

What's in the issue



Mabrook!



International Day for Illiteracy



The Scary Camel



If you are worried about something, share it with yO's agony aunt, Khala Zaitoona — she'll help you with your problem
youth_observer@moe.om

Welcome to new school year

Address by His Excellency Yahya bin Saud al Sulaimi, Minister of Education. Marking the beginning of the 2009/2010 school year

Praise be to Allah, and blessing and peace be upon the best of mankind, our Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, his family, Companions and followers till the Day of Judgement.

Brothers and sisters, members of teaching faculty

Dear students
Dear parents,

Peace and mercy of Allah be upon you

AS we welcome a new school year, I am pleased to extend my sincere best regards to our students, their parents, and all employees of the Ministry of Education in their various positions and responsibilities, especially teachers.

I am also pleased, as we welcome this new school year with hearts full of optimism and hope, to welcome teachers who have joined us this year to participate in the process of building generations and urge them and those who preceded them in performing this noble educational mission to make more strenuous efforts, and continue their hard work so that their efforts achieve success and meaningful outcomes.

I would also like to congratulate General Education Diploma students who suc-



cessfully completed the last school year, to encourage them to continue the same approach of hard work, determination and perseverance in their educational and career journey of life, and wish them a bright future, God willing. At the same time, I welcome our young sons and daughters who

will join grade one with their peers in their quest to acquire knowledge — asking Allah Almighty to grant success to their educational journey.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

As the new school year begins, the Ministry has taken all the necessary preparations to ensure its success. Schools have been supplied with all the requirements for the teaching and learning process, textbooks will be in place from the beginning, and qualified teaching and administration staff has been provided, with the number of those appointed this year reaching around five thousand in various disciplines of education. It should be pointed out that along with the enrolment of these large numbers of staff, the current school year has also witnessed the introduction of new types of educational posts, whose existence has become an essential requirement in many of our schools.

❖ *Continued on page 2*

We owe our gratitude to Oman Shipping Company and Petroleum Development Oman



Thank you from the bottom of our hearts

Welcome to new school year

◆ *Continued from page 1*

Among these are the posts of school activities specialist, school database specialist and other such administrative posts, which aim primarily to provide educational services to our students with a more specialised and scientific methodology.

The introduction of the Research Methodology subject in the grades 11 and 12 curriculum, which was initiated at the beginning of the 2007/2008 academic year, has seen significant positive results. Our students were able to produce a range of outstanding projects which were well received and commended by the specialists. The Ministry has forward many of these to relevant authorities and institutions to consider the possibility of utilising and developing them.

It is hoped that new roles such as these will help to turn schools into independent educational institutions operating beyond their traditional concept. It is further hoped that this will in turn help schools to reach higher goals and to produce a quality education which caters for a variety of student talents and capabilities.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

As you know, the world is currently going through a spread of an influenza disease caused by virus H1N1. Taking into account the safety of our students, and for the interest of their health, the directives of His Majesty the Sultan postponed the beginning of the school year for our students from 29 August, 2009 to 26 September, 2009. The aim was to provide optimum health and to make schools better prepared to receive our students, and to provide time to complete the training for teaching and supervisory staff in schools in aspects of both awareness and treatment.

In this regard, I implore our students to avoid the causes of the disease through their care of personal hygiene, and not to hesitate to visit health centres if they feel any symptoms. I also call on parents to cooperate with the teaching faculty in schools who have recently received specialised training, to support the efforts of all state institutions and to pay more attention to educating their children on the importance of personal hygiene and other procedures.

Dear brothers and sisters

The development of the education

A well qualified and efficient education cadre is a cornerstone in the development process, so we regard this educational cadre as a partner with the Ministry in all its development plans and educational programmes

system and upgrading its components is an essential requirement if we are to keep pace with rapid scientific progress in all areas of life. A well qualified and efficient education cadre is a cornerstone in the development process, so we regard this educational cadre as a partner with the Ministry in all its development plans and educational programmes. This cadre should support this partnership through the practical implementation of these programmes and adopting good practice plans in the classroom, school and educational environment as a whole. Such action will ensure that educational performance is consistent with the educational objectives.

The commitment of teachers to the set school plans, their efforts to continue to develop their skills, to mutually cooperate with their supervisors to improve the implementation of the study plan and to exchange experiences are all attributes that we hope teaching faculty members, both new and established, will keep in mind. Not only will this strengthen their skills but it will contribute to the continuous development of our education system.

Therefore we call upon teachers to practice good teaching planning and to apply the set teaching plans to ensure the successful delivery of the curriculum. We hope they will spare no effort in achieving self-development and in carrying out their duties in a professional manner. Teaching is a dynamic interactive process that will only produce the desired results when practitioners believe in the importance of what they are doing.

There is nothing more important than developing young minds in a positive way that implants in their hearts the love for learning where the quest for knowledge becomes a passion. We also call on teachers to take into account individual differences between students and to deal with each student as an independent entity based on their abilities, inter-

ests and aspirations.

A good relationship between the student and the teacher is an essential prerequisite for the success of the educational process. Sympathetic treatment of students, through respect for their opinions and understanding of their age and psychological needs, all contribute to creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust between the two parties and this, in turn, leads to a conducive climate for effective learning and the creation of outstanding students.

Here, we call on parents to collaborate with the school and teaching staff and to support teachers in their efforts to correct improper behaviour and to encourage appropriate student growth. While families have the main responsibility for the upbringing of their children, we believe that teachers have an important supportive role to play.

We hope teachers do their best to achieve this end and contribute actively and responsibly in creating a teaching and learning environment that instils values and principles of good citizenship among students, develops a spirit of brotherhood and cooperation, and makes them aware of community issues and services and environmental affairs and preservation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Oman is currently preparing for the implementation of the General Census for Population, Housing and Establishments to be implemented in April 2010. It is a national project which has great importance in the preparation of various future national plans including the plans for educational growth in the Sultanate. This General Census will provide data on the demographic distribution of Omani society and this will be of great assistance in developing our educational plans and programmes.

Given this great interest in the census, both for the education sector and

the other state service sectors, I call upon parents to cooperate with the enumerators in providing the data that will enable the state service sectors to build their future development plans in order to further develop Omani citizens.

I am also pleased as we begin a new school year to call upon students and school faculty, administrative and supervisory members to promote awareness of the importance of the census through various educational activities and to provide all facilities and full cooperation for the success of the census. I am confident that directorates, departments and schools in all provinces and regions in the Sultanate will spare no effort in giving attention to the census and promoting awareness of its importance through their various programmes.

Dear students

Time management in studying and doing homework are keys to high achievement. I therefore call on our students to manage their time and develop their learning abilities from the start of the school year, and invite them to make use of their school's facilities such as learning resource centres, science laboratories and computers, and acquire different forms of self-learning in order to raise their academic achievement levels. I also call on parents to communicate with the school in order to follow-up their children's performance.

Students are encouraged to be more focused on their studies when they are aware that their family is concerned about their learning. We hope parents will communicate and cooperate with the school, either through parents' councils or through direct visits to schools, through student's performance follow-up forms on the Ministry's website and other forms of educational communication.

Dear Brothers and Sisters Dear students

In conclusion, I wish you all a happy school year full of industrious activity and crowned with high achievements. I also would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to school administrators, teachers and supervisors for their sincere efforts in implementing the Ministry's educational plans and programmes. I extend my highest gratitude and loyalty to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said — Sultan of Oman.

Happy new school year