

Letter from the Headmaster

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Students, and Friends,

Welcome to our incoming and returning students and families. BAA faculty and staff are busily preparing for your first day on Thursday, September 6th at 8am. Please see the insert box below for the day's schedule.

I have been away from BAA since early June on a Barr Foundation funded mini-sabbatical which began with a trip to South Africa and Zimbabwe. I visited organizations that are focused on improving health care, education, and arts opportunities for young people. One of the most memorable visits was to Robben Island where Nelson Mandela (former president of South Africa) was jailed for over two decades. As my tour guide and a former political prisoner on the island said to me, "We were organized, disciplined and cared about education. That is how we survived. That was Mandela's genius." Groups of young South Africans now spend two weeks during their school break on the island learning about their history and working to build a nation in which they will be proud to participate. I am hopeful that we will be able to have students from BAA participate in this remarkable experience soon.

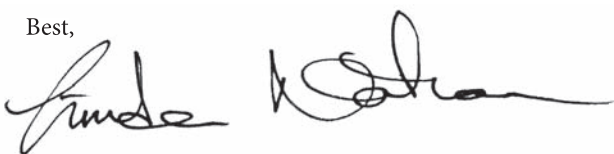
In Zimbabwe we visited a school where many students didn't have the necessary funds for school uniforms. In some classrooms there were six textbooks for forty students. Many children had to walk over an hour each way to get to school and yet everyone was eager to have an education. One of the classrooms had to meet in the open air because there is no money to build another small classroom. I felt humbled by the strength of so many people who are struggling and suffering daily and yet remain hopeful and enormously generous. I felt angry throughout the trip because of the death and deprivation caused by AIDS and poverty. I felt comforted only momentarily by the refrain, "If you aren't angry in this world, you aren't paying attention."

The trip was hard for me because of the conflicting emotions I felt throughout. I have been trying to make sense of the experiences through reading, writing, listening to music and talking about all the ways our BAA students could travel and meet some of the people I was privileged to know. I thought about how important it is for us and our students to see themselves as members of a global world. We want our students to participate in our democracy, and sometimes the best way to understand our system is to step outside of it.

I know that the world I have returned to in Boston has suffered considerably this summer from violence on our streets. I am hopeful, that as we begin the school year together, we can take strength from the determination and dedication that each one of us brings to BAA to ensure that we are making this world better than we entered it.

I look forward to greeting everyone and to sharing book titles that you have read over the summer. If you are still looking for a good book, I loved *The Glass Castle: A Memoir* by Jeannette Walls and *When A Crocodile Eats the Sun* by Peter Godwin. Please let me know if you want to read my journal of the trip.

Best,



Linda Nathan
Co-Headmaster

Important Dates

Thursday, September 6

Opening Day of School
Term 1 Begins
Family Orientation, 6-8 pm,
see details on back page

Monday, September 10

SAT registration deadline,
see details on back page
Student Govt. Service week
Summer Reading Assignment Due

Tuesday, September 18

Parent/Caregiver Council, 6-7:30 pm

Wednesday, September 19

Senior Parent Night, 6-7:30 pm
see details on back page

Friday, September 21

Grade Level activities,
no regular classes

Monday, September 24

Board of Trustees meeting, 5 pm

Friday, September 28

Midterm 1

Thursday, October 4

Family Open House

Monday, October 8

Holiday, No school

Saturday, October 13

SATs

Saturday, October 20

PSATs

Friday, November 2

Term 1 ends

**Calendar events are subject to change.
Please call to confirm times and dates.*

OPENING DAY SCHEDULE Thursday, September 6

7:55-8:55	Advisory
9:00-9:45	Honor Roll Assembly *
10:00	Rally at Fenway Park
Noon	Dismissal

* Parent/Caregivers welcome



**From Model to Resource
2007 Summer Institute
for Arts in Education**
In July BAA hosted 66 educators from the US and UK, including 40 from Boston Public Schools, to share best practices for the integration of arts and academics to improve student achievement.

Summer Reading Assignments

Completed assignments are due on Monday, September 10. These will count as the first seminar grade.

Thursday, September 6 6-8 pm
For parent/caregivers of all Boston Arts Academy students, reconnecting with familiar ones!

Required Parent/Caregiver Orientation Meetings
Please make every effort to attend the parent/caregiver orientation meeting. Each arts major has special requirements and important dates to keep in mind. Family involvement is a very important part of our students' success. We look forward to meeting new faces and reconnecting with familiar ones!

Senior Night

Wednesday, September 19 6-7:30 pm
at Boston Arts Academy Assembly Hall
Planning for college begins tonight! Families and students should attend this important meeting to learn about deadlines and application requirements for college enrollment. Local college representatives will be on hand to answer questions.

SAT Registration Deadline

The deadline for SAT registration is Monday, September 10. For on-line registration, go to www.collegeboard.com. Payments can be made with a credit card. For a fee waiver, please see Ms. Hairston (ext 121) before the deadline.

A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
FOR THE VISUAL AND
PERFORMING ARTS

Boston Arts Academy

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