

NEWS

news from the trunk

Thursday, December 1, 2016



Khartoum American School Presents Its Annual Fundraising Event

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DINNER

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Superintendent's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This past week our High School Middle School Counselor, Douglas Dworak, gave an excellent Parent Seminar titled 'Tips for Parents On Helping Your Child from Ages 5-18 Search For Careers'. Thank you Mr. Dworak. Thank you to the parents and visitors who were able to attend. There were over 35 adults in the audience. They represented visitors and parents from the Elementary and Early Childhood Division through the High School/Middle School Division. It is clear to me that parents, no matter the age of their student, are concerned about preparing their child in the best way possible for employment as a competent, happy and successful 21st Century citizen.

Mr. Dworak made the point that it is never too early to begin reinforcing the idea of finding what you are passionate about and pursuing that passion. A noteworthy point he made is the reality that many leaders in the world of business, education, science politics and so many other fields are those who are truly passionate about what they believe in and in what they are doing. Successful leaders are 'doers' who are realizing their dreams. In addition to having specific job skill training, they demonstrate well developed 'soft skills' such as strong interpersonal skills and empathy. Empathy is the ability to 'get into the shoes' of another person to better understand the other person's motivation for what they say or do.

At KAS we want all children to feel confident that they can follow their passion and their dreams. As professional educators we believe it is important not only to help build their skills and understandings through classroom instruction, but also to help them reach for and achieve their dreams. We do that 'dream building' in partnership with you.

TO REMIND-THE ANNUAL POTLUCK INTERNATIONAL DINNER AND PARADE OF NATIONS IS DECEMBER 8. DON'T MISS THIS WONDERFUL INTERNATIONAL KAS FAMILY EVENT. THERE WILL BE AMAZING PRIZES AT THE RAFFLE THAT NIGHT AND AMAZING FOODS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

I wish you a pleasant weekend.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rob Beck
Superintendent

Take a Mindful Moment By Miriam Easterling, Kindergarten Teacher



I believe most people would agree that teaching and parenting have similarities. Both parents and teachers use every resource at their disposal to better their students and children. We worry if they start to fall behind in their studies. We try to think of novel ways to entice them into digging deeper and trying harder. We endeavor to help our young ones not to merely recite facts, but to critically assess the world around them so that they can be proactive in changing our world for the better. In the article "Teaching and the Moral Life of Classroom," the author David T Hansen states, "Character and personal disposition materialize over time. They take form through potentially any contacts an individual has with other people." As a kindergarten teacher, I am constantly preparing, evaluating, and reflecting upon my lessons and daily verbal exchanges with students. It is not merely my job to provide them with curricular instruction, but to help my students become good little people who make good choices. Like other teachers and parents, I worry about not reaching each child's needs to the best of my ability each and every day, and am thus thankful that it is the time and the sum of events that generally shape a person, not a small isolated event. In the same article, Hansen proposes that, "Seriousness of purpose, respect for time and place, respect for one another, a willingness to prepare oneself for work, an implied sense of trust in the fact that what they are preparing for is worthy -- these and other qualities revealed in this classroom beginning illuminate its moral significance." These are all important virtues for teachers and parents to endeavor instilling and promoting in their students and children.

Our character is being emitted with every breath. Due to the fact that students are able to pick up on our emotions and attitudes, even before we realize we are revealing them, makes it imperative that we as teachers and parents are as self-aware as possible, and that we work to be more harmonious people so that we can model the positive characteristics of patience, purpose and respect to our students. Whatever attribute we hope to see in our students and children, is what we should be living and modeling.

A Message from the Early Childhood & Elementary Principal

Dear Parents and Community Members,

In my last Enews article I began exploring major paradoxes in modern education. Today I explore a second of these paradoxes, which is the powerful nature of the internalization process itself. For education to be successful, most would agree that our efforts at helping our students internalize (make their own) the curricula we teach them should reach some level of automaticity (i.e., having more or less immediate internal access to the skills and knowledge we have learned). Full internalization might mean full automaticity. However, this is an extremely delicate process because once a knowledge element or skill becomes fully internalized, it is extremely difficult to undo. It may tend to limit rather than expand, bind rather than free our total set of capabilities, and/or the quality of our lives. Internalization must therefore be done right “the first time”—before full automaticity has been achieved—which includes regular “looking for learning” and course corrections on the way in order to minimize the internalizing of error, superstition, harmful habits, closed-mindedness, etc.

We who shepherd the internalization process with children therefore bear a tremendous responsibility for the kind of adults that mature as a result of our efforts. Yet paradoxically, even if we were able to achieve flawless internalization of the perfect set of curricula, we may not have succeeded in our mission. This is because our aim isn't, or shouldn't be, to produce students who have so fully mastered our curricula that they simply go forth to fulfill the tasks they were trained to do in society. Logically, beings who have only achieved full automaticity would never have the chance for innovation, for breaking the rules in order to create transformation at core levels of a situation, for love, for the unknown. Perhaps our ultimate aim should therefore be to foster free human beings who are able to think, feel and will for themselves in novel situations and make good choices based on limited information and skills. For this to have any chance of success, we must deliberately leave the internalization process incomplete. This is indeed a paradox for modern educators.

Phil Centers
Early Childhood Center & Elementary Principal

Grade 7 and 11 Explore Ancient Meroe



On November 24th and 25th Grade 7 and 11 continued the fall tradition of visiting two of Sudan's most important historical sites, the pyramids of Meroe and the temple of Musawwarat. We left KAS around 9:30 in the morning packed and loaded up 3 buses and soon were on the bumpy road to Meroe. The mood on the buses ranged from unbridled enthusiasm (mostly the 7th graders) to sleepy (definitely the 11th graders), and after one last bathroom and tea break at a rest stop, we arrived at the campsite around 4 pm. Not wanting to miss out of seeing the sites while it was still light, we left everything but our clipboards and pens and headed to the nearest cluster of pyramids. After two short talks on the importance of the historical site, students left to explore the area while drawing sketches of pyramids in their workbook, uncovering ancient hieroglyphics, and analyzing Egyptian and Meroitic gods. Some students were even brave enough to speak with some German archaeologists who were working at the pyramids to uncover ancient graffiti.

Students road camels and donkeys back to camp and raced to set up their tents before the sunlight disappeared. Once darkness descended on us, the whole team enjoyed a delicious dinner of fried chicken and then set off to play games and socialize. The campfire glowed warmly as kids roasted marshmallows and told scary stories. Most people even got some sleep that night!

On Friday we left for the temple of Musawwarat before returning home, learning more about the Nubian god Apedemak and the importance of ancient pilgrimage sites. Students enjoyed taking a photo next to an elephant, undoubtedly an ancestor of KAS' very own KASMO. We arrived back at KAS in the late afternoon after a wonderful two days, and both students and chaperones enjoyed a good night's sleep that evening!



Owen McMullen
MS/HS Social Studies Teacher

KAS STUDENTS AT THE MODEL UNITED NATION CONFERENCE AT KICS



Elementary Assembly Masters This Week's Winners



Can Kurakbelli
Grade 5

Mohammed Elkedir
Grade 2



SAYING OF THE WEEK

Being on **Cloud Nine** describes a feeling of total happiness and content, or euphoria. Between the 1930s and 1950s the American Weather Bureau divided clouds into classes numbered one to nine. The highest, cloud nine, is the cumulonimbus, which reaches 40,000ft and can appear as white mountains, even on a sunny day. During the 1950s a popular US radio show, Johnny Dollar, ran an episode during which the hero was often knocked unconscious and then transported to 'cloud nine' where he was revived and lived to be a hero again in other episodes. It was through that association that 'cloud nine' passed into the English language as a popular phrase for the peak of existence.

Minette van der Bijl
High School English Department

