



# KED

Newsletter Issue 4\_18

September 10, 2018

# The Best of All Worlds

by Cecilia Aronsson  
KED Network Director

Yesterday, my work team traveled 300 years into the future. Our spaceship landed on Saturn in the middle of an ice storm. The entire journey took 12 minutes to complete at Stockholm-based Enterspace VR, in a pod the size of a small Kunskapsskolan workroom. Headsets and computers were provided to turn us into astronauts immersing ourselves in the secrets of Saturn.

Physically drawn into the story, new knowledge poured into our astounded brains. It would have been the perfect start of Big Bang or any other KED school theme course.

With time, less expensive VR can effectively help teachers excite students to want to learn.

Together as a Network, we can explore and select the best applications of new technology for learning. At the conference that gathered more than 1,000 teachers from Swedish KED schools in

August one of the presenters showed how good storytelling and authentic representation open our senses and willingness to learn. VR could exponentially increase this catalytic effect. For now, let the good stories of this Newsletter spark your motivation to learn.

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**Kunskapsskolan**  
EDUCATION



# Education in a Rapidly Changing World

by Cecilia Ingvarsdotter

Digital communicator, Kunskapsskolan Sweden

KED schools around the world are now setting goals for the new school year 2018/19. In Sweden, the teachers and staff at all 36 KED schools gathered in the city of Norrköping for a two-day kick-off conference.

**Ottilia Svensson**, who has been a student both at secondary and upper secondary KED schools, started the conference by singing the famous Swedish song “Jag vill ha en egen måne”, written by our greatly missed chief architect **Kenneth Gärdestad** who recently passed away.

The theme of the conference was the future of education and society. We enjoyed perspectives on Artificial Intel-

ligence, AI, and its potential impact on learning. **Anders Hansen**, senior physician and medical specialist in psychiatry, then presented the latest research on brain development that shows the significant positive correlation between physical exercise and a healthy brain. In fact, the brain is the human organ that is affected the most by physical exercise. How do we take this into account with the increasing use of digital media that makes us motionless in front of our screens?

Teacher and brain specialist **Anna Tebelius Bodin** offered some advice when it comes to increasing students' well-being and willingness to learn:

A productive learning situation is characterized by the student's sense of autonomy, yet belonging to a group, and the sense of mastery and purpose of what is being taught. Under these conditions, students are likely enjoying being productive.

Usually, small changes of habits can make a large difference in life – both in school and afterwards, as the mental coach **Olof Röhländer** instructed us. The act of setting a goal, taking control of it and completing it is a true generator of both results and happiness, according to the above experts.

# Creating a School for All Kinds of Dreamers



by Antonio Vance

Executive Director, KED Inspired Great Oaks Charter School, NYC

The instructional model in the U.S. must change. At Great Oaks Charter School in New York City, we are dedicated to taking a new and effective approach to teaching and learning, inspired by the ideals and approaches to individualized and student-centered learning in the KED Program.

Allowing American students to make choices about their own learning is as foreign as trying to say Kunskapsskolan three times fast. Getting teachers to trust in students and allow them to make decisions about their own learning is far from the norm and would strike fear in the hearts of most educators and school leaders. After all, isn't it the teachers who are the content experts and holders of all things sacred in their content areas and students don't know what is best for them and their learning. We know this is not true. It is a heavy lift to get educators to think differently about their students and learning, but our students are the reason we exist.

To begin our journey, we established a course called Dream Chasers. During Dream Chasers, students set goals with

their personal coach on Mondays, check in with their coach on Wednesdays to discuss their progress and reflect on the week every Friday. This constant cycle of goal setting, progress monitoring and reflecting is needed to keep students' goals at the forefront of their thoughts. Students track their goals, tasks and progress in their logbooks. Our students struggled at first to keep up with their logbooks and often lost them throughout the school year. However, after a short time and tough love from their coaches, students realized the value of their logbooks, and they were lost fewer times throughout the year.

In another job at the traditional system of schooling, our students can select their own classes each Wednesday of the week. Workshop Wednesdays are

reserved for students to choose from a menu of courses, all geared toward giving students additional experiences and an opportunity to explore any content or topic in deeper detail. For most of our students this was the first time they could make any choice about their learning. Over time students were able to make the connection to the choices they were making and how those choices laid out a pathway toward reaching their goals. >>



## Creating a School for All Kinds of Dreamers, cont.

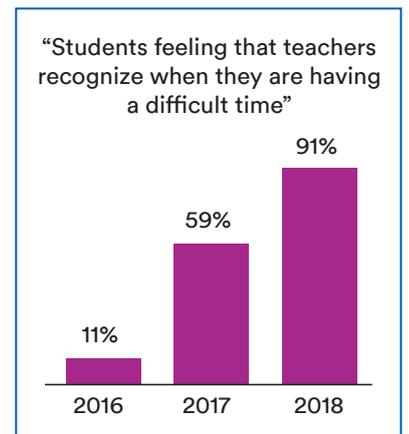
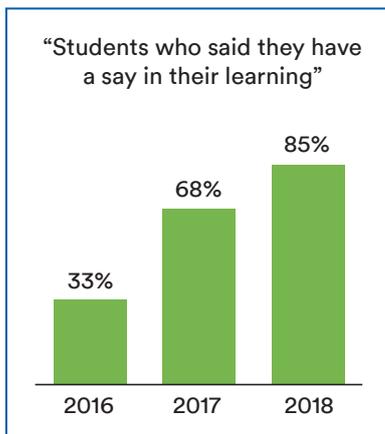
Teachers and coaches began to see the power of goal setting and student choice. In less than a year, we began to see tremendous growth in our students' English and Math assessments. The number of students in our lowest level reader decreased at a faster rate than it had in previous years. Students' growth on national exams showed marked improvement year over year.

However, the best results came from surveys to our teachers, parents and students. At the end of the 2018 school year, 85% of students said they have a say in their learning. This is up from 33% in 2016 and 68% in 2017. Along with their feeling of empowerment over their learning, students also demonstrated strong academic gains. We were most impressed with 91% of students feeling that teachers recognize when they are having a difficult time. This is up from only 11% in 2016 and 59% in 2017. A tremendous and encouraging change. Again, while we are seeing the positive results of our hard work, our journey is still ongoing.



Having the opportunity to create a goal and a pathway to reach that goal may seem logical and perhaps obvious to most. However, in public schools throughout America, students are given a path and if they stay on the predetermined path, they are likely to be successful; if they deviate, the results could be negative. Unfortunately, we all know that is not what adulthood is about. Our future generation must be

able to create their own paths and go in directions never imagined. With inspiration from KED, we are on a journey to create a school that allows each student to dream about their future, set goals, and work with a coach to determine what steps to take next.



# Applying the Skills that we Teach

by Fredrik Lindgren  
CEO, Kunskapsskolan Sweden



At Kunskapsskolan, we teach subjects but also give our students Future Skills. One of them is the skill to act globally. This is about being able to see things from different perspectives, being open to other cultures and understanding the connection between actions and consequences – locally and globally.

In that spirit, my family and I packed our bags and “moved” to Bengaluru in the south of India for a few weeks this summer. All thanks to the growing international KED Network. The school year in Stockholm had just ended, but at Kunskapsskolan Bengaluru it had just started.



Kiki Jerneheim, experienced Principal from Kunskapsskolan Sweden, is heading the school in Bengaluru, and her team were fantastic in helping us with all the arrangements.

So, on an early Monday morning in June, I suddenly found

myself waiting for the Kunskapsskolan school bus together with my twelve-year-old daughter and her thirteen-year-old cousin outside our new “home” in Bengaluru. The girls had their nice blue and beige school shirts on. This already felt a bit unusual, since we do not have school uniforms in Sweden.

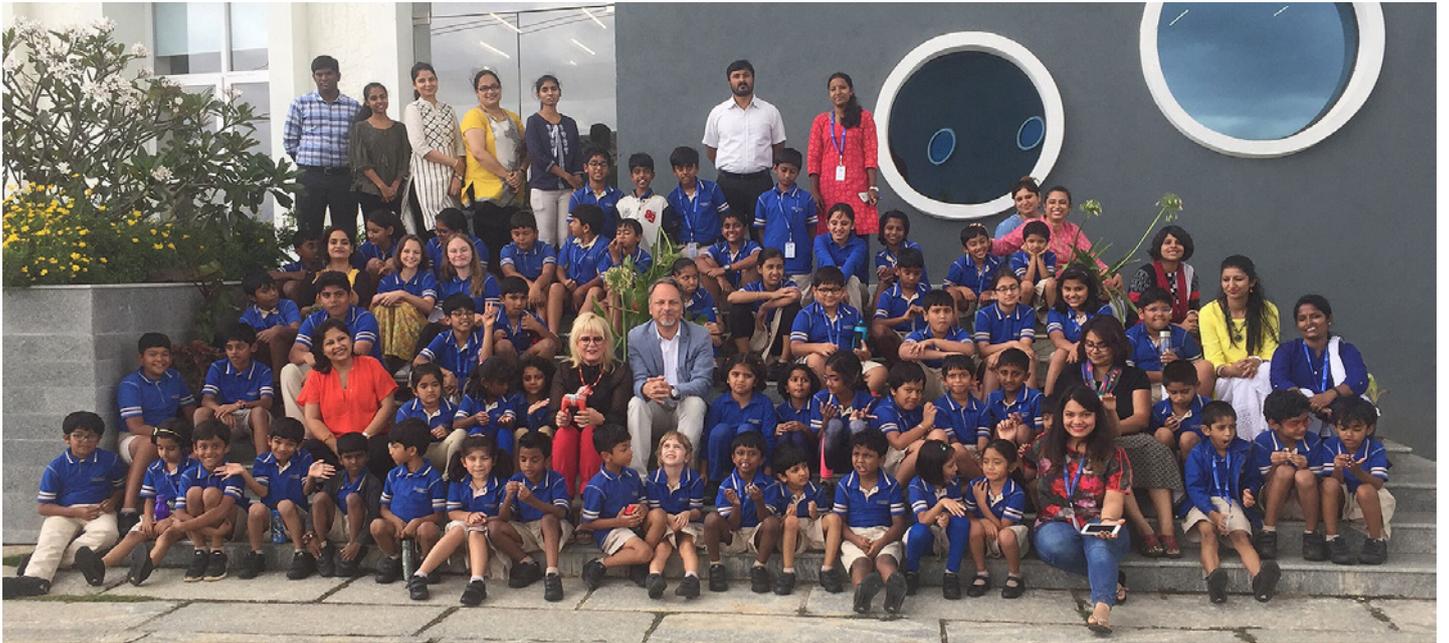
Riding a school bus was another new experience – and to do so in the busy Bengaluru traffic made it even more exciting.

Of course, we were a bit nervous this first morning. But as we drove into the school I heard the girls enthusiastically remarking: “the school looks so great – so modern”.

Their positive attitude remained. Already after the first day, they were full of impressions and fascinated by the school, teachers and level of knowledge.

For the coming two weeks, they joined Year Group 7. They were coached and challenged in familiar subjects such as Math, French and Science, but also in new subjects such as Hindi, Yoga and Indian dance. >>





## Applying the Skills that we Teach, cont.

They tried new things like binary coding, cricket and kabaddi (a popular team sport in India reminding me of playing tag), prepared papers in sustainable development and many other things. They enjoyed the delicious vegetarian, not too spicy Indian school lunch, and became comfortable in speaking English all day long. The new friendships grew stronger, and after two weeks the girls did not want to leave, which they expressed in their farewell speech to the staff and students, ending with a treat of Swedish candy. Some Indian students will never forget the taste of salty licorice.

What did I do during my school days? Well, one of the meeting rooms became my new office. From there I could interact with my colleagues back home via email, telephone and hangout. Another one of our Future Skills is to live digitally. I practiced this in Bangalore with a remote robot that let me move around

and participate in the staff and Principal meetings at the head office in Stockholm. Amazing, what opportunities new technology brings.

I also had the opportunity to get to know some of the teachers on the Kunskapsskolan Bengaluru team. It was inspiring to sense their energy and enthusiasm in bringing the KED Program to India and experience the high level of professionalism and ambition. It was a good reminder of the similarities we share in educating children in different parts of the world, and the strength of our shared pedagogical idea. I felt the same positive spirit when I visited Kunskaps-

skolan Gurgaon and Kunskapsskolan International in Delhi on our way back to Sweden. There is so much to gain from cooperation and sharing of knowledge and experiences in the KED Network.

Three weeks later we returned to Sweden full of impressions, insights, memories and friendships. The girls want to go back next year, and who knows. The world is

getting smaller and we should act accordingly, meaning acting globally.





# Global Learning at Its Best

by **Geetanjali Agarwal**

Base Group Teacher 9A, Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon

Kunskapsskolan gave me a foundation for personal development where empowerment, a sense of responsibility and confidence in my own ability were at their best during the KED Teacher Exchange Program.

I got an incredible opportunity to spend one week at Kunskapsskolan Nacka. Throughout my stay, I was surprised to see that schools in two completely different locations are following the same pattern and approach to education. All aspects of our schools are designed to provide personalized education that meets the needs of each student and is built around the core KED Values.

My project was based on a comparative study of the defining aspects of

the KED Program. I found that cultural, regional and physical differences are not a hindrance if the vision and mission are clear.

“How was the trip to Sweden?” cannot be answered briefly. You need to live it to understand it. The beauty of our exchange program is to live with the host’s family, which helps you to learn a lot about the culture, place, people, and way of doing their daily chores.

Serene nature, green landscape, birds chirping, long walks, discussions and informal conversations over fika was a usual routine that I looked forward to. I had an opportunity to meet my host Sebastian’s family for a barbeque specially arranged for me on a wonderful evening. I am deeply grateful.

After completing our school days, we visited different places, such as Stockholm Old Town Gamla Stan, Ostermalm, the King’s Garden and Danvikstull. Stockholm is a great place to travel by boat, bus, train and car to get around the city’s archipelago. My trip finally culminated with a surprise brunch with school colleagues before leaving for the airport. Every day brought pleasant amazement which will always be beautiful memories.

Experiences and learning during my exchange in Sweden have been highly motivating and enriched me professionally, as well as personally. I can feel the true and positive impact of global learning by exploring the interconnections between people and places around the KED Network.



# Norrköping Meets North Birmingham

by Thilda, Leah, Alicia, William in Year 9  
and their teacher Cecilia Lundholm Pålsson  
Kunskapsskolan Norrköping, Sweden

The long-established Swedish KED school Kunskapsskolan Norrköping has formed an exchange link with KED Inspired British North Birmingham Academy. The link is going to involve exchanges between the two schools related to teaching and learning. So far, both schools have visited each other once – mutually rewarding experiences that motivate a new round of exchanges this school year.

An early Monday morning in April, the Swedish students took off to Birmingham where they were greeted in Shuttlesworth Airport by their hosts. In the coming week, the Swedish students would stay in the homes of their buddies and be part of their daily life. Just like the British students, the Swedish students had to wear a uniform to school, meaning white shirt and black trousers or skirt. For boys, tie and jacket on top of that. A student without a complete uniform risked being sent home. Overall,

the Swedes found the British school stricter than what they were used to. Students stayed in their workrooms for the full learning session without moving around. As a result, the corridors were completely empty and without a sound. The changes of sessions took only a few minutes, when the 1,500 students of the school quickly found their new seats.

Silent on the outside, but the inside of the classroom was a lot more vibrant with plenty of decorations, paintings and posters related to the students' work. The room used for English Literature was filled with quotes and pictures of characters in a play analyzed and acted out by the class. It was creative in a way that differed from how we learn at home.

When the English students returned the visit to Norrköping a month later, they were surprised by the many open spaces and empty walls. But it was a very happy reunion. All the Swedish and



English students had stayed in touch since the first meeting in Birmingham. Now, it was time for the English students to experience a school different from their own – going to school without uniform this time, sightseeing in Stockholm and visiting the Swedes' favorite ice cream shop Smultronstället.

Something good happens to you when you open your home and show your familiar places to someone from another country. Other people's fascinated encounters add a new glow to what you used to take for granted, or even found uninteresting. This way, an exchange project provides new insights as well as appreciation of what you have. What if everybody in the world could get a buddy to visit for a while somewhere else, to share experiences with and bring one's own culture and habits in perspective. Imagine how this would change the world!

# An Update from Kunskapsskolan Nederland

by Willemien Noordhof  
Educational Director, Kunskapsskolan Nederland



After a good and sunny summer, schools in the Netherlands are starting the new school year. This year, there are 60 schools in the Netherlands using the KED Program for a selected number of base groups corresponding to 10,000 Dutch students in the KED Program in total.

Kunskapsskolan Nederland supports and guides schools in realizing personalized learning, driven by a shared dream and ambition to change education, to let the student be at the heart of it. Kunskapsskolan does not operate its own schools in the Netherlands but collaborates with schools that are inspired by KED. Four years ago, we started working with schools in secondary education, and now schools in primary and vocational education are joining us too.

The alignment with the KED Program is not only a change in teaching methods, but also a cultural and organizational shift in the way you work in your specific role and as a team. Kunskapsskolan Nederland offers tooling, training and support. Teachers, students, team leaders and principals all have their roles and responsibilities in the transition process.

The Dutch Learning Portal for secondary education now covers Year 1–4. At the end of this school year, some of the students using the Learning Portal and other KED tools will be taking their first final exams.

We observe that our integral approach and transformation towards personalized learning already has a real impact on the students' education. The tools of the KED Program support schools in their daily work. Besides learning structure and content, the Learning Portal gives students access to the logbook. For the 2,000 teachers currently working in the KED Program, there is a wide offer of training and performance support, as well as a KED knowledge bank called Knowhow. The Learning Portal also contains a planning tool.

Most schools in the Netherlands start using the KED Program with only a few base groups in the first year(s). In the following years, they are expected to add new base groups, as their existing students in the KED Program advance through the grades. And new schools

are added to the Dutch KED community each year. Hence, an exponential growth of the number of Dutch KED students may be expected in the upcoming years.

It takes courage and strong will to put personalized learning into practice. It is clear to see we can only realize our shared mission by working together. Together we are building an active KED community in the Netherlands to collaborate, share and learn from each other to anchor personalized education and the principles of the KED Program in Dutch schools. Every year in March, members of the KED Community Nederland get together for a day of workshops and lectures related to the KED Program. For the event in March 2019, we are going to invite colleagues from the other countries of the KED Network to join us.