

Rawdat El-Zuhur Newsletter

June 2023

Dear Friends:

As the school year comes to an end, we would like to thank you once again for all your support, which has enabled the school to continue with its very much needed work with the children of Jerusalem, a torn city under a military occupation that has touched the lives of most of all its families. We would also like to share with you the bright news of our activities with those children during the second semester, and to wish you a pleasant summer holiday.

Abla Nasir
President

Raeda Jasser
Principal

After the Christmas holidays, the children came back to school with a positive energy to welcome the new year and the second semester with a number of activities and programs.

19/1/2023: ***"From One Tale to Another"*** was the title of the workshop held under the supervision of the **Art Dreams Foundation** in cooperation with the Municipality of Lyon, France. The workshop came at the invitation from **Yabous Cultural Center**, in Jerusalem, and it focused on encouraging reading, and discovering lessons through the proposed stories, as well as stimulating critical thinking.





21/1/2023: It means so much to students to feel recognized when they excel in their school work and are outstanding in their behavior as well as their spirit of cooperation. In order to enhance this excellence, the Principal of the school and all the teachers *honored the students* who obtained distinguished results and those who showed remarkable improvement in their studies as well as their behavior.

8/6/2023 was the last day for *Naomi Gertz*, an American *volunteer* coopted by the Mennonite Central Committee in Jerusalem, who had spent three months at the school, assisting with the teaching of English and helping in the library. The school was very grateful to MCC and to Naomi for the period she had spent at the school, and would encourage more volunteers who have time to spare.

26/2/2023 In the presence of the director of *UCMAS (Universal Concept of Mental Arithmetic System)* and the parents of the children, certificates were handed out to the students who had passed the first level in mathematics.



27/2/2023 The students of the sixth grade visited **Dar Al-Tifel Al-Arabi Museum**.



The aim of the visit was to introduce the children to that unique museum in Jerusalem, its history, and valuable collection of old Palestinian costumes, and other items. The students also participated in an activity related to **Palestinian heritage**.



27/2/2023 At the initiative of the Mothers' Council, two days were devoted for the promotion of **healthy food** under the slogan "**Healthy food and not medicine provides good life.**" Healthy meals were provided to all students, including pastries, vegetables, fruits and fresh juices.



8/3/2023 **International Women's Day** was an official holiday and the school was off. However, the school administration honored the school staff with flowers and greeting cards with a special slogan "**You make Life meaningful**"



16/3/2023 In partnership with the **Palestinian Vision Foundation** and under the auspices of Freres Secondary School - Jerusalem, the school's Dabkeh (Palestinian Folk dancing) group participated in the **14th Dabkeh Festival for**

the year 2023, for the Jerusalem schools, and Rawdat El-Zuhur won second award. And in a special celebration and in appreciation for their achievement, the school honored the group and its trainer Mr. Basil Manna on the 21st of March.



18/3/2023 The mothers of the kindergarten were invited to celebrate with their children ***Mother's Day***, (which is officially on the 21st of March in the Arab world) Both mothers and children had so much fun as they joined in a variety of activities culminating with the children expressing their love to their mothers in the greeting cards they had prepared for them.



12-21/3/2023, During the Holy month of **Ramadan** the school initiated the ***“Good Will Basket” project***, and donations mostly by the parents of the school children and their friends went to filling baskets of a variety of food for needy people. The children are always encouraged to recognize the fact that there are children and families who are less fortunate than they are.





On March 18, 2023, and Under the title "**Colors of Spring**", a **bazaar** of various products was organized at the school, promoting the products of 15 women who have their small business. The bazaar included many items such as foodstuffs, soap, Palestinian ceramics, embroidery, pastries, and accessories.



To encourage reading and writing, **the Arabic language** teacher Rawnaq Abdul Rahman, encouraged and supervised the second grade, to write stories which were told and presented by power point to the whole class.



1/4/2023 In partnership with the **Young Women Christian Association (YWCA)**, and within the **TDIT Sindyan project**, the sixth grade students and their parents had a special meeting so as to help both parents and children to stimulate an environment for discussion, communication and understanding between family members who are often too busy or too stressed to find time to talk as a family.





10/5/2023 + 17/5/2023 **Trip of the second semester:**

The Kindergarten and grades one and two spent the day at an amusement park where they had so much fun, entertainment, adventure and relaxation. Grades three through six went to the historic city of Caesarea located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and was one of the oldest areas inhabited by humans. It is located south of the city of Haifa, and

which has an archaeological tourist site that contains the remains of a Roman city. Afterwards, students went to the city of Hadera, where an electric power is generated by coal stone.



Administrative Staff Training: (End of May and mid of June 2023)

Two administrative staff members participated in the **capacity building training organized by the Non-Governmental Development Center (NDC)** in Jerusalem: This series of training comes as part art of NDC's partnership with Palestinian NGOs working in Jerusalem, and each training lasted for 3 days: Randa Gharfeh, the program assistant, participated in Strategic Planning and Fundraising and Proposal Writing, and Fadia Bader, the accountant, participated in Project Management training.



31/5/2023 Kindergarten Graduation: Graduation from the Kindergarten section is always a memorable event for the children and their parents. Thirty-one young stars were honored with a special ceremony in the presence of their parents which included as usual dancing and singing. The school looks forward to seeing those children graduate again at the end of their elementary section.



The Fifty second graduating Class of 2023:

Twenty-one students graduated from the sixth grade on June 10, 2023. In a joyful atmosphere, the ceremony was held in the presence of the parents of the graduates, and the school staff.

The celebration started with the Palestinian national anthem followed by the school anthem. Adam Jaabari and Rafif Subboh addressed their colleagues, parents and school staff in Arabic while Qusai Obeid and Bahaa Qutteineh



addressed them in English. Words of appreciation were expressed to their school; its teachers and staff and to their parents who had brought them to a caring school. They will miss their little haven and their colleagues as well, since most of them will probably

go to segregated schools for girls or boys only.

In her address, the school Principal welcomed all the guests and complimented the parents for their efforts and cooperation in making the educational journey of their children a successful and enjoyable one full of love, dialogue and guidance. She congratulated the children for their accomplishments and wished them well. Furthermore, the Principal expressed her appreciation and gratitude to the teachers for their efforts, cooperation with a caring spirit as they worked hard to maintain the spirit of the school and its mission. And as she congratulated the children for their accomplishments, she wished them well in their new schools, and urged them to continue to have a positive outlook despite the difficult situation that this generation is going through. Furthermore, she reminded them that their education and knowledge will not be complete without holding on to the moral and ethical values and good manners that the school has instilled in them during those early years of their childhood.





Mr. Husam Dweik, (father of graduate Nour Dweik) addressed the audience on behalf of the parents of the graduating class. He emphasized the important role and history and good reputation of the school in Jerusalem despite all the challenges that the city has been facing. The school is a symbol of steadfastness (sumud) and is here to provide our children with good education and good manners and appreciation of moral values. He expressed words of thanks and gratitude to the Principal and all the staff who had taken so much care of their children making them feel that the school was their second home. He concluded by congratulating the parents and acknowledging the role of the mothers in bringing up the children and cooperating with the school. And he said that every prayer and every tear shed as they were growing up was worth it. And he concluded by urging the graduates to work hard and to achieve their dreams. And he offered a special thanks to Mazen, the well-known graduate of Rawdat El-Zuhur who has been back at the school as an employee for many years.

P.S All parents remember Mazen Nofal who is always there at the early hours of the day to welcome their children to school and to bid them farewell at the end of the school day.

Honoring teachers who will be leaving school:

With words of thanks and appreciation and souvenir plaques, the following teachers were honored as they will be leaving the school:



Maha Barakat, after 29 years of dedication as an English teacher.

Maha Ghosheh after 39 years. It was a long journey full of joy and giving with the first two grades, and part time library work.





The principal also thanked Diala Mushasha' with a symbolic gift, who was the mathematics teacher for the last two years.

Guests & Visitors:

The children and staff always welcome visitors and they enjoy singing and dancing for them. Now that restrictions on travel have been lifted, we hope to see more of our friends at the school.

Visits during the second semester:

- Phillips Theological Seminary group from the USA, 10/01/2023
- Eileen Sharbaugh, from the USA, 11/02/2023
- Nancy Stern, Jan Valle, and Lilly Padia, from the USA, 7/03/2023

