



news

news from the trunk

Wednesday, November 14, 2012



MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE

Long Weekend (Islamic New Year)

From Thursday, November 15 to Saturday, November 17, 2012



Letter from the Superintendent, Greg Hughes

Dear Parents,

Rarely does my newsletter article contain information relating to marshmallows, but these delicious treats are at the heart of an educational and fun event recently held here at KAS.

Our students in the High School participate in a weekly advisory and character-building program called GOAL. As part of this program the High School challenged the Elementary School to see who could prevail in the "Marshmallow Challenge" an activity that promotes team building skills, creativity, spatial math skills and problem-solving. The Marshmallow Challenge involved groups of students building a structure out of spaghetti and masking tape that would suspend a marshmallow as high as possible without collapsing.

This exercise which has been carried out worldwide regularly shows surprising results in that young people consistently outperform their older colleagues and in a broader context they surpass college business graduates and even CEO's of companies.

The event finished with several structures hitting high heights while others simply hit the ground, but nonetheless it was a wonderful, fun activity that was enjoyed by all. This event once more highlighted our commitment to inquiry- based learning, and proved yet again that learning comes in many shapes and forms. A special thank you goes to Ms. Kelley for making it all happen.

Enjoy the long weekend and please have a safe and restful holiday.

Letter from the Elementary School Principal, Ben Voborsky

At Khartoum American School we are raising student achievement through 21st century education. We emphasize the skills that students need to succeed. Our students are honing their communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. Being an inclusive student-centered school the KAS faculty focus on the individual student and not the individual subject. Our teachers are finding ways to challenge and stretch all of our students while giving them the tools to succeed. KAS strives for continuous improvement and identifying new ways to fully prepare our students with the skills they need to meet the challenges of the 21st century. There is a balance between these modern pedagogical methods and rigorous clear standards. Our elementary team maintains the highest expectations and our students strive to live up to them.

KAS is not an island and education does not start and end at the gates of the school. Our culture of learning extends beyond the walls of KAS and beyond our students to include the whole school community. Edmodo, Engrade, and other web-based resources bring our parents into the virtual classroom of their children and the World Wide Web showcases our students to the world. The Marshmallow Challenge highlighted the effort that KAS puts forth to foster collaboration, innovation and creativity, which is only possible with effective communication skills.

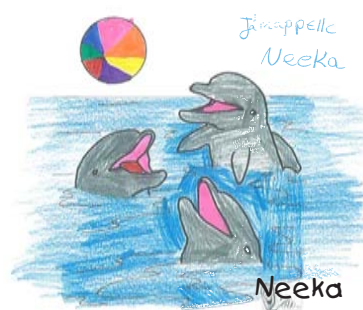
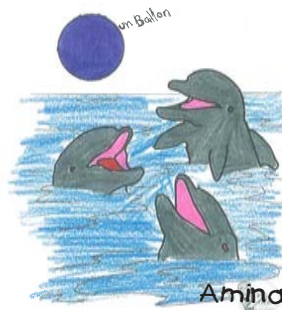
Go Team KAS!

PTA Aqua Family Picnic

Welcome to KAS PTA's first aqua picnic on Friday,
November 16, 2012 from 2:00 pm to 6:30 pm.

It will **NOT** be in the pool, but we will have fun with water sprinklers, balloons and other water related games and activities for the whole family. Please bring a change of clothes for your kids as they will get wet.
Food and drinks available! BBQ-s are on!

The swimming pool will be **CLOSED** during the family picnic.



Teamwork

Since the beginning of time, mankind has understood the value of teamwork. Whether it was hunter-gatherer societies planning strategies to snare and kill animals for food or early farmers and growers planting and harvesting; communication and collaboration was paramount. These primitive groups almost certainly would have carried out some form of assessment of their successes and failures in order to improve performance. Just like today, where new strategies for success and achievement are constantly created, adjusted and reviewed. Our world is so much more interconnected making teamwork, communication and cooperation the overriding element in any successful business or institution. The way in which we work together in a team is in essence the key to our survival.

Bearing all of this in mind, it is important that from very early, children learn to interact and perform in team situations so that they will have this essential skill when they enter the world of work. Another great aspect of teamwork, recognized throughout the world, is that students get inspired and learn best from tasks that involve social interaction and collaboration.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines Teamwork as "a joint action by a group of people, in which each person subordinates his or her individual interests and opinions to the unity and efficiency of the group." Over the past few weeks our GOAL sessions have encouraged students to talk about their individual goals, hopes, aims and ambitions. This week we went to another level with the Marshmallow Project that asked our students to come together as a team and work towards the success of the team. From Elementary to High School, our students adapted, cooperated, strengthened relationships and most importantly learned valuable skills that will stand them in good stead throughout their careers. The words that were uttered throughout all of the groups were, "what strategies can we use to improve upon our structure and get that marshmallow to stand up"? The way our students tackled this problem was very, very encouraging as it brought into play all members of the group and each and every member wanted to participate and had ideas. Above all, it was amazing to see all the happy smiling faces, testimony to the fact that we learn best when we're having fun.

C'EST ENOUEtte! On Joue

We always have fun in French with the Elementary school learning about "A la recreation" or "At Lunch time" we are learning more about the French culture through learning how the young French students play during their lunch time as part of our unit: "A l'école" (At the school).

I am really proud of my Grade 5 students, who reflecting on Halloween, wrote a paragraph "In the haunted house."



Learning Center Corner

At the Learning Center we work to serve our entire Nursery to Grade 12 community. MANY KAS students are in and out of our doors at some point or other in the school year. We strive to equip every student, regardless of their academic strengths or needs, with strategies that will serve them well right into high school and throughout their lives. Some of the students we serve have noticed that they have different learning needs and have sought professional advice. Some of these students have secured diagnoses, that have come with recommendations, which greatly help us as teachers to provide the needed accommodations for success in high school, college, and beyond. One such label is "Learning Disabled". There still remains a great deal of misunderstanding around this label.

Below is a short autobiographical excerpt from an article found at: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct12/vol70/num02/Ferrari-Engines.-Bicycle-Brakes.aspx> by a psychiatrist who continues to identify himself as Learning Disabled, among other labels. It is here, to remind us that LD is not a disability at all, but a label that allows us to approach teaching and learning appropriately for each student.

If you find this interesting, you might like to read the entire article:

"I am a 62-year-old psychiatrist who has both attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia. Of all the people who helped me deal with these conditions, top prize goes to my 1st grade teacher, Mrs. Eldredge, at Chatham Elementary School in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. She simply put her arm around me when it was my turn to read during reading period. No one laughed at my stammering and stuttering, because I had the mafia sitting next to me! Such a simple intervention, but profound in its impact.

Because of Mrs. Eldredge's arm, I didn't acquire the most damaging learning disabilities—shame, fear, and the conviction that you are stupid and defective. Many other teachers helped me along the way, but Mrs. Eldredge got me off to the right start. By eliminating fear, she enabled me to progress at my own pace, always believing that I could succeed.

To this day, I am a painfully slow reader and rarely read a book all the way through. But because of Mrs. Eldredge and the many other gifted teachers I was lucky enough to have along the way, I became an excellent student, graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy, Harvard (where I majored in English!), and Tulane Medical School. Now I am a psychiatrist as well as a writer. I specialize in helping children and adults who have, you guessed it, ADHD and dyslexia."



Katya Riziq-KG, Hzkias-G1, Melanie-G2, Haanya-G3, Hazim-G4, Rafiza-G5.



Mr. Hovde's Amazing **MATH CONTEST**

Elementary School Math problem:

Kindergarten: What are the next 2 shapes in the pattern?



Grade 1: Count in three's all the way up thirty.

Grade 2: Measure the height of your bed in cm's and inches.

Grade 3: Use partial sums to answer this question. Show your work!
 $561 + 325$.

Grade 4: . What is the median for the following set of data?
3, 45, 15, 13, 3, 7, 19, 19, 3, 7.

Grade 5: Write a 12-digit numeral with:
3 in the tens place, 0 in the tenths place, 7 in the hundreds place, 5 in the hundredths place, 4 in the thousands place, 9 in the millions place, 3 in the billions place, and 2s in all the other places.

_____/ ____ _ ____ _ ____ _/ ____ _ ____ _
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Middle School Math problem:

Use five 2's to make 88.

High School Math problem:

In order for a matrix A to have an inverse what must be true?

Middle School Dance

When the students take responsibility to raise money in bake sales, design and sell tickets, purchase the food, and make decorations, then the teachers' role changes from controlling to a facilitating one. This is exactly what made the MS dance so successful last Thursday. Every student in the MS council had a specific task and responsibility and these were carried out to perfection. Empowering students to be decision-makers, to establish their own goals and to meet these goals is what makes KAS a student-centered and caring school. I would like to thank: M,J, Liza, (gr 7) Mohammed, Justin (gr. 6), Baalaj and Haider (gr. 8) for their efforts and enthusiasm in making the Middle School a successful one. Also special thanks to our chaperones: Mr. Kahlid, Ms. Rhona, Mr. Steve, Mrs. Lanario, Ms. Afra, Mrs. Dusica, Mrs. Boutros, and last but not least Mr. Hughes for his support to the MS initiatives. The money raised as a result of this event will finance future activities and will be used towards a good cause in collaboration with the Community Service class.

Andres Sanchez



Solutions from the last week: **Kindergarten:** 😊 😊 😊 😊 😊
😊 😊 😊 ; **Grade 1:** 21c; **Grade 2:** $102-59= 43F$, Portland; **Grade 3:** 130; **Grade 4:** 16; **Grade 5:** Answers will vary; **Middle School:** \$1.19; **High School:** (.5, 7.25);

Circle one:
High School Middle School Elementary School
Name: _____ Grade: _____
Answer: _____