



# n e w s



**News from the trunk!**  
**Thursday, May 9th 2021**

**GET TO KNOW THE CLASS OF 2021!!**

**CONGRATULATIONS KAS GRADUATES!**



**EID AL FITIR  
HOLIDAY: MAY  
12TH - 17TH**



**EID  
MUBARAK**

# **Letter from the Superintendent, Bridget Davies**

Dear KAS Community,

May is a time of many different celebrations – Easter, Eid, Graduation and the end of the school year. I would also like to celebrate that although this school year has been different, we have stuck together as a school community and seen many successes.

As we look ahead to the next school year, I would also like to draw your attention to some important dates:

**May 24th** – Annual General Meeting, Small Field, KAS

**May 31st** – Last Day of 2020-21 School Year

**August 11th** – First Day of 2021-22 School Year

If you are interested in running for the board please feel free to contact me to find out more information ([bdavies@krtams.org](mailto:bdavies@krtams.org)).

Many thanks as always for your support.

Best wishes,

Bridget Davies

# Letter from the Principal - Susan Boutros

Dear Parents,

We are getting closer to the most exciting time of the school year for the graduating class of 2021. We have started preparing for our graduation ceremony and we are following with excitement our seniors as they are finalizing their plans for life after high school.

Graduating from high school is an important milestone in the lives of our students, and we feel that having a graduation ceremony is of utmost importance. We understand that graduations are milestones for families and a time to celebrate this great accomplishment. Graduation is indeed the time to celebrate the many hours of hard work that our students have put forth. The diploma each of them receive is a symbol of their accomplishment and dedication.

I would like to congratulate our graduating seniors who have adhered to the academic expectations despite the immediate intrusiveness of COVID-19. Our graduation ceremony will take place on Friday, May 28, 2021. Although this 2021 graduation ceremony will be unlike any other graduation ceremony in the past, we will maintain the tradition of having a graduation ceremony while respecting the required practice of social distancing and the banning of large gatherings. Therefore, we will ensure that our graduating seniors receive the recognition that they have earned in an environment that is safe. We anticipate that this occasion will be highly appreciated and will also be memorable for the Class of 2021.

Congratulations, graduating seniors for working hard towards completing your academic graduation requirements and for preparing for the next stage of your life. May each of you find success in everything that you do.

Susan Boutros  
Principal



# In Pursuit of Happiness

In recent Enews articles we have examined my proposition that “happiness is a skill”, implying that by practicing specific strategies (skills) you can improve your level of happiness. I’ve also mentioned that “happiness is a choice”, and simple acts of choosing to practice strategies are also a choice to increase your happiness levels. This focus on happiness is part of a larger picture of wellbeing, which includes physical, social, spiritual, and mental aspects. These aspects are all interconnected; improving one area is likely to also improve others.

This week we focus on **Connection**. Humans are hard-wired in our brains to be social creatures. As humans and societies evolved, it was those who nurtured their social Connections and interdependence that were most likely to survive. This begins from the very basics of food and protection. A group can gather more food and hunt larger animals more successfully than an individual. When one of a group is unsuccessful in finding food, s/he does not go hungry because the group shares with one another. A predatory animal is less likely to attack a group of people versus a lone individual. A group can build safer and more secure structures more quickly than an individual. People who participate in groups were more likely to survive and have offspring to perpetuate their genetic line. This is a basic biological imperative.

Fast forward thousands of years to present day. Why focus on social Connections? You can buy your food at the grocery; you can buy a house or hire someone to build it. Do we really need other people? The simple answer is yes. Yes, we need other people. Strong social Connections, in our families, our communities, and at our places of work, are necessary and beneficial. Consider these benefits:

## **Strong social Connections improve:**

- Immune system, cellular inflammation, ability to recover from disease
- Longevity (you live longer!)
- Self-esteem, empathy, resilience after a hardship
- Mental health
- Emotional regulation
- Cognition

## **Strong social Connections decrease:**

- Anxiety and depression; feelings of loneliness, isolation, and alienation
- Risk of suicide
- Vulnerability to disease and death
- Antisocial behaviour and violence
- Stress responses

The importance of quality social Connections is clear, but what if you are an introvert and socializing is exhausting? What if you are a private person and don’t want 10 BFFs? What if you are afraid that initiating conversations with strangers or people you don’t know well will seem creepy (hint: if you are even asking yourself this question then you are not creepy)? Good news about social Connections... it doesn’t matter how many friends, family member, or colleagues you have; the benefits of Connection comes from your perception and subjective sense of Connection. This means that you simply focus on feeling more connected rather than counting Connections. Think quality instead of quantity.

Focusing on quality, how do you improve your Connections? First consider your social skills. This may involve:

- Overcoming social anxieties and fears, taking risks
- Becoming more assertive, developing self-esteem
- Initiating and sustaining conversation,
- Strengthening Connections through empathy and self-disclosure

Thinking about your current Connections, intentionally work to maintain those relationships. Prioritize, Participate, Reach Out:

- Schedule and plan to spend time together Connecting. Commit to a certain amount of time together each day, week, or month—without cell phones, iPads or other distractions.
- Listen and allow your Connection to share; be present with your Connection (put away your cell phone!). To truly feel understood and Connected, repeat what you heard and make sure you understand.
- Share your feelings, dreams, disappointments, memories, experiences, and humor. Compassion creates a sense of Connection.
- Tell your Connections when you need support- most people are happy to help a struggling friend but cannot do so without knowing you are in need. If you do not tell someone you need help, they will assume you are doing well. Showing vulnerability to ask for help also creates a sense of Connection, belonging, and trust.
- Take advantage of cultural and religious observances to strengthen and deepen your Connections. As we are currently in both Ramadan and Lent, take advantage to use some of these strategies to intentionally build Connections with those whom you already gather and celebrate.

## **To build new Connections, pack your social skills and head out:**

- Take a walk in your neighborhood and start chatting with neighbors
- Volunteer
- Take a class
- Help someone in need
- Join an organization focusing on an interest of yours

## **Combine this Happiness Practice with Gratitude:**

- Send a thank you email or text
- Tell your Connections why you appreciate them
- Practice random acts of kindness (appreciation) for your Connections

Keep in mind our prior discussions that your mindset is not actually “set”. A full 40% of your attitude and perspective are up to you. I encourage you to practice some simple skills to improve your happiness level, which is to also improve your overall wellbeing. Reap the mental, physical, social, and emotional, and spiritual rewards of building and maintaining strong social Connections. Be heartened that this focus in on the quality of your relationships and your individual sense of Connection, rather than the number of Connections you have. Focus your energy to improve Connections on a scale and intensity that suits you.

Please check back in the next Enews edition for our next Happiness practice: Taking a break.

I am wishing you and your family health and happiness.

Nicole Stacey  
Student Support Services Coordinator  
Elementary Counselor

# Saying of the week

If you plan to do something very quickly, in a very short time you plan to do it **In Two Shakes of a Lamb's Tail**. The expression means in no time at all because this is how quickly lambs shake their tails. It first appeared in Richard Harris's Berheam's book *Ingoldsby Legends* published in 1840, but since then it has been reduced to two shakes (e.g. see you in two shakes). Probably the expression is gradually disappearing because fewer people grow up actually seeing lambs wag their tails. However, shake is a recognized time of unit, equal to 10 nanoseconds, so the phrase will probably be preserved among nuclear scientists.

Minette van der Bijl  
HS EAL Teacher

Source: [tinasworlds.wordpress.com](http://tinasworlds.wordpress.com)

## Poem of the week

### NUMBERS

By Mary Cornish

I like the generosity of numbers.

The way, for example,  
they are willing to count  
anything or anyone:

two pickles, one door to the room,  
eight dancers dressed as swans.

I like the domesticity of addition—  
add two cups of milk and stir—  
the sense of plenty: six plums  
on the ground, three more  
falling from the tree.

And multiplication's school  
of fish times fish,  
whose silver bodies breed  
beneath the shadow  
of a boat.

Even subtraction is never loss,  
just addition somewhere else:  
five sparrows take away two,  
the two in someone else's  
garden now.

There's an amplitude to long division,  
as it opens Chinese take-out  
box by paper box,  
inside every folded cookie  
a new fortune.

And I never fail to be surprised  
by the gift of an odd remainder,  
footloose at the end:  
forty-seven divided by eleven equals four,  
with three remaining.

Three boys beyond their mother's call,  
two Italians off to the sea,  
one sock that isn't anywhere you look.