



news from the trunk
Wednesday, March 9th, 2011

Parent

Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, March 23rd, 2011 from 7am

Spring Break

March 10th – 19th, 2011



A Letter from the Superintendent, Greg Hughes

Dear Parents,

The Spring Break is almost upon us and I wish our students and their families an enjoyable and relaxing holiday break. The weather in Khartoum right now is exceptional and I encourage all in our community to make the most of it and enjoy the great outdoors before the warmer weather sets in.

After the break we will be completing our last school quarter for 2010/2011. Parents will be given a final chance to touch base with teachers during Parent Teacher Conferences on Wednesday, the 23rd of March. As I have mentioned before, these conferences are an exceptional forum to identify strengths and weaknesses, but more importantly, an opportunity to develop strategies that can lead to positive improvements before the year ends.

One of the highlights of this day will be the change of format for Middle School students. Rather than having regular conferences, students themselves will be hosting their own Student Led Conferences. This method of conferencing has become popular the world over in that students take responsibility for their learning and engage their parents by looking through a portfolio of their work. In doing so they outline their accomplishments, their struggles, their academic ups and downs and the parts of the year that have stood out to them as some of the highlights. This method really puts parents into the shoes of their child as the child relives firsthand the educational program that he/she has experienced. From my experience the parents not only come away from these conferences with a greater understanding of our school program, but also with a better understanding of their own children and the way in which they have handled the work presented to them. For many parents like myself these conferences serve as a reminder to the amount of work that students actually carry out on a daily basis and the dedication required to be a top student.

Our Elementary students will also be adapting their conference with a similar format, which I am sure will empower students to take even more pride in their learning.

I am confident that all of our conferences will be successful and look forward to seeing a large number of parents in attendance.

Enjoy the vacation.

Global Peace Quilt Drawing Contest

The Requirements for the drawing:

- We would like the children (ages 10-15) to draw what peace means to them, in color, on an A4 size (8.3" x 11.7") piece of paper. (Regular printer paper will be fine.)
- Then within the drawing, please add the sentence.
- "We all wish for Peace because....." (We would like for you to complete this phrase accordingly).
- Incorporate the Sudanese flag into the drawing.
- You may use any medium to do the drawing with. (For example: markers, colored pencils, crayons, or paint.)
- The orientation is portrait (vertical).
- The deadline to submit a drawing to Ms. Jamie (art teacher) is Sunday, March 20th.
- Student artists may sign their work.
- The winning drawing will be submitted, transferred onto cloth material, quilted, and joined together to form One Peace Quilt with other schools from around the world.
- Advise: Fill your space (good composition), be creative, follow the above instructions, and do a great job with coloring.

If you need any additional information or help, you can come and speak with Ms. Jamie. Good luck!

KAS Science Fair That's Where!

Spring break is a great time to do Science! With the Science Fair just one month away (April 6th) everyone should be busy hypothesizing, testing, and re-testing. Make sure you are keeping a good record of your procedures and data. Also, document your experiments with pictures when possible.

"The universe is full of magical things, patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper."

Eden Phillpotts

New Books Have Arrived!

There are so many new books at the library, we can't even display them all! Do us a favor and check some out. More new books will arrive weekly, so feel free to come in frequently and browse.



After School Activities Program (ASAP) Sign Up

The final term of after school activities sign ups will begin on Sunday, March 20, after the Spring Break. Sign up sheets will be sent home. Please make sure to return the sheets to the office right away. We have a solid list of activities and want students to begin an activity right from the start. The after school activities will begin on Sunday March 27 and end on Wednesday May 18. Please contact Mr. Dave right away with any questions.

The Gift of Giving

Dear Parents and Students,

There are many people in our KAS family who work hard to give us the friendly, safe, and beautiful community it is. In recognition for all they do for us, we are starting a bi-annual program to make gift baskets for our workers and their families as a token of our appreciation. After break we will hold a drive to collect contributions for these baskets, which could include clothing, shoes, and staples. During break, we would like to ask you and your family to go through your belongings to collect gently used clothing and shoes you would like to donate. This is the time to get rid of the items that are sitting in the back of your closet or that you haven't worn (and probably never will!), and to give them a new home. We will place collection boxes around campus where you may leave these items. To help us reach our goal, each class will be requested to bring a particular food item, such as rice, powdered milk, tea, sugar, flour or oil.

This is a time to really give – to give sincere thanks to our workers for all they do for us. Please help us all do our part in thanking those who keep our community safe, clean and beautiful!

A Message from the Learning Center

This year's Middle School Student Led conferences are important in many ways. They provide students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, and showcase their progress at school. They also give students a voice, to express themselves, as students and learners. KAS is a student-centered school, and we value our students' voices and opinions.

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Dates to Remember

Wednesday, March 9th, 2011 at 11am	Early Dismissal
Thursday, March 10th, 2011 – Saturday, March 19th, 2011	Spring Break
Wednesday, March 23rd, 2011 from 7am	Parent Teacher Conferences



We all wish for peace because....

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We strive to create spaces, both in and outside of the classroom, for students to raise their personal and academic concerns, provide feedback to teachers, and contribute to lessons through participation. Self expression is an integral part of our philosophy.

Last Thursday night, one of those spaces was created at our first Open Mic Night. Teachers, students and community members performed poetry, songs, and dances. One of the most popular genres of music heard on Thursday, was Hip Hop. Hip Hop celebrates self expression and allows artists to tell a story through words and music. KAS Media Literacy student, Ayah Safieldin, recently researched the history of the genre and writes, "The lyrics of these songs would explore issues affecting the lives of urban youth through gritty political messages. Hip-hop is not only alive and kicking, but has become a global phenomenon. From Helsinki to Harare, youth around the world have been captivated by this musical genre."

Just as Hip Hop empowers artists to express themselves, we hope our students' confidence continues to grow as we listen to them, and celebrate their voices. In an effort to meet this goal, we will continue to include our students' work and opinions, such as Ayah's, in the newsletter.

Please celebrate your students' voices by listening to their stories and experiences. Ask them questions about their work, and share your own experiences with them! They benefit greatly from your advice and support.

Student led conferences are coming up!

Elementary students, parents and teachers will definitely see the benefits of student led conferences. This style of conference allows students to become actively involved in their own learning. "I know I talk too much in school," a student said to his mother. "I wanted you to hear this from me first. Other than that, I got pretty good grades."

Students learn to evaluate their own progress, take accountability for their own learning, and gain a greater commitment to school work and learning. "You say you did your best in your writing journal, but you received quite a bit of feedback from me," a teacher asks. "Why is that?" "I was looking for better ideas," the student replies and then admits to rushing some assignments and missing others.

Student led conferences also help to build self confidence, self esteem, communication and critical thinking skills in our students. Student led conferences encourage student/parent communication and place responsibility on the student and parent. Most parents appreciate hearing their children's self-appraisals. "At first, I found this a little intimidating," one parent mentioned. "I wasn't comfortable saying anything in from of my daughter until I listened to her speak about her learning. I was then able to discuss my concerns."

Parents benefit from student led conferences by learning more about their student's learning and skills. Parents receive an increased amount of information about their students. Parents also are given an opportunity to help their student set positive goals and become an active participant in their student's learning.

I look forward to seeing you all on March 23rd.

Spring Break
March 10th – 19th, 2011
School Resumes
Sunday, March 20th, 2011