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news from the trunk

Thursday, January 23, 2014

RECRUITMENT SEASON

KAS
Attracts
Exceptional
Teachers ✓



Report Cards Go Home

Thursday, January 23, 2014



Letter from the Superintendent, Mr. Steven Alexander

Curriculum at KAS

One of the essential elements of any excellent school is to ensure that the curriculum is high quality. All schools must annually review and revise curriculum to maintain high standards.

KAS uses standards from a U.S. based curriculum known as AERO standards throughout our school. These standards were developed several years ago by the U.S. State Department of Overseas Schools. They are based on what we call "Best Practice" methods and content used in U.S. schools. International Schools decide which curriculum is best to follow its school mission and philosophy. For KAS, the AERO curriculum standards provide us with a sound curriculum for our teachers to use.

Most recently in the United States another set of education standards is developing called "Common Core." These standards were developed by several U.S. state education departments with the support of Governors. They are now being used by most U.S. states. The Common Core standards are for all students at most subject levels. We are also referring to these standards in developing and revising our curriculum.

This year all of our staff are working together to revise our curriculum as needed. Our goal is to have it up-to-date by the end of this year. We are also preparing an accessible information chart for parents and prospective families that will be put on our website as soon as we finish our work. Teachers work in three groups; Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary.

It is important that our curriculum is challenging and appropriate for students in all grade levels. We look forward to sharing with you on the KAS website near the end of this school year.

Letter from the Middle and High School Principal, Susan Boutros

Dear Parents, Students and Friends,

It was lovely to welcome everyone back to school last week and the students were keen to share their holiday news. The second semester has started in a very positive and bright manner at Khartoum American School with the students showing plenty of eagerness and enthusiasm to learn and participate in the many activities that our school has to offer.

Report cards have been sent home with your student today. Parents, please take the time to go over your student's report card. This is a great opportunity for you to communicate with your children and create a plan to maximize future academic success. Help your child set realistic and attainable goals for the next reporting period.

We still have to have a regular school day on two Saturdays in order to make up the missed school days. Saturday, February 8, 2014 will be a regular school day for students. It is also a very special day because it will be the last day of our annual Sudan Days celebrations. We will end the day with a Sudan Day Performance and all parents are welcome to attend. We will be sending more information home soon. The second school make up day will be Saturday, March 1, 2014.

The first two weeks of the second semester have raced by, the students have all settled quickly back into the routine of school and we are all looking forward to the exciting activities and learning opportunities planned for the semester ahead.

With best wishes for a successful 2014!

Student Make-Up Days:

- Saturday, February 8, 2014
- Saturday, March 1, 2014

Dear Parents,

We are happy to announce the PTA Bake Sale, which will be held on Thursday, January 30, during lunch time (11:31-12:30 pm). The PTA is inviting you to make a contribution in the form of a cake or another culinary sweet specialty so as to make this special day a sweet success for our students. You can simply send your homemade treats with your child on the day of the Bake Sale. The treats may be dropped off at the kiosk.

Suggestions: brownies, cookies, pancakes, cakes, cupcakes, donuts, etc.



NEWS FROM THE GRADE 3

This quarter grade three are doing a unit called 'Pollution, Recycling and Endangered Animals.' The authenticity of this unit has really captured the imagination of the students. Learning is always much stronger and fruitful when students can see how the information they are getting affects their lives. I was surprised with how enthusiastic the class was when told about the opportunity to partner with the high school students to make our school and surrounding community greener. When told that they would be patrolling the school and



surrounding streets to pick up trash there was a cheer amongst the students. Not only is it thrilling to be taken by surprise, it is also positive to know that the thirteen students of grade three are growing up with the will to make their community a cleaner more beautiful place. Well done grade three,

I look forward to seeing how this unit will progress.



Grade 3

Calculators or CPMP Tools?

Before arriving in Khartoum, I was amazed to hear that KAS is a one-to-one laptop school. In many mathematics classes, using calculators is the beginning and end of the use of technology in the classroom. This is mostly because the calculator is the only instrument allowed for external examinations and getting to know your calculator is imperative! In many ways however, the computer is a much better way of seeing mathematics.



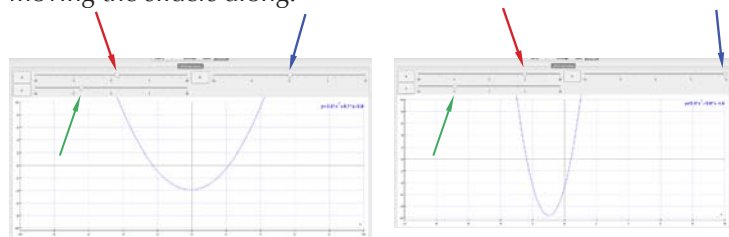
In Algebra 2 and Pre-Calculus, for example, the quadratic function is studied. First of all, we want to know what $f(x) = ax^2$ looks like. So we graph $f(x) = x^2$ and we call it a parabola. Then we want to know what happens to the shape of the parabola if it becomes larger and larger. We experiment with our calculators by graphing and then maybe $f(x) = 2x^2$. So far, we have entered three equations into our calculators. Now, let's investigate what happens if it becomes smaller.

Now we graph $f(x) = \frac{1}{2}x^2$ $f(x) = \frac{3}{11}x^2$ $f(x) = -2x^2$ $f(x) = -x^2$

By now things are getting quite confusing on our calculator screen. We have inputted seven equations into our calculator altogether and if we take the most general form of the

quadratic function $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$ we must also investigate what happens when b and c change as well. By now, the entire class is getting frustrated.....

One-to-one laptop to the rescue! Our laptops and a program called CPMP Tools, which is a free download from the Internet, will save us a lot of time and frustration. Using our laptops and CPMP Tools, we input only the equation $f(x) = ax^2 + bx + c$. On the screen, the basic function is graphed. At the top of the screen appear buttons called sliders, which can be moved, and as they moved, the graph shifts accordingly. If you are a parent of a student in Precalculus, ask your child to show you CPMP Tools. You'll have a lot of fun changing the shape of graphs by moving the sliders along.



English Sayings...



To make a **Mountain Out Of A Molehill** means to exaggerate something out of all proportion. The original phrase was 'to make an elephant out of a fly' and dates back to the ancient Greek satirist Lucian, who lived in AD 2. But in 1548 Nicholas Udall wrote Paraphrase Of Erasmus that includes the line: 'Sophists of Greece could, through their copiousness, make an elephant of a fly and a mountain of a molehill.' The original expression has long been forgotten but Udall's replacement remains a commonly used phrase.

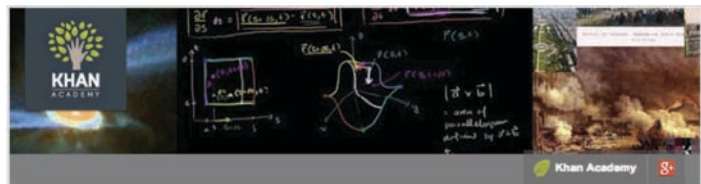
Learning Center Corner

Renewable Resources

Children surpassing their parents in intelligence may be one of the proudest moments in parents' lives, or it may also be disturbing (when the children are only in 7th grade). Regardless of the emotional response, it can be instantly intimidating when a child asks for help on homework that looks as foreign as ancient hieroglyphics.

Do not fret, parents, for there is a wealth of resources flooding the web every day. With a little luck, and a basic knowledge of search engines, most of this foreign looking homework can be relearned and retaught.

One invaluable tool is Khan Academy, striving to make education available through the Internet. With over 28,000 videos, topics are covered from basic math functions to AP physics to mortgage loans.



www.youtube.com/khanacademy

(Oh, and it's FREE.)



NEVER STOP EXPLORING



Mr. C's Amazing Math Contest

Elementary School Math problems:

Kindergarten: Show on the clock what time you wake up in the morning: ①



Grade 1: Write these numbers in order from largest to smallest: 11, 9, 13, 7, 15, 14.

Grade 2: If you buy a toy for 55c and pay with a one-dollar bill, how much change will you receive?

Grade 3: Name three things that all quadrilaterals have.

Grade 4: Use each of the numbers 3, 5, 7, and 9 to fill in the blanks on the left side of the = sign so you get the largest possible answer. $(__ + __) * (__ + __) = ?$

Grade 5: The longest snake at one country zoo is an Indonesian python that measures 376 inches. The shortest is a 4-inch thread snake from the West Indies. The python is how many times as long as the thread snake? Stop and think, estimate, show steps in problem solving and solve.

Middle School Math problem:

How many legs does a right triangle have?

High School Math problem:

Daniel Burnham designed and built the 22-story Flatiron Building in New York City in 1902. The base of the building is a triangle bordered by three streets: Broadway, Fifth Avenue, and East Twenty-second Street. The Fifth Avenue side is 1 ft. shorter than twice the East Twenty-second Street side. The East Twenty-second Street side is 8 ft. shorter than half the Broadway side. The Broadway side is 190 ft. Find the two unknown side lengths.

Solutions from the last week: Grade 1:19; Grade 2: Answers will vary; Grade 3: 90, 360; Grade 4: \$2.40, 180; Grade 5: 79 cars; Middle School 136; ; High School: $-5 < x < 6$ or $(-5, 6)$;



This Week's Winners

Jade (Pre-K), Jason (Kindergarten), Phone (Grade 1), Serene (Grade 2), Lina (Grade 3), Syahmi (Grade 4), Tawfeeg (Grade 5), Sakuntala and Abdelrahman (Grade 8).

Ross's Rebus



Who won Ross's Rebus last week?

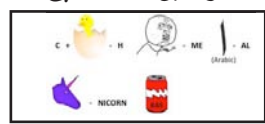


Lina (Grade 3) and Samir (Grade 8).

Elementary School Rebus



Middle and High School Rebus



Solutions from the last week: Elementary School: I love basketball; Middle and High School: Forgive and forget;