

news

news from the trunk

Thursday, February 7, 2013

Report Cards Week

Celebrating Success

Sudan Days

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, February 19, 20,21, 2013 at KAS



Letter from the Elementary School Principal Ben Voborsky

Khartoum American School provides the best possible inclusive education Sudan has to offer and we are focused on continuous improvement. To provide the best possible education, KAS has a curriculum review cycle in place where every year certain subjects are looked at school-wide. Last year, we conducted the Math and Language Arts review. This year Science, Information Technology and Physical Education have been the focus of the K-12 curriculum review.

Teachers continue to analyze what they are doing in their classrooms. We use the Understanding by Design Framework and teachers continually refine their units of work and document them on the KAS Atlas Rubicon Curriculum Mapping system. The Understanding by Design process starts off with establishing the desired results in terms of student learning. This encompasses one or more AERO (American Education Reaches Out) standards, which align with the American Common Core State Standards, the goal of what students will understand, and the essential questions that will drive student learning. After articulating what our students will learn, we focus on how we will measure that learning. We gather assessment evidence through performance tasks and other forms of assessments (oral and written tests, reports, project, etc.). From there we move onto devising the learning plan and finally daily units of instructions.

Teachers then take these units of work and sit with each other to vertically align our curriculum. Starting from Kindergarten and continuing to Grade 12, teachers sit together and make sure that students are being exposed to all types of content and that the students finish a grade with a minimum set of skills to be prepared for the next grade level. Units at certain grade levels are overhauled, new units created, and some units excluded until there is an alignment of academic progression from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

“Highly professional teachers never forget that schools are not institutions run for the convenience of the adults who work in them; instead, the purpose of schools is to educate students” (Danielson, 2007). I would like to take this opportunity to thank our KAS faculty and staff, whose day goes well beyond 3pm when the teacher-run After School Activity Program ends and meetings begin. I want to thank all teachers whose job descriptions include taking work home, logging onto Edmodo and Engrade, planning and marking at night and on the weekends. This amount of dedication demonstrates how teachers at Khartoum American School are driven to provide your student the best education possible.

This week you received your student’s report card. A narrative report card is like a reference, you should be able to read it and really get a great idea of your student’s strengths and needs, and an idea of who your child is as a student. This report card is not all based on one final exam or assessment; therefore, it showcases a more in-depth perspective of student learning. Parents, please go over your student’s report card with them and set some educational goals.

Letter from the Middle and High School Principal Susan Boutros

This week you have received your student’s first semester report card. These report cards are narrative in nature and provide information about your student’s learning development. Your student’s depth of accomplishment and their areas of strength and challenges are clearly stated.

This coming weekend, thirteen of our high school students will be participating in the annual MUN conference hosted by KICS. The conference theme is Human Security and Progressive Liberty. Our students have been working hard on some very challenging issues, and are looking forward to a weekend of debating. KICSMUN will be holding an opening ceremony on Thursday, February 7. Two KAS students will be speaking at the opening ceremony. Alex Gindi, representing the United States, and Rawan Omer, representing China, will both be speaking about insuring human security despite the ongoing instability in Somalia.

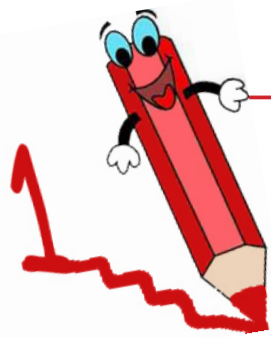
Apart from academics, which are always a priority, Khartoum American School students are also focusing on many other things. The community service club is organizing a FIFA Play Station Evening in the high school ESL room on Thursday, February 7, for middle school and high school students and teachers. This event will start at 6.30 p.m. promptly and finish at around 9.30 p.m.

The high school student council sold hot chocolate before school today in order to raise money for Valentine’s Day events. They are organizing a Valentine’s Day Dance on February 14 and they are also planning to sell roses in the days leading up to the dance.

I hope that you all have a great weekend!



Grade



This week in Grade One we reached a big landmark in our school lives. For the very first time we have started using daily planners and edmodo as tools for organization. Organizing our lives is a skill that becomes more and more important as school progresses, and, as you will all know, even more important when we leave school and enter the real world. It came as no surprise to me that the girls seem to have taken to the task with a much keener interest. It reminded me of my own family diary whilst growing up, and how it was always the safeguard of my Mum. Apparently men can't be trusted to remember important dates.

On the whole though, I have been very happy with how the class has taken to these new responsibilities. My hope is that we will reach a point where the kids will get home and the first thing that they will do is open their daily planners and then check edmodo to see what they need to do that afternoon, and what needs to be prepared for the next school day.

Mr. S



KAS Library

Khartoum American School Library serves KAS students, faculty, staff, and parents. The library collection is designed to support the curriculum, inspire critical thinking, provide reading for enjoyment, and encourage life-long learning. Library materials may be checked out for two weeks at a time, and may be renewed. Students are encouraged to come to the library daily to check out new books.

Kindergartners may check out one book. First graders can check out two books. Other elementary students may check out 3 books or magazines. Middle school students can check out four items. High school students may check out 5 books or magazines. Be advised that in case of loss, each item, whether a book, an audio book, or a movie, a fee will be charged to the parents. The library recognizes that reading is a joy, a privilege, and the right of every student. Please understand that not every book is the best choice for every student. If a book is unappealing to the reader in any way, patrons are requested to return it and select another. Parents are invited to visit the library before and after school.

Learning Center Corner

AIM – Academic Intrinsic Motivation

As report cards have come home this week, we will once again see a fresh commitment to schoolwork. Many students who are particularly pleased with their reports will be motivated to maintain their good scores and comments and may even challenge themselves to improve on some others. Students who come home with particularly disappointing reports may be motivated to settle down and really make an effort. Parents may take a greater interest in monitoring this for a time. The problem is that the new burst of motivation is generally short-lived.

Children who are motivated on their own to do well in school is a dream of almost every parent. Fortunately, whether a child is intrinsically motivated to do well academically is not purely genetic or based on socioeconomic factors. This means that parents can purposefully contribute to the development of academic intrinsic motivation, or AIM for short, despite not having the highest IQ themselves or extra money to spend.

Specific longitudinal studies revealed that children's AIM levels at ages 9, 10, and 13 were directly affected by...home environment. That is, if the home environment was more cognitively stimulating no matter the socioeconomic status, children were more likely to have higher levels of AIM.

Obviously, there are many factors that can make a home cognitively stimulating. ... The possibilities are endless: reading to them..., attending free cultural events (search for schedules of events sponsored by various cultural centers and consuls, i.e. French, German, British) held by the community and discussing them afterward, encouraging them to play sports or develop other hobbies, and not allowing TV to be a babysitter are a few examples. Neither do parents need to be exceptionally smart to implement these activities.

By the way, it's been demonstrated that using external rewards (like money) to motivate children to do well is much less effective at fostering AIM development than simply encouraging internal motivation with parental involvement So if coercion with money or presents still sounds like an easier option, it isn't the optimal one.

The majority of this article is from the Psychology in Action website.

<http://www.psychologyinaction.org/2010/11/03/raising-an-academically-motivated-child/>

The parts that are not in Italics are the parts added by the LC in presenting this article. You can go to the actual article if you are interested in reading more about the studies conducted and scientific articles published regarding academic intrinsic motivation.

Mr. Hovde's Amazing MATH Contest



At the end of the semester, the elementary class with the most participants will earn a PIZZA Party. Middle and High School students winners will earn a Kiosk Voucher weekly.

Elementary School Math problem:

Kindergarten: Draw a graph to show how many boys and how many girls are in your class.

Grade 1: Find something that is shaped like a cube, rectangular prism, cone, sphere and pyramid.

Grade 2: Find the temperature in C and F for a city, both the high and the low. Write and solve two subtraction sentences to find the difference between the high and the low in C and in F. Remember the unit!!

Grade 3: Complete: 7 yards = _____ ft
2 feet = _____ inches
6 feet = _____ yards

Grade 4: The Suez Canal links the Mediterranean and Red Seas. It is 103 miles long and opened in 1869. How many years has it been open for?

Grade 5: Create a Bar Graph using the data from your survey. Then, use the Bar Graph to write one or two sentences comparing the information.

Middle School Math problem:

One half of Karl's father's age added to one third of his mother's age is 31. His father is 38 years old. Karl was born when his mother was 25 years old. How old is Karl?

High School Math problem:

$$\tan(7\pi/6)$$

Solutions from the last week: Kindergarten: Answers will vary; **Grade 1:** 104¢ or \$1.04; **Grade 2:** 987; **Grade 3:** Sides are 12 and 1; **Grade 4:** 3, 360 miles; **Grade 5:** 1) Ignored the remainder 2) Round the quotient up to the next whole number 3) Write the remainder as a fraction or decimal 4) The remainder is the answer; **Middle School:** \$19,200; **High School:** $y = -(1/3)x + (11/3)$;

Circle one:

High School Middle School Elementary School

Name: _____ Grade: _____

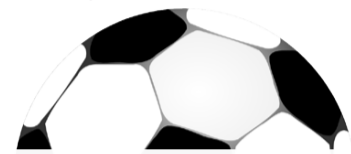
Answer: _____

Last Week WINNERS



Ella-KG, Emir-G1, Melanie-G2, Haanya-G3, Ruba-G4, Malak-G5, Ali-G6, Sakuntala-G7.

Soccer 2013



Our students are doing an excellent job in the soccer league. This week we played against KICS. The U12 boys had a hard game this past week and although they tried their best, the game had an 0-2 result. The girls continue unbeaten with a 3-0 result. We hope they continue this way.

This week our boys will face the Unity boys again. Knowing they are 3 points behind the leading team (KICS) we hope they do their best and win, but above all, we hope they enjoy their time.

For P.E. in school, as we had planned, this week will be the track try outs for fourth grade and third grade! We will find out if there are any Usain Bolts amongst us! As for volleyball, all grades between second and fifth grade have already started their volleyball training and are eagerly willing to learn.

It would be too daring to say, but by the looks of it, some of our elementary students have already passed the volleyball level of some of our high school students. Maybe by the end of the month we will celebrate with a face off! Get your bets ready!! If you want to win here is a hint: elementary will win!

Mr. Kirby, our P.E. teacher for high school and middle school is training the students how to play American Football... THEY LOVE IT!!! There is football fever in the school!

PTA Bake Sale



Dear Parents, We are happy to announce the next PTA Bake Sale which will be held on Thursday, February 14th during the lunch time (11:31 - 12:30pm) on the occasion of Valentine's Day. As always, the PTA is inviting you to make a contribution in the form of a cake or another culinary sweet specialty so as to make this special day a sweet success and a memorable event for our students. You can simply send your homemade treats with your children the day of the Bake Sale. The treats may be dropped off at the kiosk. Suggestions: Brownies, cookies, pancakes, cakes, cupcakes, donuts, etc.

With kindest regards, The PTA Team