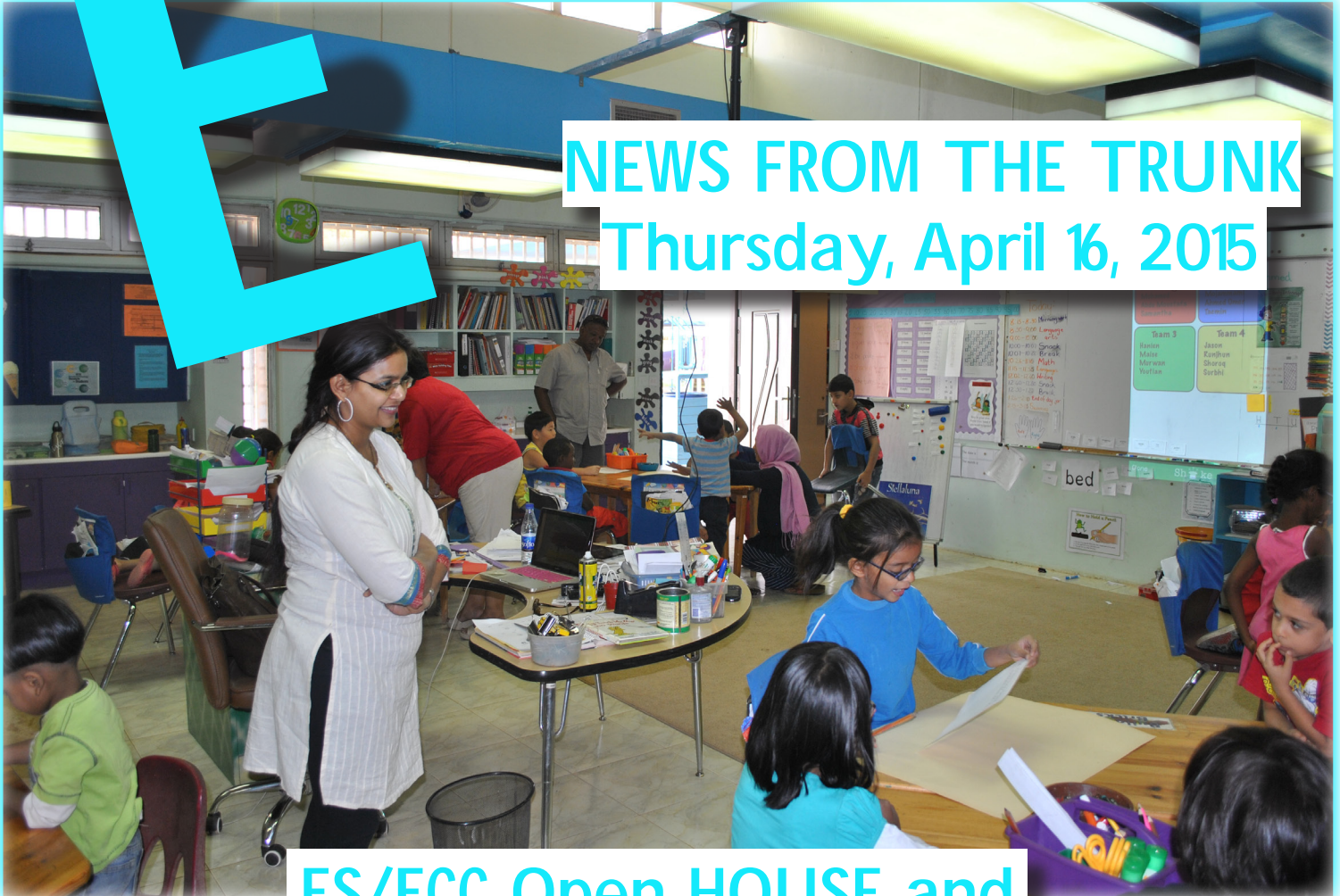


# NEWS FROM THE TRUNK

Thursday, April 16, 2015



## ES/ECC Open HOUSE and Parent Seminar!



**KAS**

KAS Volleyball Tournament Saturday, April 18 from 1pm to 5pm, PTA will sell Food and beverages. Movie Night 7pm Friday April 17. Join in the Fun!

## Letter from the Superintendent, Dr. Robert Beck

Dear Parents,

Thank you to the parents who were able to attend today's 'Early Childhood and Elementary School Open House Day', and to today's 'Superintendent's Parent Seminar-How To Prepare Young Digital Natives For The Future-Tips For Early Childhood and Elementary School Parents On Keeping Your Child Safe And Productive In The Use Of Technology' that was presented by Ms. Egbal Mohamed. We hope you enjoyed the events. The parent seminar will be repeated this Monday evening, April 20, at 7 PM in the computer lab. KAS parents of students in any grade level, nursery through grade 12, are welcomed to attend. Such activities are useful for a number of reasons. They improve communication between the school and parents; they offer an additional opportunity for students, and their teachers to see on the campus and in classrooms; and, they provide parents with an opportunity to interact with other parents as they share ideas and positive experiences related to their child's education. KAS can take pride in the fact that opportunities exist for parents to experience a 'day-in-the-life' of their child. Your presence and support mean a great deal to the staff of KAS. The children were happy to see parents in their classrooms!

Next week we will begin the US developed Measures of Academic Progress assessments (MAP). This is the first year KAS will be using this assessment program. The MAP will be given to students in grades 3-10. There are three academic areas assessed: mathematics, language usage, and reading. The MAP uses a "21st Century" approach to gathering student progress data. The data helps teachers, administrators, and parents in systematically tracking academic growth from year-to-year for individual students, and for groups of students (e.g., scores grouped by grade level). Such information can be used to improve instruction for individuals, and it can be used in the development of the KAS curriculum. The three tests are taken on a computer in our computer lab. They are 'adaptive' tests. That is, each of the untimed tests presents questions that range from less challenging to more challenging. As the child reaches higher levels of difficulty, the test adjusts the level of question difficulty automatically. The MAP will be completed by the second week of May. Results (they are transmitted to the KAS from the US) will follow within three to four weeks. After they arrive at KAS the results will be sent to you. An information seminar about the results will also be planned for parents.

**There is a Movie Night this Friday at 7:15 PM, and a Volleyball Tournament this Saturday from 1:00-5:30 PM. Bring the family to join in the sharing of fun, food and friendship. Thank you Sports Department and PTA for helping make these events available to the families and children of KAS!**

**Khartoum American School is pleased to announce that the KAS Volleyball Tournament is coming to the KAS Campus this Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>  
Time: 1:00Pm  
PTA will sell food and beverages.  
See you there!**

## Letter from the Early Childhood/ Elementary School Principal, Phil Centers

Dear Parents, Teachers, and Community Members,

In educational circles we speak about "authentic assessments." Authentic assessments are the ways we determine how our students are doing. We attempt to "measure" student progress just as we attempt to measure anything else, through some type of measuring system. However, unlike tangible objects, intangible things like student progress are inherently difficult to accurately measure because they are "qualitative" rather than "quantitative". What is the unit of measurement for something intangible like student progress? You simply have to agree on something and then use it knowing that it only gives a rough estimate of measurement because of the intangible, qualitative, nature of what we're attempting to measure.

What makes an assessment authentic, or genuine, is that it shows more accurately than other measurements how our students are doing. What we've discovered over many decades of assessing students is that many assessments that we used to use almost entirely, and that some schools still use, are not authentic, that is, they do not give us an accurate indication of how our students are doing.

Fortunately Khartoum American School is constantly seeking best practices, including in the area of assessment. The best authentic assessment is known to be the student portfolio. This does not mean a physical portfolio like an artist's portfolio, though there is some relationship to that meaning. It means that in order to accurately measure how our students are doing, we need to have a collection of each student's work so that her/his progress can shine clearly through this collection.

A good student portfolio, meaning a truly authentic assessment, will be both physical and digital and will include examples of a student's projects, writing, and other in-depth work, as well as other less in-depth indications of progress like quizzes, homework, tests / exams, etc., all tied meaningfully together with notes from teachers' observations of the student, and with the student's own self-assessment of his or her progress. We can see that what makes such a portfolio authentic is its diversity. Conversely, what makes an assessment inauthentic is when a single type of assessment, particularly a superficial, "easy," one like quizzes and tests, is used almost exclusively to measure student progress, such as was done traditionally for decades.

On Sunday we will begin administering for the first time a dynamic assessment tool—the MAP assessment—that will form part of our authentic assessment of our students, i.e., part of their student portfolios of achievement in school. We look forward to this tool contributing in a meaningful way to the continuous improvement of our measuring of student progress at KAS.

# KAS LIBRARY

In order for our KAS Library to stay vibrant and relevant to the students, families, and staff we serve, we must be continuously growing. And we are! In the two years that I have been the school Librarian, with the generous support of the KAS Board we have purchased and cataloged numerous new titles. In fact next year's order has recently been submitted, and it contains the most requested books from those we serve. It is always exciting to receive our new books and get them on the shelves so that our readers can enjoy them.

Reading isn't the only thing that we focus on here in the Library. Last month we sponsored a writing competition for the upper elementary grades 3, 4 and 5, titled "Comic Book". Students in those grades have been working on this competition, and will submit their entries from April 26th to 28th. Winners will be announced at the morning assembly on April 30th.

With all the comings and goings in our Library, occasionally we need to take stock of what we have. Our annual inventory will start the 1st of May, as it does every year, in order to complete it by the last day of school. So we would like to take this opportunity to ask you kindly to return any checked-out Library books or materials you may have, and to encourage your children to do so as well. After the 1st of May there won't be any new circulation out of the Library through the last day of school, and the Library will start to send notes and reminders about overdue, lost, or damaged materials. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

There's one more thing I would like to bring to your attention. At the beginning of this school year we received donated books about different cultures from around the world, and in different languages, and these have been very useful for both students and teachers. So we would like to ask you again to help us continue developing and enriching the international section of our Library through the donation of additional books and materials about different cultures around the world, and books in different languages. Thank you very much!

Alia Mahmoud  
KAS librarian



# AFRICAN LITERATURE

As you may be aware, all Grade 11 students are required to take African Literature as their English course. This year we have been studying colonialism, imperialism, and traditional culture through the study of short stories, poetry, novels and plays. In this class students analyze the literature of various African authors, whereas in their African Studies (social studies) class, they work on their historical and geographical knowledge of the continent. Here's what a few students have to say about what they've learned so far:

"African Literature doesn't have to be written by an African to be considered African Literature"  
- Deena Elomarabi

"In reading THINGS FALL APART, we learned about the traditions and way of life of Nigerian Igbo culture"  
- Ahmed Gamal

"People are aware of stereotypes about Africa but still conform and are stuck in their mindsets of seeing stereotypes"  
- Janique van der Merwe

"Yeats and Achebe successfully create a vision of the destructive force of British colonization in Nigeria"  
- Mariam Elsanousi

"I learned about African cultures, especially in South Sudan, that one I can appreciate. This course also shows that not every colonizer was bad."  
- Jamal Mohammed

"I learned the full effects of colonialism and how it still impacts African literature"  
- Mahasin Shingydent progress at KAS.

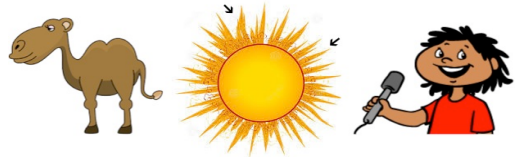
Jocelyn Urkow  
HS Language Arts and Model United Nations

## English Saying

To call someone a **Berk** is generally regarded as a mildly humorous put-down without malice, but the origin of the phrase suggests it was very different to begin with. Berk derives from a simple piece of cockney rhyming slang where anybody referred to as a 'Berkshire Hunt' was on the receiving end of one of the most offensive uses of rhyming slang. 'Berkshire Hunt' was shortened to 'Berk' as a replacement for the original meaning, but these days, berk is not at all linked to its original meaning by those using it.

Minette van der Bijl

**Elementary Rebus**



**Middle & High Rebus**



**Faculty Rebus**



**Last week's Answers are!**  
Elem: Peanut Butter & Jelly  
MSHS: Rock the Vote  
Faculty: Map Test

**Last week's WINNERS are!**  
MSHS: Mostafa Murtada gr. 3  
Faculty: Hani - IT

Learn to pause... or nothing worthwhile will catch up to you.  
-Doug King

For the past year, I have looked forward to the Association of International Schools in Africa AISA Professional Development Conference held in Cape Town during the Spring Break. AISA 2015 was spectacular. I am still implementing strategies and philosophies to which I was introduced in Cape Town. Teach games for understanding (TGFU) reaffirmed my belief that physical education teachers are great people and they know how to help all children!

"The Double Payoff of Better Physical Education Classes" - As I read such ideas, my brain went into overdrive. We need a new way of thinking about physical education. In the PE department, we always challenge ourselves to think about how we could modify, adapt or make what we teach better. Gone are the days when all students do is play soccer with half of the class standing around doing nothing. "No Body Left on their Behind" is our new motto. So if we can change the global perspective on Physical Education and Sports, and use evidence-based resources to develop physical literacy and life skills with TGFU.

As teacher Hanro van der Merwe says, "Go!" and flips on the music of Martin Garrix 's Animals. The KAS Basketball court becomes a whirl of racing, jumping Middle Schoolers. Ms. Pappano lists the following characteristics of a new focus in PE classes:

- A focus on wellness rather than athletics;
- Fitness games that value teamwork, build confidence and encourage self-expression;
- More choices so students can find activities they enjoy;
- Teaching skills like throwing, catching, and kicking as physical training, not sports prep.

The human body was truly made to move. We are blessed with the opportunity both to encourage those who thrive on movement and to inspire those who lost the joy of physical activity to find their way back to wild abandon... back to the joy of the effort.

Please send your feedback about this message. I would love to hear from you. ([hvandermerwe@krtams.org](mailto:hvandermerwe@krtams.org))



**MR. G'S MATH MINUTE**

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MATH PROBLEMS:**

KG	DRAW THE BACK OF A PENNY. HOW MUCH IS A PENNY WORTH? DRAW THE BACK OF A DIME. HOW MUCH IS A DIME WORTH?
GRADE 1	MIRANDA BOUGHT 12 RED APPLES. AT THE END OF THE WEEK, 10 APPLES HAD BEEN EATEN. HOW MANY APPLES WERE LEFT?
GRADE 2	IN THE GIANT PACK OF FAT CRAYOLA MARKERS, THERE USED TO BE 288 MARKERS. AFTER A YEAR, 189 OF THE MARKERS DRIED UP AND GOT YUCKY. HOW MANY GOOD MARKERS ARE THERE LEFT? PLEASE SHOW YOUR WORK!