

KED

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New Habits

Cecilia Aronsson

KED Network Director

cecilia.aronsson@kunskapsskolan.com

Things suddenly turned very different without notice. The pandemic did not ask for permission. After a long time of lockdowns, keeping distance and being stuck in one place, many of us mourn our previous life without borders and boundaries. Favorite ingredients in life are missing with our beloved old habits out of reach.

Though we might be stuck with the circumstances, we are not stuck with our habits. A good way to avoid the restrictions is to do something which is not discouraged or deterred by pandemic rules. Like horses in their fields, we can

have a good day without touching the electric fence.

A new habit will help you turn the tables on the virus. And if you cannot take a plane to your KED buddies in India or England, you can read more books instead. Swedish author, mental trainer, and speaker Olof Röhlander spoke at the yearly Kunskapsskolan conference in Sweden two years ago. Since then, I subscribe to his weekly letter that hits my mailbox with wisdom and laughter first thing Monday morning. Today he described his intention to read more

books in 2021 compared to last year, when he only completed five books. His plan is to read 20 pages every day. If you do that for 365 days, you have read a total of 7300 pages. And if those books are 365 pages long on average, it becomes a total of 20 books completed in a year.

Reading is still open to us. And with other things cancelled, there is time to read more than before. Set yourself a reading goal today and realize how a few pages every day accumulate to great insight. That way, you also win something back from the plague.

The Key to Successful Distance Learning

Koos Woltjes

Communication Manager,
Kunskapsskolan Nederland

Students falling behind. Growing inequality. The corona virus is not only a threat to global health, but also to global education. The first Dutch studies into education during the lockdown of schools show that the motivation to actively participate in online lessons, to learn diligently and to stay on task has decreased. Moreover, having a good home workplace makes a significant difference in learning, which has hit pupils and students who were already vulnerable and demanded extra attention. A survey with 8000 teachers in primary, secondary, and special education, completed by the General Education Association (AOB) in the Netherlands, shows that teachers fail to deliver their usual quality of education due to Covid-19.

But does this image apply across the entire spectrum of schools? The answer to that is no. There are schools where learning and development have continued largely uninterrupted during the pandemic. Where there were hardly any extra backlogs, no students were left behind and the teachers remained afloat. At the Dutch Kunskapsskolan Partner School Dr. Nassau College in Norg, education during the lockdown has continued successfully.

Personalized and prepared

The Head of School, Richard Gerding, is not the man to take credit for this success. According to him, personalized education was an excellent starting point for switching to distance learning within a few days when the lockdown went into effect. The digital infrastructure was helpful, but the higher motivation and ownership of his students



“It is a pitfall to think that distance education is about the digital infrastructure.”



Richard Gerding
Head of School,
Dr. Nassau College Norg

made the difference. These abilities are a direct result of the intensive personal coaching of the students and that each student can learn at his/her own level and pace. As a result, the school was prepared for distance learning even before the first lockdown came into effect:

“It is a pitfall to think that distance education is about the digital infrastructure. Of course, good technology will make the transition easier. But the biggest success factor is in the mutual communication. Listening to each other and teamwork. Between students, parents and a team of professional and passionate teachers and supporting professionals,” says Richard Gerding and continues:

“Within personalized education, students and teachers naturally have a stronger bond. In addition, there is more >>

The Key to Successful Distance Learning, cont.

>> contact with parents. But still, we immediately realized that communication had to be accelerated. To take people along, to make them aware of what was possible. And to identify the students who did not have a stable learning situation at home, so that we could offer them a place at school during the lockdown. Our school has never been fully closed. Every day, some students take part in the joint online education from here. Therefore, we can say that none of our students has been left out.”



Adjustments

Yet, Marijn Scheper, teacher at Dr. Nassau College, experiences the lockdown as challenging:

“Honestly, it should not have been a month longer. Just like students, teachers must deal with a home situation. And it was not always easy to combine that with our active role. Although I must say that our four roles within personalized education – subject teacher, personal coach, general teacher, and team member – came in handy here. Thanks to the good organization, our daily team meetings continued as usual. Just like the weekly teacher meeting to discuss how students are doing in the various subjects. In this way, we kept a good

view of development and realized when we had to bring students to school to give them a quieter workplace.”

“The students handled this situation very well. Some of them worked better than ever.”

During lockdown, the lessons would be a bit shorter and a little less interactive. The team decided to increase the amount of weekly personal coaching and make the scope of the conversation more personal, in addition to the focus on learning goals. The main concern was to keep track of how students were doing and prevent students from being left out.

“For this reason, we have intensified the absence registration in collaboration with the students themselves. If a student was late, we quickly received text messages from other students who knew why he or she was not there for a while. We let the workshop time go on as usual, including the guidance by teachers. The students handled this situation very well. Some of them worked better than ever,” says Marijn.

Backlogs

It goes without saying that some students cope better than others with distance learning. But the team at Dr. Nassau College conclude that students who are behind now already had those challenges before the lockdown. And while certain learning is more difficult remotely, it is easier to come up with solutions if you see the obstacles. Even the gym classes at Dr. Nassau continued during the lockdown. Pupils then went >>



The Key to Successful Distance Learning, cont.



“Communication from the school to parents and students has been excellent at all levels, including individual coaching and additional one-on-one conversations when needed.”

>> into the garden to do exercise, sometimes accompanied by their parents. Marijn also finds this period inspiring:

“This situation made me reconsider education – how to make it more efficient, with an even better connection with our students. I have also noticed that I must take care of myself. In all my enthusiasm, I threw myself into work. We will have to pay close attention to that next time. At the same time, this period has

“This situation made me reconsider education – how to make it more efficient, with an even better connection with our students. I have also noticed that I must take care of myself.”

once again proven that education is human work. Online education alone is not an option. You miss certain things and emotions on the screen and as teachers we were sometimes overwhelmed with e-mails. But I estimate that our learning activity really continued for 90-95% during the lockdown. So, when it happens, we know that we can create an environment that does not fundamentally interrupt our students’ education,” Marijn says.

Parents

The latter has also been noticed by parents. Frank and Frederique both have children at Dr. Nassau College in Norg. They are impressed with the school’s rapid switch from physical to online education.

“Communication from the school to parents and students has been excellent at all levels, including individual coaching and additional one-on-one conversations when needed. Even under these challenging circumstances, I have seen some students taking

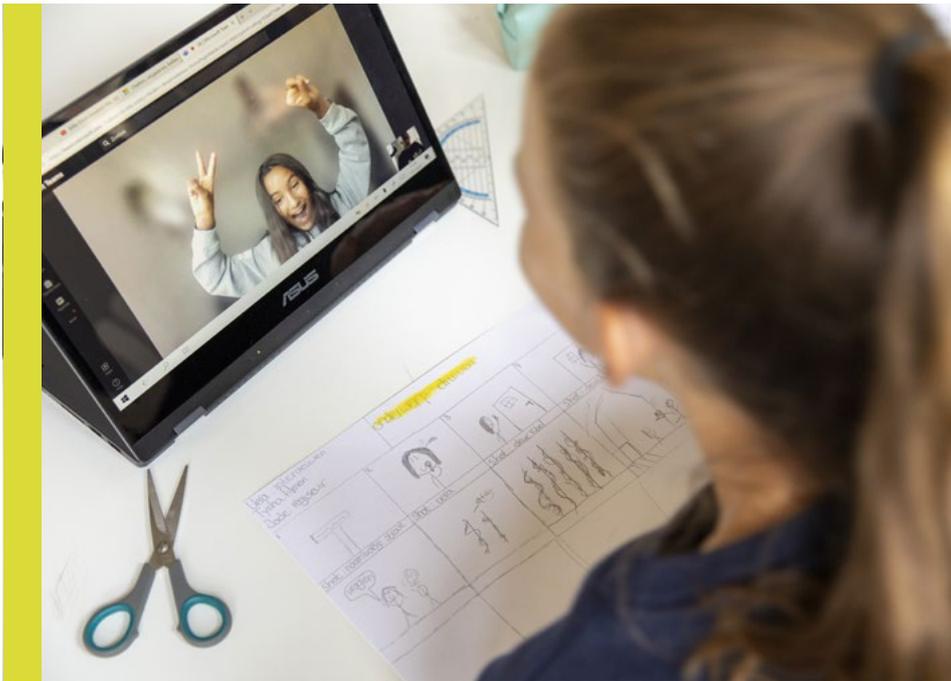
extra steps supported by the school team. I do think, however, it is a pity that during this period the international contacts with the Swedish schools have been put on the back burner for a while,” says Frank.

Frederique agrees that Dr. Nassau College more than lived up to expectations:

“Although I have not been too worried. Because I know that the school is up to scratch in terms of digitization, and that the students are more motivated and independent thanks to the personalized approach. As parents, we were included in the process, and the school had literally switched completely to the new situation within a few days, with a clear structure and timing, and without violating the base.”

The parents find that distance learning is more tiring for the students. Sometimes the teacher’s presentation was not entirely visible on the computer screen, but they are full of admiration for the teachers and their hard work. >>

The Key to Successful Distance Learning, cont.



>> Students

And what does the student have to say about working on the computer with the camera on?

“At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher asked how we were doing, made a joke maybe, and it was fun. Then we got to work. The teacher explained something, and we were given assignments to complete independently. We

“It becomes difficult when a teacher just checks attendance and then tells us to work independently on our weekly task.”

were busy just like in a regular lesson. We always got five assignments, three to do in class and two to hand in as homework. At the beginning of the next lesson, we got feedback on it,” says Belle.

Tessa likes when the teacher uses a PowerPoint presentation, because the content sticks better when she can listen and watch at the same time.

“It becomes difficult when a teacher just checks attendance and then tells us to work independently on our weekly task. And it is boring when the teacher is speaking throughout the lesson. So, there were some unpleasant lessons as well,” Tessa says.

Carmen, Astrid, Femke and Ruben thought distance learning was completely ‘chill’, especially during the first

weeks. But it got unexciting over time, not seeing friends. Carmen noticed that she was more distracted at home. Collaboration also turned out to be trickier online. And it was clearly noticeable, they say with a laughter, which teachers felt more at home in the online world and who did not.

Moving on

School leader Richard Gerding and his team found that the lockdown has had a greater effect on a social level than initially thought.

“I see a bit more unrest, some students behave differently, some parents react differently and there are teachers who suddenly handle things differently,” says Richard.

He talked about this with fellow school leaders who noticed the same thing. A lockdown disrupts the stable social environment of students, as they cannot see friends or family or do nice things for a while. It is the same with parents and teachers. This article was written after the first lockdown. The Netherlands has now entered a second lockdown of schools.

“I have discussed this with my team and have agreed that we must therefore very consciously give extra attention to socialization and personal development going forward.”

The great thing is that a KED school can build on the close relationship established between teachers/coaches and students before the lockdown. Richard encourages everyone in the KED Network to keep asking students about their experience of distance learning. And as Marijn Scheper has said, we must pay close attention to teachers’ well-being and workload. ■



New Platform for KED in the UK

John Baumber
Educational Director, UK

Tough though the times are now, it is important to remember a quote from Sun Tzu, the 6th Century BC Chinese military strategist and philosopher:

“In the midst of chaos, there is always opportunity.”

And so, it is now. A time to rethink what we thought was great about how we lead our schools and the impact we have on teaching and learning. It is so easy to just keep on doing things in the way we always have, even though the world around us changes. How will leaving the European Community and the pandemic alter things? Chaos or opportunity?

Partly in preparation, in July, we completed the partnership between Kunskapsskolan with University of Bolton where John Baumber along

“In the midst of chaos, there is always opportunity.”

with Professor David Hopkins have established the International Centre for Educational Enhancement (ICEE). This is the new home for KED Network schools in the UK. A plan to secure our previous partnership, but also enhance our work to face these new challenges.

The foci of the Centre are educational leadership and school improvement. We are committed to bridging the gap be-

tween policy and research on one hand and school practice. In other words, how do we make sure that any change we make delivers better outcomes? And what should be those outcomes? Have we to reorientate our mission? What has the pandemic, increased populism and the perceived threats to our democracies told us about our work in school? When we say “empowering every student to master the challenges of today and shape the world of tomorrow” – how will we do that?

Change is easy; improvement is harder. So, at the heart of the Centre is a program for schools called ‘Unleashing Greatness’ that will help build their capacity to secure real improvement; but one that is driven by our moral purpose and is informed by personalization, social mobility, equity, and globalization. >>

New Platform for KED in the UK, cont.

He challenged us to see this time as 'Mission Possible'.

>> The Centre was formally launched with a virtual inaugural lecture from Pasi Sahlberg, the renowned Finnish educator, now the Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. He challenged us to see this time as 'Mission Possible'. He drew on a range of evidence to show that despite significant investment in education around the world, the quality of outcomes has deteriorated. Before the pandemic things were not right. So, getting back to where we were is not what is needed. We know so much from research nowadays into how young people learn, and what strategies lead to success. So, why has so little changed in teacher practice, especially as we know that the quality of our education system cannot exceed the quality of teaching in our schools?

Pulling together the transformation that Kunskapsskolan has brought from its 20 years of practice with some of the Centre's best international minds in education and school improvement and then feeding that back into our schools, is an exciting prospect. As part of this we are taking 16 schools through accreditation to be research informed laboratory schools. Together they will develop expert practice that they can showcase and share. They will conduct action-based research



into their own work and help build up a library of case studies. In so doing we can inform the system of better ways to develop schools and the profession.

We are also developing signature master's programs in International Educational Leadership and Inclusive Practice and David Hopkins already leads one of the world's most successful and ground-breaking doctorate programs. We need school leaders who know how to manage change built on a core moral purpose.

In the inaugural lecture, Pasi Sahlberg highlighted the things we should all be thinking about as we move back. You will see that Kunskapsskolan stands in a strong position with some of these already, as you can see in the picture 'Will the change come?'

But perhaps we might challenge ourselves about the last two areas of change highlighted in this picture. We have done a lot of thinking about 21st Century Skills, but if the last year has taught us anything, it must be the importance of relationships and the need for respect, kindness, gratitude, and trust as well as a more comprehensive understanding of global citizenship and responsibility. How do we create that dimension in our school cultures? And finally, more than anything else, this pandemic shows the inequity in our systems. How are we ensuring all young people, whatever their circumstances, can be successful?

It is early days but the University of Bolton and Kunskapsskolan are continuing to explore ways of working together on this mission. In the meantime, if anyone wants to share ideas and options further, we would love to hear from you. ■

- **Unleashing Greatness: Hopkins D. 2020**
https://www.acef.org.au/ACEF/ACEFWEB/Publications/AEL/2020/3/Lead_Article_1.aspx
- **Getting to the Heart of the System: Hopkins D. & Baumber J. 2020**
<https://educationstudies.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BESA-Journal-EF-10-2-1-hopkins.pdf>
- **Does the pandemic help us make education more equitable? Sahlberg P. 2020**
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10671-020-09284-4>

Kunskapsskolan Alumni on Top



This year, Kunskapsskolan has operated schools for 20 years. To mark the milestone, educational researchers have investigated our work in KED schools. Dany Kessel and Elisabet Olme, both Ph. D. in Economics, have mapped all students that have graduated from Kunskapsskolan in Sweden since the first ones started, comparing them to students from other schools. The study shows the characteristics of students in Kunskapsskolan, their performance in school relative to other students and what happened next. This could influence our expectations of students in KED schools all over the world and suggest what future year groups can accomplish.

The new report is based on information from Statistics Sweden about the students that finished secondary and upper secondary KED schools in Sweden between 2003 and 2018.

The analysis shows that Kunskapsskolan secondary schools, on average, have students from families with higher socioeconomic background than comparable

schools in the same municipality. However, the analysis also shows that Kunskapsskolan's students with lower socioeconomic background perform better than students of similar backgrounds that attend other schools.

Students that have attended Kunskapsskolan have received higher grades than comparable students. Of all students that have graduated from KED schools, boys from less educated, immigrant families are the ones that

...Kunskapsskolan's students with lower socioeconomic background perform better than students of similar backgrounds that attend other schools.

have performed best relative to their socioeconomic benchmark. This is the case for both secondary and upper secondary KED school graduates.

This indicates that the approach of the KED Program benefits students regardless of their background and that a KED school is a valuable alternative for students that are less advantaged upon joining the school.

On average, parents of students in KED schools are more educated and better off than the average parents of students the same age in Sweden. However, in upper secondary KED schools about 50 percent of students are immigrants to Sweden, compared to 30 percent on average for upper secondary students in Sweden. Immigrant background is traditionally documented to be a disadvantage for students in Swedish schools. >>

Kunskapsskolan Alumni on Top, cont.

>> Students that finish a secondary KED school are more prone to choose an academic program in upper secondary school compared to students from other secondary school backgrounds. They also receive higher grades in upper secondary school. From the report, you can conclude that slightly more students than average continue to higher education, which can partly be explained by the fact that they have higher grades.

For all parts of the study, the difference between students from Kunskapsskolan and other schools are most striking when you look at boys specifically, and for students from less privileged backgrounds.

“Many families have trusted us to educate their children and we hope to benefit even more students going forward – with different backgrounds, abilities and goals,”

says **Cecilia Carnefeldt**,
CEO of Kunskapsskolan
Education.



Comment by researcher Dany Kessel Ph.D.

Kunskapsskolan started secondary and upper secondary schools with the vision to provide education tailored to each student's individual needs, goals, and motivation. For this purpose, a complete new pedagogical model was designed – the KED Program. The study cannot establish that Kunskapsskolan and the KED Program is the reason for the superior outcome in

grades and academic progress for students that have been educated there. There might be other differences between the students that attend KED schools and other schools that account for the advantages seen in this report, other than what happens at the school. At least, you can say that going to Kunskapsskolan signifies a student that is developing in the right direction.

Based on the report 'Vilka har gått på Kunskapsskolan och hur gick det för dem' by Dany Kessel and Elisabet Olme for Kunskapsskolan Sweden, summarized and translated by Cecilia Aronsson. All sources for information in this text can be found in the original report.

What I Like About My School



She is passionate about sciences, excited by the various concepts in Biology and Chemistry and thankful for her one-on-one personal coaching sessions.

“I can always turn to my study coach if I have problems with something,” says Shadija, who is attending the Natural Science program at upper secondary KED school Kunskapsgymnasiet Liljeholmen.

Shadija let her interests guide her when planning for upper secondary school. Since she likes math and science very much, she decided to study the Natural science Program, specializing in life sciences.

When she arrived at the KED upper secondary school in Liljeholmen, she was immediately struck by the pleasant atmosphere.

“That is what I love most about this place. Everyone knows each other, students as well as teachers, which is something I hoped would happen in upper secondary. People here were friendly from the start and the teachers made us feel welcome,” says Shadija.

What do you think about the education you get?

It is very good, mainly because you have such good contact with the teachers. They teach in different ways, but all of them want you to reach your best

potential and together you plan in detail how to reach your goals in each subject. We receive a lot of feedback from the teachers, which is exactly what I need to learn in the best way.

In upper secondary KED schools in Sweden, all students are linked to a teacher who acts as their personal study coach and meets the student individually every week. During these sessions, students are supported in planning their schoolwork to reach their goals.

What do you think about study coaching?

It feels very good to have my own study coach. During our talks, I can express my opinions and ask questions about the school and my courses. It is important for me to have this opportunity and be able to see my study coach if I have difficulty with something. I know that my coach is going to take me seriously and try to help me.

You also have something called study forum. How does it work?

Study forum is a session where you choose any subject that you want to work with. For example, if you feel that you are falling behind in math, you work on math with your math teacher during study forum. Then you can ask questions, be helped, or just continue working. Usually, I make sure to utilize study forum so that I do not have to bring

“People here were friendly from the start and the teachers made us feel welcome.”

work home. I complete everything at school and do not have to worry about any homework. But of course, it also depends on how much work you have.

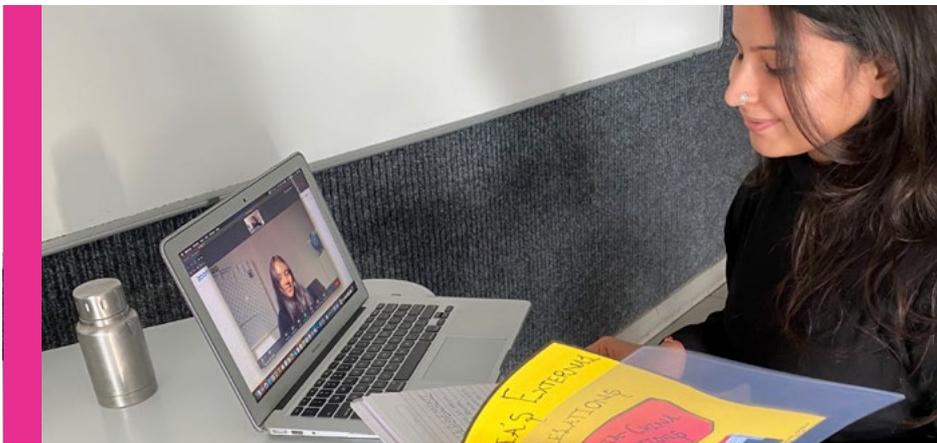
What is the best thing about your school?

I would say it is the people, my classmates as well as my teachers. You always feel welcome and secure here. This creates a good atmosphere during lessons. I like the breaks too, thanks to the many cozy rooms and places in school to study or hang out with friends.

What do you dream about?

I am undecided about the future, but right now the only thing I consider is to become a doctor. It would be a combination of most things I want to do, like working with people and apply natural sciences. But of course, it also depends on what kind of doctor you are. Personally, I am thinking of intensive care or aviation medicine. ■

Dynamically Global in Constricted Times – the Virtual Exchange Program



“Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change.”

The inherent determination of this statement by English novelist Thomas Hardy is the underlying spirit that the prodigious KED Network works with. The year 2020 brought a tumultuous pattern for the globalized population, across borders and locations. But we, at Kunskapsskolan have been committed to turn this turbulence into a smooth sailing. Teachers and students have worked tirelessly to adapt to the developments in the arena of online education. Sustaining its methods, schools in the KED Network have worked in an assiduous manner to avoid any compromise on its system of education and planning.

Standing true to its tag of an international school, aiming at global collaboration and bridging cultures, the organization

has maintained exchange programs between its schools in different locations. Before physical movement acquired a restrictive characteristic in this heightened era of transport and communication, Kunskapsskolan engaged in having its students and teachers travel to observe, survey, learn and imbibe the best practices of varied environments.

With a stringent focus on the KED educational philosophy of developing responsible and aware citizens, who take ownership of their process of learning, we are prepared to strengthen this exchange. Taking the challenges of virtual schooling in our stride, our goal is to develop a program that continues to extend global collaboration. This project of virtual exchange comes with an additional focus of

making virtual schooling a more interactive experience. The aim is to internalize the nuances of an exchange in our regular time plan and carry on with proficiency. This program is sure to break the monotony that appears in sessions at certain times. As Ms Cecilia Aronsson, KED Network Director, rightly expresses: “a new face in a similar setting”, we are aiming at a similar practice to help facilitate students’ enthusiasm towards learning. While keeping the coherence of our academic planning, lesson planning and delivery of content intact, we are going to let teachers enter each other’s classrooms to deliver guest sessions, engaging with students in different locations.

In alignment with the KED core values, planning for sessions will be based on providing a personalized experience for students. Keeping strengths and challenges in mind, our team will cater to lesson planning to suit the uniqueness of students. For teachers too, this will be an experience that will add value to their academic fervor.

Our virtual exchange project is concomitant of KED’s mission of developing and operating outstanding schools and providing personalized education, and our vision of empowering students to master the challenges of today and shape the world of tomorrow. ■

Shweta Rana

Base Group Teacher 10A and Social Science Facilitator, Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon

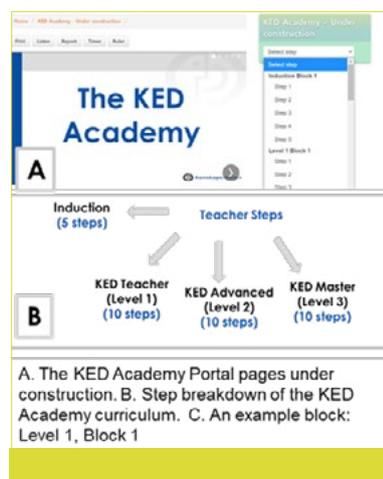
KED Academy

– A Structured Approach to Teacher Development

Pritpal Chandan
Director of Curriculum
Development, KED

KED teachers have four distinct roles: subject teacher, personal coach, team member, and a general teacher of the learning process. But, central to the work of a KED teacher is to develop students who are self-regulated learners. These are students who understand themselves as learners and personalize the learning for themselves in different subjects. Although a privilege, this can indeed be a daunting task. Not only for teachers who are new to the KED Program but also those who are trained KED teachers and aim to sustain their KED practice. The KED Teacher Program offers teachers a clear path as they develop from a KED teacher, Advanced KED teacher and eventually a Master/Senior KED teacher. In this article, we present a learning resource (still under construction) for KED teachers, which will structure and scaffold this path and therefore complement the Teacher Program.

Research into teacher development programs indicates that collaborative, reflective and sustained programs which include an element of inquiry-driven learning are the most effective in raising student achievement. Taking this into account, the construction of a new international 'KED Academy' has been initiated. In time, this will become an online resource functioning as a 'Learning Portal' for our teachers in India, Saudi Arabia, and the UK. To draw a parallel with the students' Learning Portal we have designed a learning journey for teachers in the form of a 'Steps'



A. The KED Academy Portal pages under construction. B. Step breakdown of the KED Academy curriculum. C. An example block: Level 1, Block 1

Step	Title	Skill Strand	Goal
1	Personalised Learning	Knowledge	Define and describe Personalised Learning
		Implementation	Plan for Blended Teaching
		Reflective Practice	Investigate fundamental concepts and common misconceptions
2	Goal Setting	Knowledge	Understand CCR goal setting.
		Reflective Practice	Obtain evidence to measure the impact of Goal Setting
		Implementation	Coach to facilitate CCR goal-setting
3	Coaching	Knowledge	Understand effective coaching and base group sessions.
		Reflective Practice	Self-assess your practice
		Implementation	Use learning to improve coaching and base group sessions.
4	Learning Portal	Reflective Practice	Reflect on previous use of E-Learning tools
		Knowledge	Develop understanding of Steps and Themes
		Implementation	Use the Learning Portal to plan lessons, effectively.
5	Block Presentation		Present key learning to school leadership

curriculum (image B). This is a journey of 35 steps (7 blocks), grounded in practice and not just theory. As teachers move through these steps, they will develop their understanding of Personalized Learning, Goal Setting, Coaching, The Learning Portal, Teaching and Learning Sessions, Learning Strategies, Instructional Practices and Assessment Strategies. In addition to enhancing teacher pedagogical knowledge, the KED Academy will aim to develop KED teachers as reflective practitioners who carry out research in their classrooms.

Central to the work of a KED teacher is to develop students who are selfregulated learners.

With regards to implementation, we see this as a flexible resource. Teachers could move through these steps as individuals or by collaborating with a group of peers. In either case, we see the role of KED teacher coaches, as a crucial one. On completion of a step, teachers will get an opportunity to showcase and discuss their learning with their KED coach, like a 'step presentation'. On completion, we hope that this version of the KED Academy will not only be used in the countries mentioned above but also help in the development of the KED Academies already in place for our teachers in Sweden and the Netherlands. As its construction gains full momentum in 2021, it will be key that the KED Academy is rooted deeply in research, written in collaboration with experienced KED teachers and has the KED Program at its core.