

BNB: A Legacy of Love and Learning

In 1999, Hawassa City bore witness to the inception of a legacy characterized by love and commitment, giving rise to what we now know as BNB Learning Center. This institution's roots are deeply embedded in the profound loss of Dagmawei Yissahek Boncato Bekalo, affectionately known as Bubbah, and his two young cousins, Biniam Tesfaye Bekalo and Nathanael Samuel Bekalo, who left this world prematurely. The acronym "BNB" itself is a tribute derived from the initials of these cherished individuals, symbolizing their enduring presence in the school's identity.

Originally conceived as a small kindergarten to honor Dagmawei's memory, BNB Learning Center was initiated by his parents, Prusevie and Isaac Bekalo, along with his siblings, Pearl and Krystle. Led, by Ato Samuel Bekalo, Nathanael's father and uncle to Bubbah and Biniam, this modest beginning paved the way for a fully-fledged giant high school that now stands as a beacon of academic excellence in Hawassa City, the capital of the Sidama regional state.

Starting with only 49 young learners in the summer of 1999, BNB has evolved into a mega K-12 institution, presently educating a thriving population of 2250 students. Beyond academics, the journey has profoundly impacted the lives of students and served as a source of livelihood for over 150 teaching and non-teaching staff, benefiting the larger community, including suppliers, builders, and other small businesses. These dedicated individuals not only contribute to their families but actively participate in the education of their own children.

Strategically nestled in the heart of Hawassa City, BNB's expansive 2-hectare property is adorned with lush trees and modern buildings, reflecting the school's commitment to providing a conducive and contemporary learning environment. BNB has risen to become one of the three largest and highest-quality schools in Hawassa City, a testament to its unwavering dedication to educational excellence. At the heart of BNB's vision is an unwavering commitment to both academic excellence and integrity. This commitment manifested profoundly in 2022, with an outstanding 78% of BNB students successfully passing the national university entrance exam—an achievement notably surpassing the national pass rate of 3.2%, among nearly 100,000 students. Beyond mere statistics, BNB's success underscores its dedication to cultivating students who not only excel academically but also embody positive discipline, integrity, and character.

This academic achievement is not only attributed to the hard work of teachers and administrators but is also significantly influenced by Mrs. Bekalo, one of the co-founders of BNB. Her tireless efforts in generating state-of-the-art learning resources for all grades have not only contributed to academic success but have also served as an inspiration to both teachers and students alike. Looking ahead, BNB has outlined a ten-year strategy designed to pave a clear

path to sustained academic excellence. Central to this vision is the integration of digital technology as a means of instruction and the development of state-of-the-art infrastructure. These strategic pillars align seamlessly with BNB's enduring commitment to providing quality K-12 education, ensuring that every student not only learns but thrives in an environment that encourages critical thinking, innovation, and holistic development. The table below illustrates the growth of BNB over the years.