



## KAS Staff Visits Shendi Schools



## INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK



## SCHOOL COMMUNITY SHOW & LIVE BAND SHOW!

Thursday, December 8, 2016. Gates Open 7:00pm

**GET YOUR  
TICKET NOW!**

Tickets are  
available  
at the The Trunk  
Store,  
The Nurse & The  
Office

Limited number of tickets sold at the gate for a higher price.



## Superintendent's Message

Dear Parents,

This evening is the annual INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK DINNER at KAS. This is a very special event for the entire KAS Family and community. The event is a celebration of diversity. With over 30 nationalities represented in our student body and faculty, we can say with pride that we are a truly international school. Our inquiry based curriculum of studies, coupled with our diverse student body and faculty, makes it clear to all that KAS is a school that is serious about preparing children to be 'Global Citizens'.

The Parade of Nations during the dinner is an exciting and meaningful moment when the children and staff come forward to make visible the diversity of our school community. Diversity is our 'signature'. We are proud of our commitment to helping the children of KAS live and learn cooperatively with others from around the world. We know that what makes the world a better and safer place is respect for diversity. Our mission is to be certain that every child, every family, and every faculty member at KAS is respected regardless of their background or nationality. When children come together in our classrooms to learn and interact with others from different cultures and backgrounds, we are confident 'cross-cultural seeds' of tolerance and acceptance are being planted. That is a comforting thought.

As parents we know you agree that fostering an appreciation for diversity and building cross-cultural skills, in addition to our quality curriculum taught by top quality teachers, are reasons why you have selected KAS as the school of choice for your children. You have made a wise choice indeed!

I wish you a lovely **POTLUCK DINNER**, and I thank you for being a member of our diverse and caring school community. You have enriched the diversity of KAS!

Sincerely,

**Dr. Rob Beck**  
Superintendent

## Music in Learning



During a professional workshop I attended last October, the presenter explained to us that music has a powerful influence on our lives. It can calm us down when we are stressed or energize us when we are tired. It can move us to laughter or tears. Others believe music acts as social glue, pointing to its use in important events. Whenever people get together to celebrate a birthday, wedding, graduation, etc., music is almost always a key component. Research suggests that the social benefits of music grow out of our tendency to want to move to a beat.

In my music classes, I teach my students to explore and experience music and how they can make it meaningful. I have seen a consistent musical growth in my students since August. The Kindergarten students learned to echo back patterns accurately, using simple percussion instruments. The First graders can now confidently play patterns of different note values. The Second graders can identify short and long melodic passages and read note names to make note-able words. These students love to relate their music concepts to literary work, and I am impressed with their writing skills.

The Third graders have learned to identify music scales and add note values, while the Fourth graders continue to skillfully play pieces on the recorder while mastering the note names on the staff. The Fifth graders enjoyed engaging in project-based learning assignments to master musical terms by making crossword puzzles. All my elementary students are training to sing and be excellent performers through using good techniques.

I look forward to continuing to see my students grow musically every day, and to see them use music as a tool to learning other things in life.



**Didith Lanario**  
Music Teacher

## A Message from the Middle & High School Principal

The end of the semester is approaching and high school exams are on December 18th - 20th. We all know that this could be a very stressful time for many students.

Here are some test preparation tips to reduce anxiety:

- **Approach the exam with confidence:**

Being well prepared for the exam is the best way to reduce anxiety. View the exam as an opportunity to show how much you've studied and to receive a reward for the studying you've done.

- **Be prepared!**

Space out your studying over a few days or weeks and continually review class material. Don't try to learn everything the night before. Use a checklist.

- **Strive for a relaxed state of concentration.**

Avoid speaking with any fellow students who have not prepared, who express negativity, who will distract your preparation.

- **Exercise** is said to sharpen the mind and reduce stress.
- **Get a good night's sleep** the night before the exam.
- **Don't go to the exam with an empty stomach.** Have a good breakfast. Take a small snack in between exams.

### **During the exam:**

- Read the directions slowly and carefully
  - If you don't understand the directions on the test, ask the teacher to explain it to you.
  - Skim through the test so that you have a good idea how to pace yourself.
  - Do the simple questions first to help build up your confidence for the harder questions.
  - If you don't know an answer to a question skip it for the time being (come back to it later if you have time), and remember that you don't have to always get every question right to do well on the test.
  - Focus on the question at hand. Don't let your mind wander on other things.
  - Don't worry about how fast other students finish their test; just concentrate on your own test. There's no reward for finishing first.
- We wish all our students a lot of success with their exams. Please remember that **some anxiety is very normal**. It's a reminder that you want to do your best.

**Susan Boutros**  
Middle & High School Principal

## Shendi Schools Visit



A small delegation representing KAS administration (Dr. Robert Beck), IT Dept. (Mr. Magdi Saeed), Special Services (Nicole Stacey) and Community Service/ Social Studies (Charlene Joyce) was invited to visit the Al Sayal boys and girls primary and upper schools in Shendi in November. We received a wonderful welcome from community dignitaries, administration, and staff at the school, and were honored by students who came to school on a Saturday to greet us with songs, poetry, and verse.

The Al Sayal schools in Shendi have had the distinction of scoring the highest in Nile River State on their final exams in the last school year. They are now eager to continue to improve those results by learning more advanced ways of teaching from others in an effort to develop as a model school group for Sudan. As a part of Shendi Province, the schools also share a community goal to promote advanced green projects for improvement of the local environment.



Our visit in November gave us the opportunity to introduce ourselves, observe classroom environments, and meet with interested school and community members for an open exchange sharing our international experiences. To further this exchange, a group of eight teachers from Al Sayal Schools will be visiting KAS in December to attend seminars promoting best teaching practices and will shadow teachers for part of the day.

Seminars offered on December 12th to these visiting teachers will focus on Differentiated Learning, Classroom Management and ESL instruction (English as a Second Language). For a continuing dialogue on sharing international school strategies and more advanced ways of teaching, another seminar is planned next semester.

**Charlene Joyce**  
Social Studies Teacher

## Reading Improves Empathy

A question I often ask my students is why do we read fiction? The most common answer is to improve our English language, and build our vocabulary. A few say that they read because it gives them pleasure and they enjoy it. Nowadays, English teachers throughout the world feel they are fighting an uphill battle when it comes to getting students to read. Parents tear their hair out and bemoan the advent of the smartphone. The proliferation of technology, despite its many advantages, has accentuated the problem. However, when students do get into fiction they get an immense amount of pleasure out of reading. There is nothing finer than getting students to turn the pages of a novel and cultivate a hunger for what comes next.

Why do we read? What do we get out of it? After all, there are some students who get through their entire academic careers without completing a book. Is it necessary to read novels, when I can go to Spark Notes or just read the non-fiction necessary to do the essay? I've heard it said by friends that they read as a form of escapism. It is after all a beautiful way to forget the troubles of the day and drift into another time or place. Alternatively, we can find ourselves in books, as we recognize some of our own traits, and foibles in the characters of the fiction we read. Invariably, we find close associations with protagonists and antagonists, as well as relating to the way in which they handle the vicissitudes life throws in their way.

A very close friend from my university days, an avid reader of Jane Austen I hasten to add, has always said that she can't connect with people who don't read. She said, "I don't know what it is, but I'm not on the same wavelength as readers who read only non-fiction or don't read at all." I dismissed this statement at the time, and thought it was a form of intellectual snobbery.

Lately, I've discovered that there is another very good reason why it is imperative that we read fiction, not far removed from what my university colleague had said. Psychologists suggest that reading fiction improves our powers of empathy. An article from 2013 in The Guardian brings into the foreground research by psychologists David Comer Kidd and Emanuele Castano, at the School for Social Research in New York, who have proved that reading literary fiction enhances the ability to detect and understand other people's emotions, a crucial skill in navigating complex social relationships. In a series of five experiments, 1,000 participants were randomly assigned texts to read, either extracts of popular fiction such as bestseller Danielle Steel's "The Sins of the Mother" and "Gone Girl" by Gillian Flynn, or more literary texts, such as Orange-winner "The Tiger's Wife" by Téa Obreht, Don DeLillo's "The Runner", from his collection or work by Anton Chekhov. The pair then used a variety

of Theory of Mind techniques to measure how accurately the participants could identify emotions in others. Scores were consistently higher for those who had read literary fiction than for those with popular fiction or non-fiction texts.

Now, rather than dismiss my friend's statement out of hand, I have to concede that she may have had a point that is worth considering. As for me, I've just completed "World Without End" by Ken Follet and I'm seriously contemplating the "Jane Austen Collection," in the hope that it will improve my emotional intelligence and of course for the sheer enjoyment of it.

Bury L. "Reading Literary Fiction Improves Empathy, Study Finds." The Guardian Online, 8th October 2013.

**Alamin Michael Metcalf**  
Language Arts Teacher

## Elementary Assembly Masters This Week's Winners



Mohamed Abdalmanem  
**Grade 5**

Mohamed Osman  
**Grade 5**

Asad Burrell  
**Grade 5**

Abdulrahman Moustafa  
**Grade 3**

David Matte  
**Grade 1**

## SAYING OF THE WEEK

To **indulge in Horseplay** is to behave in a boisterous but friendly manner. The origin of this saying lies with the English Morris dancers. At country fairs players riding wooden hobbyhorses usually accompanied Morris dancers. These 'horses' were expected to engage in wild and uncontrollable antics to entertain the crowds, much as a clown does in a circus, and the 'horseplay' became a popular and important part of the Morris dancers' act.

**Minette van der Bijl**  
High School English Department