



# KED

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# Global Connections

The **KED Network** provides exchange opportunities for everyone. Teacher exchange and school leader exchange are captured in this edition of the Newsletter. And as you read the pieces by exchange teacher Katja Hjelm and exchange principal Niklas Dahlström, several student exchanges are in motion. A group of secondary students from the KED schools in India are on their way to Sweden and their host families with students at Kunskapsskolan Nacka. Then there are several exchanges between students at the Dutch KED partner school Dr Nassau College and students

at various Swedish KED schools. A musical with participants from Sweden and the Netherlands is soon coming on stage in both countries – including an international bus tour, of course. We will give you a full report in the next issue.

Global connections, interaction and collaboration is a vital part of our KED DNA. It is in our values, vision, and daily mission in schools. We believe in exchanges to accomplish an education that makes students ready to shape the world of tomorrow. The links with colleagues in other places also matter for the day-to-

day experience of team members. These bonds help us understand the potential of the KED Program more fully and develop our professional practice.

We are committed to preserving and enhancing these connections, for the benefit of you, of the education we provide, and – because of the impact of learning – of the world. ■

**Cecilia Aronsson**  
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# Namaste India



**Early in the morning,** I landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi and was overwhelmed by the throng of people, buses, rickshaws, and taxis outside. Having decided to stay in a hotel nearby to get home to Rachita and my Indian host family in Gurgaon the following morning, I quickly jumped into a taxi to get to the “nearest hotel”. We drove for a long time and eventu-

I landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi and was overwhelmed by the throng of people, buses, rickshaws, and taxis outside.

ally arrived at a decent hotel, owned by the taxi driver’s friends, settled the price (slightly different price depending on whether I were to pay with rupees, dollars, or Visa card) and finally I got a few hours of sleep.

I then moved on to Gurgaon and was received by Rachita and her lovely family consisting of her husband, their son, the



husband's parents, and the family's domestic help. A delicious lunch was laid out and I really enjoyed the Indian specialties, cooked with a variety of spices and much love. The fact that food is an important part of Indian life quickly became clear to me. Every meal consisted of selected dishes from different parts of India and at school lunch, I was treated to homemade favorites cooked by Rachita's caring colleagues. Every time I tried something new, people curiously wondered "How did it taste?", "Was it good?", "Too spicy?", "Did you like it?"

Colors, tastes, smells – so many impressions from morning to night. Even the drive to and from Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon involved small adventures with cows crossing the highways, monkeys sitting by the road, wedding processions stopping traffic, overloaded vegetable trucks, entire families on mopeds swishing past, etc.

The school was welcoming and well-organized. What probably struck me the most was the combination of discipline, clear rules and at the same time a warm and caring relationship between school management and teachers, between teaching colleagues and not least between teachers and students. It was a real pleasure to join and observe lessons

and workshops and even more fun to teach a few classes myself and interact with students from different grades. I also joined the base group assemblies and the coaching sessions and was impressed by how well the pupils had prepared, eagerly taking responsibility for their own learning goals. The students were curious about my presence and asked me questions about my country. They were astonished when I told them that education is free of charge for the students in Sweden.

The evenings in Gurgaon were quiet and cozy with my host family. We had dinner, drank tea, and talked about

What probably struck me the most was the combination of discipline, clear rules and at the same time a warm and caring relationship between school management and teachers, between teaching colleagues and not least between teachers and students.

similarities and differences between our countries, religion, class differences and much more. I am used to being independent and managing on my own but appreciated being part of Rachita's nice family and following their everyday life. I am not used to being dependent on a car to go places, since I usually get around on foot or by bike. When I was out on my own, I had to be a little more on guard as a single woman than I need to be at home in Sweden. However, the Indians I met during my stay were all friendly and accommodating. One thing I realized is that things do not always turn out as planned. Flexibility and patience are key.

I take with me many great memories and funny stories from my week in Gurgaon and New Delhi, followed by one week in Goa and a visit to Agra and Taj Mahal. I will remember the taxi driver who left me alone in his car in the middle of New Delhi, with his car key, while he went home to change clothes. But that is a completely different story. Namaste India and hope to see you again soon!

**Katja Hjelm**  
English and Spanish Teacher,  
Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö



Swedish KED school principals Björn Nyman and Niklas Dahlström recently visited India to conduct teacher training.

I had the privilege of working as Academic Head at Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon, KKG, and Kunskapsskolan International, KI, in India 2019–2020. The big challenge was how I would approach the challenges that I would face. I asked Sabreena Talwar, Head of School at KKG at the time, how I should behave. She replied with a broad smile: “Niklas, go with the flow!”

The other week when I had the opportunity to reacquaint myself with the Indian KED schools together with five principal colleagues from Sweden, it felt safe to know that all I had to do was going with the flow. India gives so many impressions that nothing else is possible.

Together with Björn Nyman, Principal at Kunskapsskolan Borås, I traveled to Kunskapsskolan Lucknow. There, teacher training was already in full swing with Kunskapsskolan India CEO Sunitha Nambiar and Education Director Sabreena Talwar. Principal Madhulika Agarwal greeted us and over two days we met with her entire teaching team and team leaders to explore the KED mission, CCR (clear, challenging, realistic) goals, how to talk to parents, team leaders’ responsibilities and how to lead all processes as the Head of School.

A flight back to Gurgaon and some sleep later, at six o’clock the next morning we got into the car that would take-

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Björn, Lata and Niklas, KED Principals in different countries with a common mindset.

us to Abohar and Delhi Public School, a school inspired by the KED Program. Six hours later, we arrived at the school and met Principal Lata Tejpal.

Abohar is in Punjab, a few miles from the Pakistani border. But no matter if the school is in Abohar, Lucknow or Gurgaon, the warm Indian hospitality is always there. Lata Tejpal had prepared a list of what she wanted us to work on, and so started two intensive days developing personal coaching sessions through elements of role play, in addition to everything we worked on in Lucknow.

We went back by car on Friday and checked into the hotel in Gurgaon for the third time that week. The last day before the journey home, I used to visit my old colleagues at KKG and KI. A dear reunion.

Three things strike me after this week with Indian teachers and school leaders. The first is how right Kunskapsskolan is in its thinking about personally designed education. We constantly return to the



Exploring the KED Program with teachers in training.

**Learning process grade 6 - 12**

Progress curve student "A"  
 Progress curve student "B"  
 Progress curve student "C"

Difficulty level	Difficulty + Complexity progress											
	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1
Gr 10												
Gr 9												
Gr 8												
Gr 7												
Gr 6												

**Students goal B2 (CCR - goal)**

Students learning curve of understanding and progress. The bigger the area is, the faster the transfer from one level of complexity and understanding to the next.

**Students goal B1 (Not CCR - goal)**

Where are the students learning goal of understanding and progress?

**Students goal B2 (Not CCR - goal)**

Students learning curve of understanding and progress. The bigger the area is, the faster the transfer from one level of complexity and understanding to the next.

**Students goal B2 but teachers expectation is C1**

Students learning curve of understanding and progress. The bigger the area is, the faster the transfer from one level of complexity and understanding to the next.

How should we think about goal setting and how do we explain what we mean by a Clear, Challenging and Realistic (CCR) goal? We discussed this during our sessions in Lucknow and Abohar.

relationship with the student and how that relationship is key to both academic and personal growth.

The second is how easy it is to share experiences and be enriched by colleagues who have their reality in a completely different context, but where we are united by a common mindset.

And third – how uniquely irresistible the country of India is when you go with the flow.

**Niklas Dahlström**  
Head of School,  
Kunskapsskolan Varberg

# Learning Leaders

A short while ago, representatives from all countries in the KED Network met for the annual KED Network Conference. 90 school leaders and other representatives from Sweden, the Netherlands, India, Saudi Arabia, and UK got together in the Netherlands for three days.

The theme of the conference was school leadership. A consistent approach to leadership is important for the KED Program to work successfully. To make sure we develop in line with the latest research, several speakers were invited to share their perspectives on leadership.

Dr Petri Partanen, with a PhD in cognitive and educational psychology, is a licensed psychologist with ex-

tensive experience from both preschools and schools in Sweden and other countries. In his lecture, Partanen emphasized that getting to know your students should always be the starting point when developing the school and its teaching practices, because learning and well-being are interdependent. So, ask yourself what your students need. What do most students need? Many students? Individual students?

Physical activity during the school day affects many students positively. It resets the executive functions of



Dr Petri Partanen



the brain so that students can pay attention again and work the whole day. And when Partanen supported the claim that students' ability to self-regulate and take responsibility for their studies is fundamental to success in school, he also noted that many students do not get support at home to develop self-regulation skills. Therefore, it is important for school leaders to create a school culture where everyone is seen, knowing that early intervention can prevent an avalanche.

Nicolette van Halem, Assistant Professor at the University of Amsterdam, challenged the leaders to think about how to accommodate student agency now that we know that it is so important. Structures, tools, and most of all the culture at school is the answer to that question. And at the heart of the culture lie the relationships in the group or team of students and teachers that work together. Bringing us back to what Petri Partanen had said earlier, that a good student/teacher relationship is for the student to define. There seems to be strong correlation between a perceived good relationship with the teacher, and the teacher's ability to explain and protect a good working environment, remembering that environments can enhance but also distract learning.

Director Anantha K. Duraiappah from the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development in India joined the conference to remind the learning leaders of the true purpose of education: Flourishing. Bringing us full circle in understanding that flourishing, which Petri Partanen called well-being, is just a better word for what



Director Anantha K. Duraiappah

we want to achieve in schools. Flourishing appears through learning, where the goal is to learn competences, involving both subject knowledge and skills. And where the human touch into the education experience can never be replaced by any virtual reality. Social sensitivity,



respect for others and diversity are factors that make the work get done, as Nicolette van Halem showed. Making the conference guests very interested in forming new connections to benefit them and their schools going forward.

The learning leaders went back with the insight that their teams and students are all part of a wide global network where relationships nurture our learning and confidence in handling challenges. Collaboration continues to be a top priority for KED going forward.

**Cecilia Aronsson**  
Network Director



Assistant Professor Nicolette van Halem



School leaders from all parts of the KED Network joined the conference.

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A podcast series brought to you from Stockholm by Kunskapsskolan Education (KED). Reflecting and connecting educators of more than 100 schools that use the KED Program for personalized learning across Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands, India, USA, and the Middle East.

Working around the globe to personalize each student's education according to their individual needs and abilities. Empowering the students to master the challenges of today and shape the world of tomorrow.