There has been a number of interesting developments over the last month. I am very pleased about the student involvement in a number of aspects of the reflection activities that have taken place. This reflection will extend to the Elementary Section in the next week. I look forward to reading what the Elementary students have to feedback. One of the reflection activities is called a 'climate questionnaire'. This is not about weather! The climate questionnaire completed by the Upper School students was very informative, and all the more so for being anonymous. The data obtained from the climate questionnaire fed back that our students feel safe and

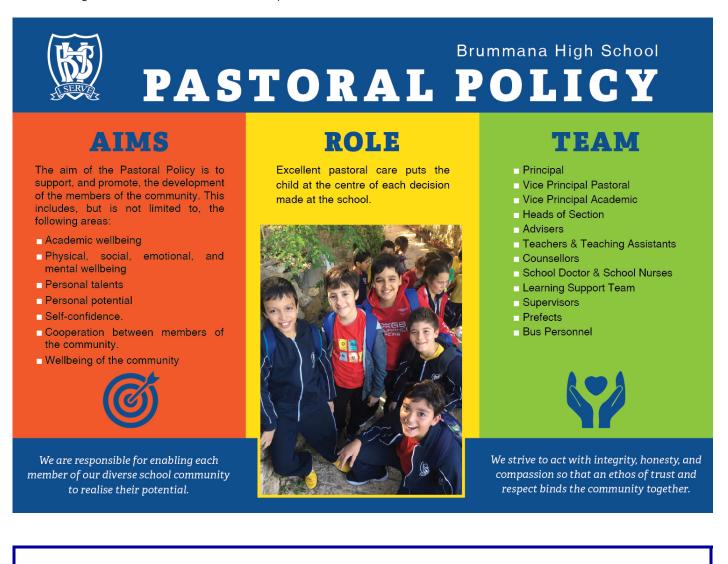
that they feel there is respect in the school. The data also fed back that approximately 2/5^{ths} of our female students do not have breakfast in the morning!

I enjoyed meeting the Elementary parents on 25 October 25 to share information, with some great videos, about pastoral care, safeguarding and PSHE. I look forward to meeting with the Infants' parents and the Upper School parents over the next few weeks. Following these initial meetings, I plan to establish further information sessions, with a strongly interactive aspect. I will make contact with parents and share a list of possible titles on areas that parents may want information sessions on. This will cover topics as varied as: online safety; fixed/growth mind sets; how to talk so children listen and how to listen so children talk; what are the

milestones in my child's development; how to read to children like a story teller; and supporting students to live a balanced life so as to avoid anxiety. I will also ask for parent feedback on any areas that they would like information on.

I will be going into Upper School assemblies over the next five weeks to provide online safety snippets to the Secondary and Intermediate sections. I am looking forward to getting into assemblies. The aim for these snippet sessions is to provide teens and near-teens with relevant information that is useful for their needs. The first session for the Secondary students will be to introduce them to 'Zipit'. This is a great app that teenagers can use when they are sent a message or information by a friend and they are not sure how to respond to it. It allows them to send a relevant meme back that shows that the other person has created an awkward situation!

French HoD Jamie Tayah is working hard on our first international trip for this year. This trip is destined for Paris and promises to be a great experience for the students and a strong experiential reinforcement of the curriculum material that is being covered with the Secondary students. Ms Tayah is communicating the date of the parents evening for this trip in the very near future. I look forward to announcing news of our second international trip in the next newsletter.



BOARDING NEWS

"We've been waiting for this for years. We have a new multi gym and the football field is under construction. Not only that, but we have a new smart TV, chairs and couches. The floor was renovated as well. We knew this was going to be a great year. To live independently and amongst our dear friends is an experience we will come to cherish forever. From playing ping pong or pool, watching a movie or a game, or studying together, we're building our character in a cheerful manner. Life in boarding prepares us for the road ahead, it has primed us with the necessary skills to grow independent and succeed in life." Sulaiman Al-Aini (12 IP)



INSURANCE/BHS ID CARDS

- All BHS students are insured 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, should they have an accident in Lebanon and require any subsequent medical treatment. The list of hospitals covered is posted on the BHS website.

- By now, parents of all sections, except the Lower Elementary Section, should have received the student accident insurance/BHS ID cards and letters explaining the insurance policy and the hospitals covered. These were distributed in November. Please check that you have received your child/ren's card/s. Any cards unclaimed by the end of December will be sent to the BHS Sick Bay where they will be available for collection.

In case of an accident, the insurance card should be presented at the emergency room of any hospital included in the policy

together with the student's Identity Card.

SOCIAL MEDIA FEED

Brummana High School (65) er 18 at 2:04 PM · 🚱 Published by Ar ad [?] · No

Exciting news update! Excavation work began today for the new BHS Sports

Arena development. Looking forward to a top-of-the-range artificial grass pitch plus running track in the coming months #iserve





Published by Anis Saad [7] · November 17 at 12:48 PM · O

On Friday 15 November, BHS hosted Brummana 1 Group - Lebanese Scout Association for a recruitment assembly for the Lower and Upper Elementary which included a fun presentation and interactive Q&As. #brummanahighschool #brummana1group #scouts #bhs

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UPPER SCHOOL NEWS

SECONDARY SECTION

- On 5 November 2019, and after the **long unexpected break**, the Principal addressed Secondary students about the **meanings of unity** in these difficult times. Mr. Gray shared with students personal experiences which made him realise the importance of unity within any social structure. The address was from the heart, and at the end, he asked all Secondary students to stand, hand-in-hand, as a sign of unity.

- Progress reports for all Secondary students have been posted on the Parent Information System on 4 November.

- Due to the difficult circumstances of the country and the several days off, **International Day** is postponed to spring. The date will be announced in due course.

- The Principal had finalised the selection process of **Secondary Prefects** at the beginning of October 2019. The prefect structure has been revised and now includes a **Prefect Leadership Team** and a **Prefect Body**. The **Prefect Leadership Team**, as detailed in the Principal's message, consists of: A Head Boy (Rudy Zalzal – Sec. 3 LS), a Head Girl (Rochelle Chlala – IB2), and five Deputy-Head Prefects: Juan Pablo Ghantous Herrera, Sharbel Gabriel Yammine (12 IP), Karen Abi-Zeid Daou (Sec. 3 LP), Alex Kanj and Anna Yaghi (IB2). The **Prefect Body** consists of: **Senior Prefects:** Joey Bader, Ayana El Achkar, Jad El Hajj, Samar Jemal, Tina Maria Kasparian, Karl Omar Salman (12 IP), Rand Haidar (Sec. 3 LP), Christina Atallah, Gina Alexandra Chamaa and Samih Farhat (IB2). **Junior Prefects:** Paula Pita Arike, Gheed Haidar, Julia Hilany, Oceane Tannous (11 IP), Gabriel El Khabbaz, Adriana Goraieb, Kelly Kanaan, Joya Laure Khoury, Tatiana Rousse (IB1), Samir Bu Jawdeh, Marinella Nassif and Lea-Maria Rizk (sec. 3 LP). **Classroom Prefects:** Kara Farhat, Vera Laura Kasparian, Marc Najjar, Maxime Jean-Sebastien Touzot (10 IP), Kevin Abi-Zeid Daou, Chaha Anis Akl, Carina Harfouche, Leona Harfouche, Johnny Kazandjian, Ralph Nasr, Yasmina Tannous El Ghoul and Remi Zalzal (Sec. 1 LP). On 17 October, the 41 Prefects took the **oath** in the presence of the Principal and their peers in the Secondary assembly.



- On 12 November, the Prom Committee held its first bake sale for Upper School students.

- On 15 November, Mr. Gray and his wife invited the 41 Prefects, Secondary advisers and HOS to a **dinner at the Principal's House**. The dinner was in honour of the Prefects and to celebrate their nomination and role in leading the school.

- The **Elections of the Student Council** (BHSC) for Grades 9 to 12 took place on 18 November. Students running for the Presidency of BHSC each gave a speech detailing their programmes in a special assembly to students of Grades 9 to 12 on 15 November. Our students exhibited a high sense of civic and democratic awareness on the day of elections. The results came as follows: **President of BHSC**: Rodolf Aouad (Sec. 3 SE); **Vice President:** Natalie Ashkar (IB1); Representatives: Juan Pablo Ghantous Herrera (12 IP), Antonio Sawma (Sec. 3 LP), Maxine Michiko El Aswad (IB2), Hasan Alwakeel (11 IP), Valerie Naufal (Sec. 2 LP), Tamer Saleh (IB1), Adan Assaad Gemayel (10 IP), Kevin Abi-Zeid Daou (Sec. 1 LP), Thierry Hitti (9LP) and Rami El-Haddad (9IP). Congratulations to the elected members of BHSC.

- On 19 November, the **Vice-Principal Academic** George Rizkallah held a special meeting with **Grade 10 IP** students to discuss **IGCSE** related matters and answer their questions concerning the Cambridge examinations.

- On 21 November, during the lunch break, a large number of Secondary students and their teachers participated in **fun sports games** during the internal **launch of the multi-gym** by the Principal. Students and teachers had great fun and all were appreciative of this new facility which is made available to them at a symbolic cost.

- Exam 1 schedules were distributed on 21 November, for Grades 10, 11, 12 IP, IB2 and Secondary 3 LP students. The exams will take place in the week of Monday to Friday 9 to 13 December.

- Founder's Day this year will take place on Friday, 29 November, at 2:00 pm. The Guest Speaker is Old Scholar Majdi Al Ayed, Class of 2001. Students, as is traditional, are expected to come in full formal attire for the event and the class photo which will be taken on the same day.



Careers Department News

- **SAT Classes:** This month, students were offered an option to enrol in a SAT course provided by experts from SKILLZ, a third party company with a number of years of experience in training and preparing students of this age for the rigours of the SAT. This class will prepare those enrolled for the SAT test occurring in December 2019. This intensive programme will challenge the hearts and minds of our students, pushing them to realise their full potential and achieve higher scores for the standardised testing needed for application to the top universities both in Lebanon and abroad. These classes, organised by the Careers Department at BHS, aim to provide our students with the foundation necessary for the next step into university and academia. 25 students enrolled in the class making it one of the largest classes in BHS history for such programmes. Future classes are also planned, namely in January 2020 to prepare our students for future SAT tests.



- LAU Visit: On 20 November 2019, the Lebanese American University (LAU) visited BHS campus and spoke to our Grade 12 students in order to explain the different fields of study offered at LAU as well as answer questions that students have for this particular university. The presentation conducted by Grace Saliba of the Admissions Department at LAU gave specific students Fee-Waived applications to recognise those students who have shown academic excellence throughout their Secondary school

years. LAU has been ranked 10th in Times Higher Education's list of top universities in the Arab World and is one of the two universities ranked on this list from Lebanon.

INTERMEDIATE SECTION

- Assembly: 30 Sept. - Vice Principal Academic George Rizkallah spoke to students about the school's Promotion and Exemption Policies. This was followed by some Grade 9 students speaking about the topic of the week "Gratitude" and what they are grateful for in their lives. 7 Oct. - Vice Principal Pastoral Sage Ball addressed the Intermediate Assembly. Mr. Ball introduced himself and his role at our school. He thanked the students for being so well behaved. Finally, he read out and explained the BHS Pastoral Policy. After the talk, students watched a touching short video in which students demonstrate sincere kindness to a less fortunate classmate by sharing their food with him. 14 Oct. - A presentation was given by Richard Bampfylde, Marketing Manager, and Old Scholar Houssam Shaiban on the plan to transform BHS campus into a Botanical Garden. This proposal includes the possibility of having glass homes for a variety of plants, solar panels and harvesting rainwater. The students were mostly excited about the possibility of having animals in these botanical gardens. 18 Nov. - The assembly started with Mr. Ball addressing students. He gave some of the results that came out from the questionnaires that the students filled out a few weeks ago. The students were asked questions related to health and safety. The Head of Section then explained the meaning of Democracy since the Grade 9 students had just finished the voting process for the student council elections.

- A Special Assembly was held on 5 November after the students had been out of school for more than two weeks. Our Principal spoke about the importance of remaining united because in that way we remain strong.

- Advisory: In the coming three advisory sessions (5 to 25 November) the advisers will be going over the following study skills: better listening, note taking, study plan, smarter reading, confidence in tests, dealing with academic stress and tips on dealing with test anxiety.

- A New Upper School Student Handbook has been published and each student will receive a copy to read and discuss with their parents. In Advisory, the advisers will go over the section "Upper School Behavioural Expectations and Rules".

- Mid-Term Progress Reports were posted online on 4 November for parents to read.

- Back to School Night took place on 16 Oct. in the afternoon. Parents experienced sitting in their child's classrooms and listening to their child's different teachers explain the aims and expectations for the year.

- IB Meeting for Grade 9 students and their parents took place on 16 Oct. Mr. Gray and Mr. Rizkallah gave an explanation of the IP programme and then answered the many questions of the parents.

- ID Insurance Cards were distributed on 7 Nov. These are cards to be used in case of an accident at any time and are valid for one year.

- A Teachers' Office Hours paper was sent home with students on 15 Nov. The list includes the hours that a teacher is free and available to meet parents. The list also includes teachers' emails for parents to establish contact with teachers when necessary.

- Student Council Elections took place on 18 Nov. Grade 9 students voted for their class representatives. Congratulations to Thierry Hitti who won the Grade 9 LP elections. Congratulations to Rami El Haddad who won the Grade 9 IP elections.

- Points for Parents: Please try to maintain contact via email with your child's teachers especially in the subjects in which they are struggling.



Gardening Club

You name it we have planted it.....

Lettuce, cabbage, red cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, sweet peas, pigeon peas, fava beans, dwarf brown kidney beans, climbing beans, carrots of all colours, celery, turnip, spinach, arugula, peppergrass, onions, garlic, nasturtiums, daikon radish, round radish and a mesclun salad (containing a mix of six different leafy vegetables). Twenty-plus delicious winter vegetables, happily growing in our tiny greenhouse at the gardening club, were planted by our young green-thumbed gardeners during the last few weeks. Our greens are 100% organic, with no chemical fertilizers, or pesticides. The secret recipe for growing those legumes includes good

soil, treshwater, abundant sunshine and the most important ingredient - loads of Tender Loving

Botanical Garden



Transforming Our School Into a Botanical Garden

The school's project to transform the wonderful campus into a botanical garden is up and running. Led by Houssam Shaiban, Old Scholar and owner of Focal Point, and supported by the Principal and Marketing Manager, the transformation is now in the planning phase. One of the chief goals of the garden is to return it to being a home for native species, and at the same time removing some of the non-native, invasive species which have been planted on campus over the school's history (since 1873). A possible future development would see glasshouses created, with different biomes housed in each glasshouse (e.g. tundra, desert and rainforest). Presentations have been made in assemblies of the Intermediate and Elementary sections. A Working Group including students is set to meet on Wednesday, 4 December. Once accredited by AUB next year, the campus will open up for approximately four Open Days during the year, welcoming the whole school community and general public to enjoy the botanical garden, ushered around by BHS students as the visitors' guides.

LOWER SCHOOL NEWS

ELEMENTARY SECTION

- In the midst of a period of havoc in the country, BHS has maintained a stream of stability and managed to engage the children in more than one activity which proved to be healthy and productive.

- The **Scouts** came to introduce themselves to students and to encourage them to join the groups.

- Our students were joined in assembly by one of our Secondary students, Nathalie Ashkar, who talked about **community service**. Their awareness was raised to understand what a community is and how to interact with it positively. They were also urged to perceive the importance of the "I Serve" motto at BHS.

- Substitute Robotics Teacher Elie Jose Matni presented a musical assembly to the Upper Elementary telling the story of the Lebanese **Independence Day** and the meaning of the Lebanese flag. Social Studies Teacher Nadia Wannous presented the story of the independence through Zajal with students from Grade 3 for the Lower Elementary.

- Lower Elementary Teaching Assistant Elma Zgheib also taught the students how



to **eat healthy** snacks or meals, how to pack their lunchboxes for school and manage a dietary balanced plan for a healthy lifestyle. To enforce this plan, the Lower Elementary tuck shop is undergoing a make-over, with the introduction of healthier options, such as fruit, custard and jelly. Many students have also been sharing their healthy lunch boxes and identifying the plant parts we eat.



- Grade 1 students have been bringing in special items to "**show and tell**": Jad El Masri and his Lego car; Ralf Badine and his pet tortoise.

- Houssam Shaiban gave the opportunity to all students to learn about and later delve into the **Gardening Club** on the BHS campus. Students can raise their own vegetables to enjoy later as a nourishing salad. LE students have started taking their science lessons outside to the Gardening Club greenhouse.

- The students have been having a wonderful time in the **Lower Elementary Library** with Ms. Tara. They have been sharing stories, checking in and out their books with the scanner and have been "illustrators", drawing beautiful pictures to decorate their library.

- Finally, cautionary pre-emptive **fire drills** have and will take place in our section periodically as a way to keep our students safe in case of an emergency.

INFANT SECTION

- The Infant Section started a new **theme** with the beginning of a new month "**RESPONSIBILITY**". All students are given responsibilities in which they can succeed. All classes have started to settle into the daily routine. As a class, they have discussed their responsibilities at school, one of which is cleaning up after snack.

- KG I students have enjoyed using sponges to make an autumn tree using autumn colours. They also enjoyed doing some hand prints to make a circle of friendship.

- KG II students enjoyed preparing different art activities related to our theme "All About Me". It was really fun for KG II students working on the crab craft activity for letter "c" and colouring the lemon for letter "l".

- **KG III** students enjoyed discussing the "friendship" theme and worked on an activity, which is the circle of friendship. It is really interesting how KG III students are able to write simple sentences and read them. While studying graphs they enjoyed making a picture graph that showed the number of girls and boys in their class and displayed it.

- Library books will start to go home with KG II and KG III students. When one arrives at your house please read it with your child and then return it to the classroom so it can travel to a new home.

- Please **label** your child's coats/jackets/long-sleeved shirts with his or her name. It greatly helps us match students up with their belongings at the end of the day.

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to Nado Chelala, Upper School Maths, Robotics, STEM and Design and Technology teacher, who gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Ameleen on 9 October.



SCOUTS NEWS

- On 12 October, Brummana One Group attended the association's end of year closing ceremony in Saida, where they participated in the award ceremony, the annual parade and the celebration of the newly appointed leaders. The group is proud to congratulate the Cubs Unit for winning two prizes, as well as Girl Scouts Leader C. Christina Sawaya and Boy Scouts Leader C. Joe Jad Rufka for their appointment during the past scouting year.

- After the closing ceremony, we started the new scouting year, but skipped a couple of meetings due to the country's security

situation.



- As of 2 November, our meetings are back on, every Saturday from 3:30-5:30pm. The first two meetings of the year were full of celebrations as we transitioned seven new Cub Scouts Kevin Jarjoura, Sami Abou Diwan, Elie Hachem, Yasha Saad, Kelly Ziade, Yendi Abou Diwan & Michelle Abi Haidar to the Guides and Troop. Additionally, three Girl Scouts Gem Haswany, Angela Saade & Yasmina Yared transitioned to the Venture Scouts. We are ready to watch our family as it grows and progresses this year.

- To contact our leaders and ask for further information about our group:

C. Andrea Saad: 70-699933 – Cub Scouts 7-11 years old C. Christina Sawaya: 76-754191 – Girl Scouts 11-16 years old C. Joe Jad Rufka: 03-307995 – Boy Scouts 11-16 years old C. Farah Salem: 76-895478 – Venture Scouts 16+

• C. Laura Aouad: 70-395172 - Administrative leader

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWS

- On behalf of the Parents' Association, I would like to welcome all Parents and students again to the academic year. Let me take this opportunity to wish you a happy Independence Day.

- Dear Parents, we understand your worries during this passing period but with the cooperation between the Board, our Principal,

staff, students and parents, we can and will achieve a successful year to provide a bright future to our lovely students. Our thanks go to the schools' staff for all the efforts and the support.

- As you know, our agenda is on hold due to the current situation, but we will continue with it soon.

- During this period, we met with Duncan Knox who is a representative of "Hubbub" group and who had joined us from the UK. He is willing to help with digital fundraising within and outside of our community. The presentation was marvellous.

- We are so happy for the excavation work that started at the Football Field and will be proud to officially have an artificial grass field.

- Congratulations to the school for the launching of the new multi-gym and indoor sports court.

- On 25 November, we joined Vice Principal Sage Ball for an Upper Elementary parental pastoral session; it was very interesting.

OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION NEWS

This is a reminder that the BHS Old Scholars Association is accepting Financial Aid applications on behalf of the OSA Financial Aid Programme for Academic year 2020/2021. Funds are earmarked for eligible BHS students in Grades 10, 11, 12 and the deadline for submission of applications is end of February 2020. Parents of BHS students and/or BHS students who would like to apply, can call Nadine Abdel Khalek, Fundraising and Financial Aid Officer, at the BHS OSA, on 009614 862368. Alternatively, you could download a soft copy of the application on this link: http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019. http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019. http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019. http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019. http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019. http://www.bhsosa.net/OSA%20FINANCIAL%20AID%20Application%202019.



THANK YOU TO...

- Hani Aboul Jabine, Chairman of the BHS Board of Governors, for donating \$50,000 through the BHS Old Scholars' Association earmarked as follows: \$25,000 for sports equipment for the new multi-gym and \$25,000 for the Financial Aid Programme.

- Donors to a Friends' appeal for donating 20,401,480 LL to the Financial Aid Programme.

- Vice Principal Academic Georges Rizkallah for donating books to the Thomas Little Memorial Library.

- IB 1 student Gabriel Khabbaz for donating books to the Lower Elementary Library.

The Newsletter will be undergoing a makeover, with the new format ready for the start of 2020. If you would like to receive a copy of the Newsletter by email, please send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line to: najat.wakim@bhs.edu.lb.

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