

Hello, this is the second issue of the welcoming committee newsletter. In these newsletters, we will try to answer most of your questions, at least those that might apply to all of you. For individual concerns, please contact your social and/or academic buddy accordingly. You should have received an email from at least one of your academic or social buddy by this time.

Snapshots around the school



ACS e-mail account

Once you arrive, you will notice that the school relies heavily on the use of the school email for its communications. It is important that you get yourself acquainted with how to use your school email from outside school. An e-mail account is created for you as soon as you sign a contract with ACS.

Instructions to login to ACS Outlook Web Access

- Go to www.acs.edu.lb
- Click on Quick links→ Mail.
- Enter your username: ACS email address i.e: jdiabbitar@acs.edu.lb
- Enter password:

Or you can go to the direct link: <http://www.acs.edu.lb/mail>

A separate email was sent to you once your account was created from “**ACS Beirut (No Reply)**” with the subject “**ACS Beirut Account Creation**” containing your credentials (Password, Printing PIN, Payroll ID) and direct access to important school links.

In case you face any problem, you can send an e-mail to ithelpdesk@acs.edu.lb , using your ACS e-mail account only.

[Please check your ACS email accounts as your buddies will be trying to contact you.](#)

Note from the Head of School

Building Your R.A.F.T.

You need to leave well in order to enter well. For those who have moved a number of times in your lives, particular to different cultures, the acronym R.A.F.T. (Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewells, and Think destination) is a known concept about using each of those 'logs' as part of a process of leaving and arriving. This idea of building a raft can help with the journey from



where you are to where you are going. How you leave one place has a profound effect on how you enter the next place: how we leave (Vietnam, Uzbekistan, Taiwan, U.S., etc.) will have an effect on how you enter ACS Beirut in August and the years ahead. The R.A.F.T. model might shed some light on how you may leave 'well'.

Going through and strapping each of the four logs together to form a R.A.F.T. will ensure that you not only leave well, but that your transition journey will be a psychologically healthy one that will help on the other side. Allow yourself to reconcile relationships, affirm those things important to us, to say farewell, and to think about what is special about where you are now is necessary.

Here are some thoughts about each log:

- **Reconciliation:** Making the relationship right. Just because we leave a place doesn't mean the problem(s) go(es) away. They don't – instead they go with you. Research has been done on health related issues due to lack of forgiveness and lack of resolution. Take the time now to figure out what needs mending and then move forward.
- **Affirmation:** Is there anyone or any part of your work that you are super thankful for? Any person in your life now that has been helpful, inspiring, special to your work at school? Tell them. Let them know how much you appreciate them and what they did for you, for your teaching, for your profession. Is it a program or a space or a tree? Take a photo and post about it or make note how you can replicate it. Awkward? Write a letter to tell the person or publish about the place- but do tell them. You have the opportunity to make someone or group of people and projects feel appreciated – and you'll feel great that you did it as you move forward.
- **Farewell:** Before I left my home last year in Costa Rica, I stopped and took a picture of the zip line and amazing set-up on the soccer right before a field day and sent it off to a few people. I needed to say goodbye to zip lines! While the goodbyes and farewells are the hardest part of the raft, it is important to say goodbye. This may sound strange, but many transition blogs and accounts describe how this really helps to bring closure.
- **Think Destination:** It's just that – think about ACS and Beirut! How will it be different from where you are now? How will it be the same? In your own classroom, in your own daily schedule, go through this dialogue with your inner self and with your students as well. It may help them in the process as well. Reminder: It's okay to feel excited about your new destination as you say goodbye to all the old places here. It's normal.

Take the time personally and professionally as a new ACS community member to build the R.A.F.T. and leave your special place in order to join a special community in August.

Accommodation

Faculty Apartments

All ACS foreign-hire teachers are provided with apartments within easy walking distance of the school (20 minutes or less.) Apartments vary in size according to family size and the design of various apartment buildings. After your first year at ACS you will be given a choice of continuing to live in the same apartment, bidding on another vacant apartment or being paid a cash stipend to find your own accommodations.



Furniture

All apartments are furnished with a basic set of furniture. The furniture allotment includes sofas, armchairs, coffee and end tables, bookcases, desks and beds. All apartments have a refrigerator and a stove, and access to a washer and dryer. Kitchen appliances and electrical goods are readily available in Beirut. New residents will receive brand new kitchenware (utensils, dishes, cookware, etc...), bedding and bath sets (sheets, pillows, towels, etc...)

Water

A small initial supply of bottled drinking water is provided upon your arrival. After that, there are several companies in Beirut who will deliver drinking water to your apartment. Information about these companies will be supplied in the welcoming packet which will be in your apartment when you arrive. Tap water in Beirut is considered safe for all purposes other than drinking.

Utilities

Electricity on the ACS campus and in all campus buildings is 220V, 50Hz. All ACS apartments are supplied with 220-240V. Transformers and voltage stabilizers are readily available in Beirut. Power cuts of 3 hours or more are a daily feature of life in Beirut. During these power cuts, the ACS campus and all ACS apartment buildings are equipped with generators. Generator power in your apartment will NOT be as strong as government power. Restoring generator power to your apartment after an overload will probably require intervention by your building superintendent. Therefore, it is essential that you run a very minimal set of electrical appliances during a power cut. An i-Phone and Android app (Beirut Electricity Cut Off) is available to keep track of the scheduled power cuts and warn you when one is approaching. However, unscheduled power cuts can occur. Desktop computers must be connected to a UPS in order to avoid damage while switching to and from generator power. Stoves operate from gas bottles. The first canister is free, and you will be responsible for replacing the gas bottle after that. The canisters last approximately 3 months, and refilled canisters cost \$15.

Electricity is included as part of your housing benefits, up to \$1,000 per year for singles and \$1,500 for couples. Each apartment comes with its own private telephone line. Monthly phone bills are charged to the resident as a payroll deduction.



Maintenance/Pets

Prior to your arrival, the apartment receives thorough cleaning and painting. All new residents will receive an inventory list to be filled out, signed, and returned to ACS Facilities & Operations Department. Please be aware that the apartments are leased and the landlord needs to approve any significant changes in the apartment.

Cleaning and maintaining the apartment and its contents are the occupant's responsibility. The Facilities & Operations department will respond to emergency calls pertaining to plumbing or electrical problems. However, residents are expected to attend to routine repairs and upkeep, such as replacing light bulbs and unclogging drains.

Some property owners prohibit keeping pets in their buildings. Please notify ACS as early as possible of your intention to bring a household pet. It may or may not be possible to find accommodation in a pet-friendly building. Aside from the regular wear & tear, residents are liable for damages caused by their pets to drapery, upholstery and other household furniture items.

Keys

It is the occupant's responsibility to safeguard the keys or give a copy to non ACS individuals. A fee will be applied for replacing lost keys and locks whenever deemed necessary.

THE ABOVE IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT TO EXPECT. PLEASE REFER TO THE HOUSING HANBOOK AND HOUSING POLICY.

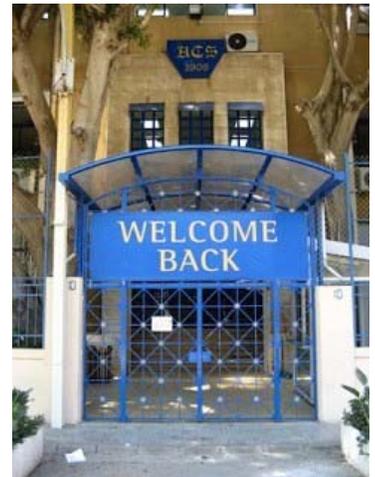
Security

Foremost in everyone's mind, even many years after the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon, is the question of security. Your family and friends most probably raised eyebrows in dismay when you announced your plan to teach in Beirut. But the outside image belies the reality. Many Beirutis claim, with justice, that Beirut is far safer than other major cities of the world such as Paris, London and New York. Of course, occasional crime does occur as it does in major cities everywhere in the world, but the crime rate in Beirut is significantly lower than elsewhere.

Many newcomers may be alarmed at first by the number of military personnel in evidence on neighborhood patrol, at traffic intersections, and along the highways. But you will soon realize that despite this military presence, life in Beirut is more peaceful and secure in almost all of Lebanon. During the war years, a young female student of journalism, apprenticed to a Philadelphia newspaper, declared she felt far safer in war-ravaged Beirut than on the streets of the city of brotherly love. And today, Beirut and all of Lebanon are far safer.

Nevertheless, it is always prudent to proceed with caution and to respect the laws and customs of the host country whenever travelling abroad. While moving around Beirut and the rest of the country, always be prepared to show your identification papers on request. A photocopy of your passport and/or residence permit is sufficient.

Occasionally, uniformed police or army officers stop traffic for security reasons. When approaching a security check by car, slow down, remove sunglasses, and open the window; in the evening turn on the interior light. Most security personnel will wave you through, but make sure you fully understand one another before you move on.



ACS Gates Entry to the ACS Campus is through one of several gates (depending on the time of day), each of which is guarded by ACS security guards. An ACS ID or a visitor badge is needed for entry. Before you receive your ACS ID make sure you carry a photo ID with you, which may be exchanged for a visitor badge at the gate.

Internet

Each ACS apartment is equipped with Open Speed and 120 GB Upload/Download Internet connection from a local ISP, including a wireless router.

The connection is uncapped: Extra fees will apply if you exceed your quota. The monthly DSL subscription will be domiciled at the local bank, and you don't need to refill the account on a monthly basis, since it will be renewed automatically. The invoices will be automatically sent to ACS bank account and paid. The Business Office will then turn around on a monthly basis and deduct the DSL invoice from your paycheck. A copy of the invoice will be provided.

Wireless coverage in your apartment will vary, based on the layout of concrete walls and the shape of the apartment.

If you choose to:

1. Upgrade your ADSL plan, the upgrade fee will be 10,000 LBP and you need to send us a helpdesk ticket before mid-month, and this is subject to feasibility. When you leave

ACS you need to revert back all adjustments to their original (Open Speed and 120 GB Upload/Download Quota without any service) and this will cost another 10,000 LBP and also needs to be done before mid-month. This process will be part of the sign out sheet.

2. Freeze the internet connection while you are away for the summer (freezing connection means, the account is active but no internet connection). The freeze option can only be activated for 1 full month (i.e. July 1 to July 31), no partial month freeze is allowed, and the request must be submitted before the 20th of the month. Instead of paying the monthly internet fees, freezing the account will cost \$8 (Tax Included) per month. You will be responsible for those fees. Note that freeze option can be activated for a maximum of three consecutive months.

P.S: Generally speaking, you will find the quality of internet in Beirut slower, less reliable, and more expensive than other countries.

About ADSL	Regular Plans & Rates	Special Offers	Add-ons	Coverage	Apply Now
4Mbps*					
4M					
12\$ / 15 GB 30 GB					
16\$ / 40 GB					
19\$ / 50 GB					
25\$ / 70 GB					
SUBSCRIBE					
Open Speed					
OS					
20\$ / 50 GB					
30\$ / 100 GB					
33\$ / 120 GB					
40\$ / 150 GB					
46.36\$ / 200 GB					
SUBSCRIBE					
Unlimited**					
∞					
23\$ / 4Mbps 2Mbps					
40\$ / 2Mbps 4Mbps					
60\$ / 6Mbps					
SUBSCRIBE					

Extra Traffic:

- Prepaid Customers: \$1 / extra GB
- Postpaid Subscription: \$1 / extra GB, for the first 50 extra GBs \$0.67 / extra GB, for extra consumption above 50 GBs

Notice

- Above indicated Speeds are "Up To" based on your location and the quality of your copper phone line
- * Open Speed applies for lines installed on GDS network
- ** All plans are subject to Fair Use Policy
- All prices are subject to change by the provider without prior notice
- An e-mail message with your Internet account credentials will be sent to you prior to your arrival to Beirut

All prices are subject to VAT

A sample of prices in Beirut

Beirut is an expensive city to live in. You will notice that many items that are cheap back home are sometimes double or triple the price in Lebanon. However, there are items that are far less expensive here than the prices you are used to paying. Here is an overview of prices in USD to give you an idea.

Grocery Shopping	Restaurants	Fitness/Leisure
Milk (1 liter) - \$2.50	Meal at an inexpensive restaurant - \$15.00	Gym membership (these vary depending on the gym) but on average - \$100 to 150 per month
Loaf of fresh bread - \$1.50	Meal at mid-range restaurant (PF Changs for example) - \$35.00	Daily swim at AUB pool - \$10.00
Sliced bread - \$3.00	Combo meal at McDonalds - \$7.50	Entrance to beach club for a day (depends on the club and beach) - \$20 to 40.00
loaf wheat, 1 ft., 3 pieces \$0.70	Bottle of local beer in bottle - \$3.50	Car rental for a day - \$20 to 30.00
loaf cereal, 1 ft., 1 piece \$0.50	Mixed cocktails - \$10.00	Taxi ride: cabs here are not metered. A Taxi fare in Beirut is LL 10,000. Trips outside Beirut will obviously cost more. You can call a cab company and they will give you a set rate on the phone before you get picked up.
Bag of large pita bread - \$1.00	Wine- \$7.50	“Uber” or “Careem” services: (pay by credit card or cash. Prices vary depending on time of day and travel distances.)
Rice (1 KG) - \$1.50	Coffee- \$5.00	Within Beirut - \$7.00
Boneless chicken breasts (6) - \$10.00 (1 KG for \$15.00)	Soft drinks - \$3.00	Beirut suburbs - \$12.00
Bottled water (6 x 1.5 L) - \$ 3.00	Fruit juice - \$5.00	Bus ride - \$.50
Dozen eggs - \$5.00	Large bottle of water - \$2.00	Movies - \$8.00
Apples (1 KG) - \$2.50		Bicycle rental - \$5.00, per hour
Oranges (1 KG) - \$1.50		
Yogurt (4-pack) - \$4.00		
Box of Cheerios - \$8.00		
Local Cheese (1 pack) - \$4.00		
Limes, imported (1 KG) - \$20.00		
Lemons (1 KG) - \$2.50		
Potatoes (1 KG) - \$1.00		
Tomatoes (1 KG) - \$2.00		
Shampoo (Herbal Essence for example) - \$5.00		
Conditioner (Herbal Essence for example) - \$5.00		
Olive oil (1 liter) - \$7.00		
Tide liquid- \$16.00		
6 pack local Beer - \$6.00		
Bottle of local wine - \$8.00		

*When buying produce it is much cheaper to buy it at a local vegetable and fruit stand than from the super market. Many brand name items that you are used to from home are very expensive here but you can usually find a local brand that is similar for less.

Check with Your Bank

Many non-Lebanese banks require that you sign a document if you plan on using their US debit or credit card in Lebanon. A visit to your bank may be helpful to avoid any surprises when you get here. Also, if you are planning on making wire transfers, please get complete routing information from your bank before you leave, as well as fees.

MEET YOUR ACS COLLEAGUES

Moving to a new country is an exciting time and it's always nice to see a familiar face when you arrive. We are pleased to introduce the new members of our ACS community. If you wish to contact each other just put the initial of their first name and their full last name@acs.edu.lb

Brook Pauley

Hello! My name is Brook and I am very excited to come to ACS Beirut! I have 8+ years of school counseling experience and really love working with high school students. I currently serve as a sponsor for the National Honor Society as well as the Sophomore Student Government. My hobbies include traveling, cooking, baking and crafting. Last year I started my own side business called Cooking By The Brook, where I teach everything from how to make fresh pasta to Boeuf Bourguignon. I am excited to learn about Lebanese cuisine and how to make delicious Lebanese dishes. This is my first assignment abroad, and I know I have much to learn. I am grateful for this exciting opportunity, and I look forward to working with all of you at ACS Beirut.



Jessica Brown

Hello I am currently sending my greetings from the extremely sandy and often times very hot country of Kuwait. I have been working here in Kuwait at a bilingual school for the last seven years in a variety of different roles. I am excited to be joining ACS as an Early Years Teacher and helping to provide an age appropriate firm foundation for the youngest learners of ACS. When I have time you will find me trying to convince myself that I am a runner and a yogi. 😊 I look forward to meeting everyone very soon.

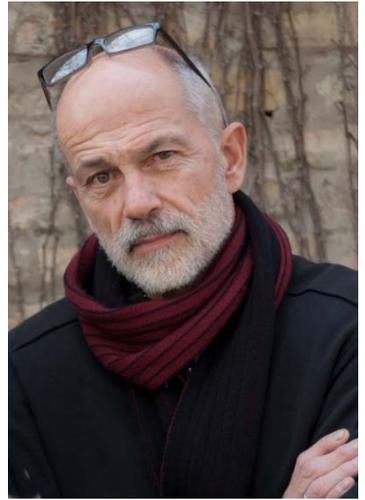
Max Zentner

Hello from Las Vegas! My name is Max Zentner, I've spent the last few years teaching social studies in Sin City and will continue in the field at ACS Beirut. It's been a wild adventure out west, but I'm looking forward to a return to work in international waters. Prior employment has taken me to Taiwan and New Zealand - Lebanon will be a new geographic region for me! I won't be traveling alone this time however, as my partner (Corinne) will be working as an elementary school teacher at Wellspring. After school hours she and I enjoy spending our time actively, and plan to take advantage of Beirut's unique sea to summit setting. I am beyond excited by the opportunity to belong to the ACS community and look forward to meeting its members come August!



Jay Kuhlmann

I am excited to join ACS next year. I visited Beirut many years ago when I was teaching in Damascus, and I found it to be a fascinating place. I love that region of the world. My recent teaching experience, between 2011 and 2018, was at Tashkent International School, where I taught MYP/DP English and Theatre. This year I am on leave from teaching and reside with family in the US. My projects have been focused on writing, research, and directing a group of senior citizens in a devised theatre production. I very much look forward to meeting you all and getting back into the classroom in the fall.



Laurie Hergott



Hello from the Netherlands! I'm Laurie and I will be joining the 4th grade team at ACS this fall. I am originally from Canada, but have been exploring the world through various work and travel. I have been teaching internationally for the last decade and before that, my international work was with environmental and social justice organizations. I have missed Lebanon very much and am happy to be returning to both Beirut and ACS. I love mountains, forests, and coastlines and on my weekends can often be found hiking, cycling, lying on the beach, doing yoga/meditation or on long walks exploring local neighbourhoods. I look forward meeting everyone in August and to another great experience in Lebanon.

Siobhan Buckman

My name is Siobhan (Irish and therefore phonetically non-nonsensical). I am coming to ACS to teach Drama in the MS which I am very excited about. I have been a MS and HS teacher for 23 years, in the UK, Tanzania and Uzbekistan. I am coming with Andy, my husband, and our two daughters, Isobel (gr 6) and Evie (gr 9). We are especially looking forward to the vibrancy of Beirut, the rich and varied community, and to being back by the sea. Our house in the UK is by the sea so that has made up for some of the ocean time we have missed whilst living in this double land locked area of Central Asia. I look forward to meeting you all and to starting our new chapter in such a dynamic part of the world.



Kelsey Simpson

Hello! My name is Kelsey Simpson. I am a Washington native who has been living in San Francisco for the past few years. Since living in SF, I have worked at AltSchool, a private micro-school. However, I've also worked at traditional public schools too. I'm excited that ACS seems to fit perfectly between those two experiences! My current teaching passion projects are helping students be more metacognitive and collaborating on project-based learning arcs. In my free time, you can find me hiking, getting creative in my kitchen or watching a comedy. Teaching at ACS will be my first international teaching experience!



Josh Federwisch

Ciao a tutti! My name is Josh Federwisch. I am originally from Southern California and making my way to Beirut after two years in Brussels, Belgium and seven years in Florence, Italy. I love photography and drawing, music and concerts, cinema, learning Italian and getting lost on holiday. I will be teaching middle school science at ACSB but have also taught IB Biology and served as a teaching and learning coach. I am very excited to become a part of the ACSB community and find (eat) my way around Beirut.

Cyndi Campbell

Ni Hao from Beijing!

I'm so thrilled to be starting a new adventure at ACS Beirut. I've been teaching and/or directing some form of the performing arts for over 30 years, most of those at the international School of Beijing. Over the years I have taught everything from PK – 12 but found my heart is with the upper elementary grades. Cape Cod Massachusetts USA is home and that is where you will find me over the summer or holidays. I'm a single mother of a grown daughter. She is now finished university and off making her way in the world so that means it was time for me to start exploring again. So while Marcia is volunteering with the Peace Corp in Liberia I am coming to Lebanon and a whole new list of travel spots. I love traveling and hope to find a travel partner. I love reading and will be looking for a book club. I also love to cook---anyone want to come to dinner! See you in August. musiccapecod@yahoo.com



Jordana Velasco



Hi! My name is Jordana Velasco and I was born in Barranquilla, Colombia, which is located in South America near the Caribbean Coast. As a Clinical and Educational Child Psychologist, I've always been interested in education and working with kids especially those with learning difficulties and/or social-emotional needs.

I am currently working in Qatar as a Lower School Counselor/Psychologist for Grades 1 through 5 and this has been quite a learning experience for me and I'm ready to encounter a new one in Beirut. I'm actually very pleased with all the rewarding experiences I have acquired through my 12 years of work and such valuable people I've met through this journey.

I have been able to grow professionally and personally and right now am extremely interested in continuing with my International opportunity in Lebanon as well as being able to learn about different cultures and above all helping others. As part of my hobbies, I enjoy listening to music, dancing, traveling, reading, learning new things, and watching movies as well as spending valuable time with my family and friends. I look forward to a new start at ACS Beirut and on meeting you all and getting to explore Lebanon!

Joanna McKoskey

I was born in the Iowa (USA) but left the States when I was eight years old. I graduated high school from an international school in Taiwan and returned to Iowa for college. After graduating from Coe College (Cedar Rapids, IA), I taught two years in a small HS in Minnesota. Then I returned to the international school in Taiwan to teach HS social studies for 16 years. Over half my life has been lived in China/Taiwan. I love the natural connection this creates with my cross-cultural students. This past year, I have been taking a sabbatical to reconnect with my family and friends. As I've traveled around the USA and Canada this year, I've been able to visit over 40 former students and more than a dozen former colleagues. I'm excited to join ACS Beirut and join a new community and learn about new cultures.



Alexis Jones



My name is Alexis Jones and I am 27 years old. I graduated from Oregon State University and have been teaching for 3 years on a small island in the southeast of Alaska that is the only Indian reservation in the state. I grew up overseas because my father served in the U.S Air Force and can't wait to be back overseas. I have lived in Texas, Japan, England, California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and am very excited to be living in Beirut soon! I enjoy reading, watching movies, baking, cooking, listening to music and podcasts, and traveling (often doing many of these at once). A fun fact about myself is that I coached gymnastics for 11 years and can still walk on my hands if I stretch enough! I could not be more thrilled to join the ACS team as a high school social studies teacher. I look forward to growing as a teacher and bringing out a passion for learning in my students!

Paulina Bula

Marhaban to my new colleagues. I am originally from Krakow, Poland but grew up mostly in the exciting suburbs of Connecticut, USA. After 7 years of working in university admissions in Boston, I am excited to take on my new role of College Counselor at ACS. As a first-generation university student, I have always been grateful to the mentors that helped me reach my educational goals. Now, I am hoping to pay it forward. Outside of work I am passionate about travel, dogs and boardgames. Through my career and personal travel, I have had the privilege of exploring 40+ countries and have also lived in China and Greece. I will be moving with my husband, Don, and out two rescue dogs, Milhouse and Carlos. We can't wait to make Lebanon our new home and are beyond excited to become a part of this community. Do zobaczenia za niedlugo.



Savannah Bradley



Greetings! My name is Savannah and I'm very excited to join the ACS community as a high school math teacher. I'm originally from Florida but I moved to Massachusetts for college and haven't left since! I've spent the last two years teaching Pre-Calculus at an urban school in Boston, and this will be my first international teaching experience.

Outside of the classroom, I love to travel, cook, exercise, and spend time with my family. I look forward to starting this next chapter very soon and becoming acquainted with all of you!

Please note the new hires whose blurbs are not in this newsletter will be posted in our third newsletter.

We'd like to introduce a few more members of the Welcoming Committee!

Rania El Chaar

Welcome to ACS and to Beirut! My name is Rania El Chaar. I have been teaching at ACS for the past 10 years. I currently teach KG2 in the Early Years Division. I was born in Lebanon and moved to the states at the age of 4. I relocated to Lebanon after living in the United States for over 25 years. I lived in Minnesota for most of my early childhood and then my family moved to Florida where I attended high school, college and started my adult life. It has been a joy being back home after all these years! I love to cook new and different cuisines, I enjoy reading and spending time with my family and friends. I am looking forward to meeting you all in August. Please feel free to reach out if you have and questions or clarifications- relchaar@acs.edu.com



Karson Anderson

Hello my name is Karson. I am from the southern part of the United States and have lived in Florida, Tennessee, and North Carolina (I love and miss my cheesy grits and bacon). I taught in North Carolina Public schools for 8 years, before moving to Salvador, Bahia, Brasil for 2. Currently, I am in my second year here at ACS teaching 6 and 7 years olds in first grade. Activities I enjoy have anything to do with art, nature and sports. I love a good dance party too! If you want to get out camping, running or hiking come find me because more than likely I am doing this on any given weekend. One of the things I love about Lebanon is how small it is: you are hiking in the mountains in the morning, and swimming at the beach near evening. I hope your transition is smooth, and if you might need anything or have questions I am always happy to help in any way. Welcome to Lebanon and to ACS!!! – Karson