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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #258

***“For I know the plans I have
for you, declares the LORD,
plans for welfare and not
for evil, to give you a future
and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).***

Jambo, family, and friends of Rafiki,

Now that it is February, the rain clouds have dissipated, and the sun's rays beam down on the Village quite consistently; it is the hottest month of the Kenyan calendar year. We do not take these days for granted. In fact, we are very grateful for such weather because it gives students the opportunity to be outside for recess and to play co-curricular sports as well.

There is much to be done during the time period that the sun is up. We write you this update as Rafiki Classical Christian School (RCCS) enters the sixth week of Term One. The days are moving swiftly by as we train students to work and play “*Utukufu wa Mungu Pekee*” (for the glory of God alone). In the Upper School, students have gotten used to a new addition this year: brass hand bells which ring to signal the transition from one class to another.

In our previous newsletter, we shared the historical development of the education system here in Kenya in general terms. In the last thirty days, a clearer of portrait has emerged regarding what lies ahead for our ninth grade class and beyond.

The class of 2027 will be the last class to take the culminating exam (known as the KCSE) for the 8-4-4 system. During the past forty years, secondary school educators concluded that the culmination of secondary education was focused too heavily on an aggregate exam score. This system was heavily criticized for its emphasis on rote learning (memorizing for the test) and a one-size-fits-all model for educating students. The government experienced many school strikes since the majority of graduates did not have the marketable skills necessary to gain immediate employment after college.

So, the framework for an alternative education system—the competency-based curriculum, or CBC, was rolled out in 2017. Its focus was to be less on a cumulative grade and more on students developing competency in subjects that would lead to greater employment opportunities.

In the midst of program transitions and uncertainty, the verse from Jeremiah 29 (part of the memory passage for this week's Rafiki Bible Study) still encourages believers here, and missionaries as well, to trust their futures to the Lord.

Those in the realm of education decided that with the CBC, the goal should be to focus on what a child is “bent towards,” rather than the dictates of the government. So for the class of 2028 and beyond, there will be a shift in the national education program preparing each student

to pursue one of four subject “pathways” in which they excel, and also have interest. This is a refreshing change of events which could actually be an answer to prayer!

Starting in 2026, there will be three subject pathways in the CBC system that students can choose from: Social Sciences, Arts and Sports Science, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Thanks to the creators of the Rafiki Education System (RES) and many generous donors, the facilities at RCCS may make us a location for all three pathways! The new national test which will begin in 2028 will be referred to as the Kenyan Certificate of Basic Education (KCBE).

Based on the changes occurring in the realm of Kenyan education, we would like to spotlight some of our teachers and the co-curricular activities that our students have already been involved in this year. In light of the new CBC system, the RES, taught from a biblical worldview, can be seen as “CBC Plus.”

Along with leading eight streams of students through physical education classes five days each week, Coach Cris is also developing himself—learning more about coaching a sport that he loves: football (a.k.a. soccer in the U.S.). He has been climbing the rough side of the certification mountain in the Confederation of African Football (or CAF) for some time now—studying the tactics, skills, and philosophy of coaching. Having completed the CAF Introductory Level and CAF D level, Cris was able to complete the physically rigorous and mentally challenging CAF C certification over the school break in December.



Coach Cris, receiving his certification



JSS students learn badminton during P.E. class

Currently, there are almost 600 certified and licensed CAF C coaches in Kenya. To break out of that large pool however, Cris will have to pass the CAF B and then the CAF A certification (the highest in Kenya and on the African continent) at some point in the future. Until then, he is grateful to have reached another personal milestone and looks forward to teaching the soccer unit to his P.E. students with deeper insight.

“Learning is not attained by chance; it must be sought for with ardor and diligence.”

-Abigail Adams

This week, students in grades five and six presented a fashion show as part of their “Proper Grooming” lesson in home science. The audience was comprised of teachers and peers in the upper grammar school. The lesson’s objectives included: developing independence, enhancing fine motor skills, building body awareness, improving self-esteem, practicing coordination and sequencing skills, and gaining the ability to express personal style through clothing choices. Preparation and practice for this event also taught students about elements of style, choreography, music, and narration allowing each of their clothing ensembles to tell its own “story.”



5th and 6th Grade fashion show participants with teachers

Please Pray

- *For our teachers as they continue to develop the professional teaching tools to ignite the intellectual curiosity of our students.*
- *For our senior class of 2025, and our freshman class of 2028, both of whom have national exams this year.*
- *For the bursitis issue that Theo is dealing with in his elbow to heal.*
- *That our supporters will have opportunities to share this ministry with others—and that they may be willing to partner with us.*
- *More missionaries to join us in this work.*

Our very own “Maestro,” (Teacher Felix) has been selected to attend a national workshop for music trainers (directors) at the end of this month. He has received this special opportunity because, under his direction, Rafiki Classical Christian School choirs have been acknowledged among the top in the nation for several years in a row. Not only will our young vocalists benefit this year from the skills that he will acquire, but our senior secondary students will also be fully prepared for the “Performing Arts Pathway”—a new education program being launched nationwide by the Government next year. For Felix, it is an honor and a privilege to represent Rafiki at the workshop. He gives God all the glory for graciously blessing the school with a music program and abundant favor with the judges in the annual competition.

In the CBC system, sports is a compulsory activity for all schools in Kenya. While this is new to some schools, it is nothing new for our school because for classical Christian education, sports and performing arts are co-curricular—not extra-curricular—activities. We have been blessed to forge relationships with other Christian and parochial schools for healthy sports competitions this year. We have also established Friendly Fridays, where neighboring schools come to our Village for sports competition. In so doing, they are able to see how our children pray and play for the glory of the Lord. The Friendly Fridays have become a community-builder.

Love,

Theodore and Crystal

Theodore and Crystal Wilson



Maestro switching senior secondary vocalist positions during rehearsal



Rafiki Sophomore, Paul, leading the pack in Athletics (a.k.a. “track”)