



The School Buzz



News & Updates

A Farewell Note – Class of 2020

Message from Our Seniors

Amaan Siddiqi, Grade 12

I speak for all the seniors when I say that this year was not what we envisioned nor spent months dreaming of. With COVID-19 taking over the world, we have gone into lockdown, stilling the noise and traffic of twenty-first century life. With the implementation of social distancing and health and safety guidelines, our social lives have been put to a halt, and most, if not all, of our school events have been driven to be digitalized or canceled.

We have missed out on a lot of great events that the previous seniors were able to take part in. We weren't able to experience the last weeks of our school life nor walk through the corridors of the place where we spent so much of our childhood learning, growing, and evolving into the wonderful people we have become today. Had we known the 12th of March was truly our last day present in school as students, we would have undoubtedly said our proper goodbyes with dear sentiments.

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However, we must bear in mind that the glass is not half-empty, it is half-full. We have had the privilege of attending one of the best schools in Oman and having studied in a system that is recognized and respected worldwide. We have made friends and memories that will last us a lifetime, and we will reminisce about them for years to come. Most of all, The International School of Choueifat – Muscat has been our second home, one that has changed us for the better, and has prepared us for the challenging realities of the world.

I know for a fact that the academic lengths we have reached right now would not have been possible without the help we received from our incredible teachers, who have played such an integral part in molding us into the young adults we have become today.

Every teacher I hold in high regard as they have taught me what it means to be an adult, have made me realize where my strengths lie, and have helped me shatter my mental barriers over and over again. They have constructively pointed out my weak points and guided me on how to minimize them to the best extent.

It is with a heavy heart that we end this school year, having gone through a stressful experience, exacerbated by the Coronavirus pandemic. We might not have had the year we deserved, but we have had 11 years of joyfulness and memorable experiences that have molded us into the strong-willed individuals we have become today. Graduating from an honorable school like The International School of Choueifat – Muscat has prepared us for the road that lies ahead of us all. We know with all of our hearts that no matter where this road takes us, ISC-Muscat will always be our school, and more importantly, our home.

Message from Schoolmates
Salma Darwiche, Grade 11

I speak on behalf of the entire upcoming seniors of the Class of 2021 when I say you have all inspired us with your ability to work through such unexpected, long-lasting, and unfortunate circumstances with such composure and consistency. The excitement and commitment you conveyed at the beginning of this year, welcoming your final months as school students with open arms, remains unmatched by any other. Your quick and keen work to organize activities, trips, and events to tighten your bond and make the most of your time together as students inspired us deeply. Yet despite all the positivity with which you strode into this year, you were faced with the loss of our forever cherished HM Sultan Qaboos Bin Said and a global pandemic that caught many off-guard and put a stop to many plans.

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We have had 11 years of joyfulness and memorable experiences



A global pandemic that caught many off-guard and put a stop to many plans

We cannot begin to imagine or understand the stress and pressure you have been undergoing in the current weeks as you face time-sensitive, life-determining decisions in pursuing higher education. However, what we can take from you is a lesson of maturity and inspiration to uphold as we enter our final year, working harder than ever with a new sense of awareness. We truly thank you for repeatedly reaching out to us, to aid us, with academic and social matters, and for leaving behind such high standards to challenge ourselves to meet and surpass. On a final note, we wish you luck in your futures that, although may seem unclear now, will undoubtedly work in your favor as you have worked tirelessly for them. Today, you are graduates; tomorrow, you are the doctors, engineers, architects, and labor force that uphold this beautiful country with great dignity and respect.

KG Teddy Bear Picnic

Aya Al-Sabahi, Grade 11

Everyone remembers having an item that was dear to their hearts as a child. For many children, teddy bears are that common souvenir of childhood, and it is still nostalgic for adults today. SABIS® is not only about academic achievements; school-organized events like the KG Teddy Bear Picnic help enable children to learn about social connections from a young age. The kids brought their own teddy bears and had a picnic with them. They jumped in the bouncy castle, played with bubbles, and made teddy-bear themed snacks. The air balloon and teddy bear cutouts added to the magical atmosphere, which allowed teachers to take pictures to be treasured forever. The bouncy castle and other activities were bound to make the students tired, but they had their bear sandwiches as an energy boost. School activities like this help bring a closer bond between students and teachers, enabling a healthy learning mindset.



Scan for more pictures



Teddy bears are that common souvenir of childhood



Blockchain Technology Safeguards SABIS® Diplomas

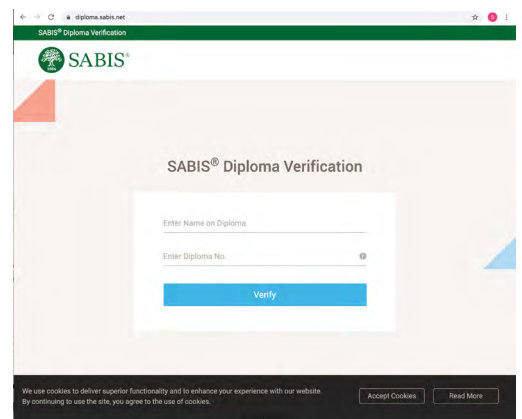
At the end of every academic year, thousands of students in SABIS® schools around the world are awarded their well-earned diplomas at graduation. And for over 130 years, SABIS® has traditionally issued these diplomas on paper to its students. Today, SABIS® diplomas have undergone a total transformation and students will benefit from a traditional paper diploma as well as a digital one!

For the 2019-20 academic year, SABIS® schools started offering their students immutable digital diplomas that are protected using the blockchain technology – a record-keeping technology that offers a secure way of making and recording transactions through a chain of blocks (digital information) stored in a database known as the chain and shared over a verified network.

In line with this, a new SABIS® Digital Diploma platform has been developed and implemented at SABIS® schools to automate the generation process of the diplomas, which has to go through various phases of validation to be digitally signed by the key parties, securely issued, and delivered to the students. The platform offers great advantages including increased accuracy, automated process and notification sending, maximized time efficiency, minimized errors, and reduced cost.

The platform is designed following SABIS®'s high data security standards. The architecture includes multiple security layers where fraudulent activities are near impossibility as the platform is trusted, secure, and requests instant authentication. Besides, the data is centralized and backed up and all transactions are digitally archived, logged, and tracked.

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All SABIS® High School Diplomas will be stored, updated, authenticated, verified, and shared on the new SABIS® Digital Diploma platform. “Automating the SABIS® high school diploma is an important step towards enabling every SABIS® graduate to digitally access their diplomas. Inspired by the blockchain technology, the SABIS® Digital Diploma platform securely stores sensitive and confidential data records and automates the process of digital signatures while verifying the authenticity of the certificates being issued. This adds great value to the SABIS® higher education,” commented Mr. Serge Bakhos, Group Vice President – Information Technology and Digital Publishing.

Enabling every SABIS® graduate to digitally access their diplomas

For students, the benefits go beyond innovation. They can share their diplomas with whomever they please and at no cost. This is particularly important for students as they have a convenient, digital proof of their SABIS® diploma when applying to university or for a job. Using the SABIS® Diploma Verification platform, universities/employers can very easily verify that the diploma is legitimate without contacting the school’s registrar office. Further to this, SABIS® graduates can easily and securely access their diploma online by accessing the SABIS® Digital Diploma platform and soon, they will be able to share their achievement on selected social media platforms.



SLO Stories

The Learning Never Stops

Aya Al-Sabahi, Grade 11

Being under quarantine has given us a valuable commodity of time, which many students did not have before. ISC-Muscat’s SABIS® Student Life Organization (SLO) Outreach Department stepped in and did their part to help deal with the pandemic, and began planning daily activities in hopes of making everyone’s days brighter. Prefects within the department volunteered to have weekly meetings to prepare posters and discuss new activities. Activities were set to continue until the very last day of school in late June, amounting to over 70 distinct activities.

Activities like this are necessary to keep students productive and make use of their time efficiently; as always, the learning never stops. The activities helped keep students happy with the energetic use of their minds and we bonded through community spirit from a distance. Each activity was announced every morning as a motivator to the start of a productive day. The school asked students to submit their work through social media or E-mail, which helped encourage others to participate as well.



The activities were fun, engaging, and educational. They helped students educate one another, stay aware of methods to remain safe, learn a new skill, or simply fill their free time with a joyful family activity. A particular favorite activity was “Tasty Tuesday,” where students would try out a recipe the SLO team provided. “Wildlife Wednesday” gave students a voice to help spread awareness over matters such as animals going extinct, and “Make it Monday” often involved bringing out the students’ creative skills. The current situation is undoubtedly sorrowful, yet ISC-Muscat did not fall short of helping our students utilize their time for self-development and improvement.

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ISC-Muscat did not fall short of helping our students utilize their time for self-development and improvement.



Hams Al-Atheer Visit

During these hard times, it is important we take a look back to rejoice at the memory of one of the highlights of the school years. In December, our prefects took time from their winter break to give back to their community by visiting the Hams Al-Atheer Rehabilitation Center. The center provides rehabilitation for all types of disabilities through special education, occupational therapy, speech therapy, physiotherapy, psychological counseling, and behavior modification. Our prefects distributed gifts and spent the morning listening to stories, playing games, doing arts and crafts, and spreading joy! The experience as recounted by one of the prefects:



“We were generously greeted by the leading faculty who familiarized us with the different divisions located within the center and how to access them. After being led through the main office, we were briefed on the different forms of rehabilitation services the center offered as well as their compassionate objective to facilitate the academic, communicative, and developmental aspects of all members. The representative emphasized the importance of understanding that, despite the difficulties the children and young adults faced, they all deserved an equal opportunity at expressing themselves and pursuing their ambitions. As soon as we were done being informed and asking questions we were split into groups, each being assigned a different room of members to spend time and enjoy activities with, such as arts and crafts, storytelling, and fun coordination drills.

I had the wonderful opportunity to spend time with a group of children who, after eagerly introducing themselves, began showing me their artwork and books. We all proceeded to sit together as I taught them how to draw and color different animals. Once we were done drawing, they began exhibiting their sharp memory skills through fun drills that involved colored hoops and balls.

In the next hour, all of the prefects were reunited in the center’s garden, where we began distributing to all the children and members the gifts that were generously donated by ISC-Muscat students. The gifts were organized by age groups and consisted of toys, books, board games, and stuffed animals. Smiles were spread all around as happy spirits filled the air; it was truly an unforgettable experience.” – Salma Darwiche, Grade 11



Smiles were spread all around as happy spirits filled the air

School Trips

Seniors 2020 Bidiyah Trip

Amaan Siddiqi, Grade 12

Our senior class took a memorable trip to the desert, joined by some of their teachers and supervisors. First, they enjoyed a picnic in the park on the way to the camp. At the camp, they were entertained with traditional stories and campfire activities, witnessed the beautiful sunset and sunrise in the serenity of the desert, but most of all, they bonded and shared this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

As we crossed the sandy expanse beneath our feet, the breathtaking landscape of the Bidiyah camp was revealed. With the bright sun glimmering onto the enormous shifting dunes in front of us, the camp looked like a place untouched





by humans, displaying nature in all of its raw beauty. The employees at the camp gave us a heartfelt speech in both English and Arabic, explaining the various activities that we were to take part in. After showing us our rooms, we took a few minutes to explore and then took part in some thrilling activities like dune bashing and sandboarding.

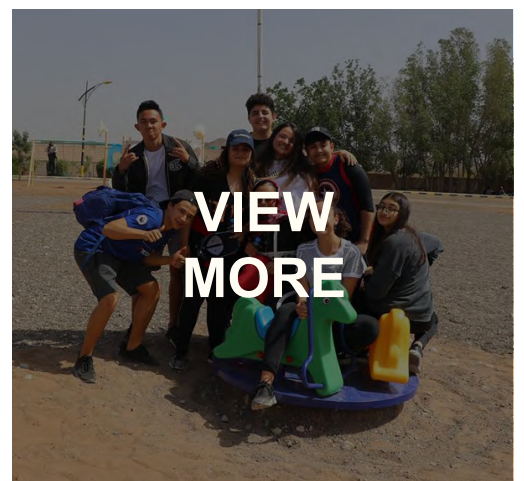
My friends and I opted to try dune bashing, deciding it was perhaps one of the most riveting experiences of the whole trip. After refueling the jeep and making sure the wheels had enough air in them, we set out to the nearby dunes. We were then taken to the highest dunes, accelerating at a rapid but safe speed. The adrenaline rush paired with the joy of being surrounded by friends made the experience even more memorable.

Half an hour later, we were all dropped off on one of the larger dunes to watch the sunset. The view was stunning, with the stark landscape of the desert contrasted by the simplicity of the nearby plains. We took our time to appreciate the vibrant colors of the warm sky as we sat by our teachers making memories.

After dinner, our whole grade huddled around a campfire, roasting marshmallows and listening to beautiful poems by the locals at the camp. We then played several team-oriented games like Tug of War, dodgeball, and musical chairs. These games were made much more enjoyable since our teachers also joined in, adding to the competitive atmosphere!

Early the next morning, we were woken up to watch the serene sunrise. After traversing a few dunes on foot, we were at a point high enough to witness it. Watching the sunrise is

The view was stunning, with the stark landscape of the desert



often considered a novelty but to us, being able to enjoy it in the company of one another made it an experience beyond cherishable. After the sunrise, we had a hearty breakfast and were then given free time to explore the land as we wished. We were also given the option to go camel riding, which many students took advantage of.

Finally, it was time for us to pack up and leave the site where we had all shared and made so many beautiful memories. It had run through my mind that while we left together that day, we will soon have to come to terms with leaving apart as we go on our separate ways into our bright futures.

The trip was perhaps the highlight of our senior year; we would like to thank the teachers that joined us for their supervision and companionship and the employees at the Bidiyah camp for making sure we enjoyed our time there.

*We had all shared
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