

NEWS FROM THE TRUNK
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18 2014

PTA
PICNIC
GATHERING



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18 2014 11AM EARLY DISMISSAL (WINTER BREAK DEC 19 - JAN 10)

Letter from the Superintendent, Dr. Robert Beck

Dear Parents,

A special thank you to the PTA who worked hard to make the KAS Picnic last week such a huge success. Bravo to you PTA! You are so important to KAS. We are grateful for what you do for the KAS Family. And our thanks also for the KAS Movie Night that followed the picnic. It was a great afternoon and evening for the children, their parents and friends of KAS who joined in the fun.

With this being the last day of the first semester of the school year, I wish to congratulate all students, their teachers and parents on a 'job well done'. From the moment the children entered the campus on the first day of school on August 17 until today, students have been working hard to advance in all areas of development: intellectual, social, emotional and physical. It has been a true collaborative and cooperative team effort with you during the past semester. Thank you.

I wish you a pleasant winter break and, in advance, HAPPY NEW YEAR! The second semester begins with a regular day of classes on Sunday, January 11, 2015. It will be an exciting second semester filled with top quality instruction by our top quality teachers. As in the case of the past semester, we will combine our focus on learning with creative and growth promoting extra-curricular and co-curricular activities that are offered during and after school. Enjoy the break with family and friends. I look forward to seeing you and the children in 2015!

Letter from the Middle/High School Principal, Susan Boutros

Dear Parents, Students and Friends,
We have made it to the end of a very busy and successful semester. When I look back, I can't help thinking about all the amazing learning that has happened this semester. It was indeed an exceptionally successful semester.

There has been so much going on in the last couple of weeks. And High School students are very happy to have finished with their exams. Middle School students were busy finishing their work, getting ready for sports day and wrapping up the semester.

Today's assembly and sports day was a great success. The excitement of the holiday season could be felt in the air. Everyone seems to be excited and ready to end the semester on a high note.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our faculty, students and parents for their many contributions this semester. I wish you all a joyful, restful and peaceful holiday season with your family and friends.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Winter Break!

Letter from the Early Childhood Center & Elementary School Principal, Phil Centers

Dear Students, Parents, and Community Members,

First I want to welcome Dr. Ann Beck in a new role she has taken on in the school (in addition to her Admissions and Curriculum Director duties), to the great benefit of our students and staff: that of Elementary School Counselor. Dr. Beck has many years of training and experience as an elementary and middle school counselor. She has begun working with our ES students in need of counseling, and this is already making a positive difference.

In my E-news articles I have been exploring the primary question of what students should learn in school, which is part of one of KAS's "Four Cs:" Curriculum. "Curriculum" literally means "the course that will be run," and in this sense mastering an educational curriculum may be thought of as the running of a long-distance race. By envisioning the end result we desire for our efforts in educating the young people in our care, we can design a course of experiences and knowledge content that will lead our students to their destination as competent graduates going out in the world to make it a better place, and fulfilling their potential (self-actualization) in the process.

Beginning in ancient Greece and through the Middle Ages the seven liberal arts (grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music) were considered the gold standard of Western curricula. With the knowledge explosion of the Renaissance this standard curriculum of two millennia began to shift, slowly at first and then dramatically. Now there is so much knowledge available it has become a major task just to decide what of all there is to learn we have time to focus on and master. What is essential?

Do we need a new gold standard, a modern framework of what is essential that modern human beings learn and master in their childhood and youth? If so, a modern "eight liberal arts" might include training in the essential realms of modern life: language arts (i.e., literacy and effective communication: listening, speaking, reading, writing, ideally in more than one language), the human story (history, anthropology, sociology, etc.), the human mind / spirit (psychology, philosophy, comparative religions, the inner life, etc.), creative arts (design, sculpture, graphic arts, music, drama, etc.), math (the basic skills for all students, and advanced skills for those who find it interesting), science (a basic understanding of the physical universe: chemistry, physics, geology and geography, biology, astronomy, etc.), technology (how humanly-constructed things work, from pencils to computers), and health and fitness (including nutrition, food preparation, etc.).

But shouldn't our students, those who are actually "running" the course of the curriculum, have a say in the design of this course that will involve their lives so intimately for twelve years or more? This important question will be explored next time! In the meantime I wish everyone a very happy and safe winter holiday.



WINTER BREAK:
Holiday: Thursday, December 18 (11am early dismissal)
School Starts: Sunday, January 11 2015

Helpful Holiday Hints

We all know what happens when we go on holiday, lots of fun and relaxation. We look forward to that. However, we sometimes tend to forget what we learned and come back to the next semester feeling overwhelmed! Here are a few helpful hints to prepare for returning to school:

+Organize your school items in one designated area as soon as possible. That way you can access them when the semester starts.

+Read about 30 minutes every night

+If you were struggling with a certain subject area, practice 2 or 3 times a week.

+Find an activity (other than TV or other electronics) that you enjoy and do it. The holidays are the perfect time to pick up or continue a hobby.

+Get plenty of rest and exercise that will vitalize your body and mind

Leena Salih
Learning Center Teacher

THE WONDER OF MEROE

A few weeks ago I took my second trip to the ancient ruins of Meroe. This one, however, was quite unique for I saw it through the eyes of the KAS 7th graders as we took our class trip together. From the start there was a great deal of excitement since many had never been on a camping trip and the chance to be with their classmates far from Khartoum made the possibilities seem endless. For me, spending 5 hours each way on a small bus with 13 middle schoolers is something I never want to experience again but for them it was like a circus on wheels.

As we walked amid the pyramids, the comments I heard made it obvious that they were thinking about the times when this place was the center of the Great Nubian Kingdom. Knowing their gift of wonder I could only guess how their imaginations were running wild, as they themselves were wildly running.

While the sun was setting over our encampment, I looked up to the highest sand dune and saw the children sitting in a line, facing the west, and simply watching the sun disappear. It was a sight to behold.

As darkness enveloped our camp we lit a bonfire and settled in for song, games, and conversation. While I sat there gazing into the fire a student sat down next to me. He leaned over and told me that he had never been camping before and it was his first time sitting around a fire. Adults often times forget their firsts so hearing this was a joy. He then asked me if I had ever seen a shooting star and how one goes about finding one. I told him I had many times but never as amazing as seeing one in the black African sky. I said he should climb a dune, stare up into the sky, and wait for one to appear. After some time he wandered off and I hope, along with the other students, he experienced the sheer magic of a shooting star in the expansive African sky.

Joel Christenson



Last week's solutions:

Elem: Santa Claus

MS/HS: Hot Chocolate

Teachers: Meet me under the mistletoe

Last week's WINNERS are!

Elem: Mohammed Hadra gr. 4

Faculty: Reem Elashi - Graphic Designer

Let them Wonder!!

“Cell phones, mobile e-mail, and all the other cool and slick gadgets can cause massive losses in our creative output and overall productivity.”

Robin S. Sharma

This quote has made me think deeply about the way we learn, about the world and everything surrounding us. We wonder about things around us and we ask questions that will lead to greater knowledge.

When I was a child, I remember that I used to go with my dad whenever he would go to buy groceries. What I liked to do with him was going to the butcher shop because I had a chance to see inside the sheep and then ask questions about the different parts of the animal itself.

During my childhood, we kids used to learn by real life experiences. For example, when we saw worms we asked many questions about how worms live and what they eat. And when we had the answers to those questions we started our own exploration journey by digging deeper to know more and more. We used to try to find a microscope or magnifier glass to see a real worm eating a leaf or any type of plant. We would sneak and try to dig in the grass to find how worms make holes in the ground to help the plants grow. We tried to find answers to many questions. The good thing was having something to wonder about.

Nowadays, kids learn a lot of things through the Internet. They know that they will find whatever they want to know online. Unfortunately, they tend not to think of how they can find out about something in a variety of different ways. Those different ways often require creativity and a motivation to explore.

It is true that technology has made our lives easier, but I think it can take away a lot of possibilities that encourage creativity. We need to help our kids, for example, wonder about the environment surrounding them. We need to help them get ready to face tomorrow's issues by helping them see themselves in a global context. For example, we need to help them develop as global citizens with awareness of what we need to do to protect our natural resources.

Since we are heading to our winter break, I encourage you to make available outdoor activities that will encourage your child to “wonder” about different things happening in real life. This promotes active learning. Slogans for this winter break could be: “Being energetic instead of being lethargic”, and “Let them wonder”. Do the outdoor activities with your child. I'm sure your child will enjoy that!

Ms. Egbal Mohamed
Technology Coordinator



Bellow are some links for ideas of outdoor activities that parents can use:

<http://www.pinterest.com/binspiredmama/outdoor-play-ideas-for-kids/>

<http://tipsaholic.com/>

<http://www.kidspot.com.au/kids-activities-and-games/fun-outdoor-activities-for-kids+9.htm>

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/play/outdoor-activities/33394.html>



Ms. Egbal Mohamed
Technology Coordinator

Words of Wisdom from William Shakespeare

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts.

“All the world's a stage” is the phrase that begins a monologue from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. The play catalogues the seven stages of a man's life from birth through to death.

Life is undoubtedly a stage, without realizing it we are all actors playing out the game of life. In a single lifetime we take on many guises and many roles. I love Shakespeare

Michael Metcalf

English saying

Dead In The Water means an idea or scheme has no momentum and no chance of success. This is a nautical expression, dating back to the days of the sailing ships. On a windless day, with nothing to propel the vessel, a boat sitting motionless in the sea was known as 'dead in the water', going nowhere.