



POYNTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PIONEERS

KED

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Happy Reading, Happy Reaching-out!

by Cecilia Fällgren
KED Network Director

"We aim to provide global learning from the heart of our community. Our approach to learning has the student at its heart," begins Mr J Bennett's Principal Welcome note on the website of the Elizabeth Woodville School, one of the inspired members of our KED Network.

It captures the essence of what unites all of us in the KED world – strong local anchorage but with an open eye to what is happening elsewhere, and always with the student as the guiding star. Thus, our work stays relevant, meaningful and effective.

Through our shared resources for personalized learning – the coaching sessions, Learning Portals, logbooks, workshops and themes – and through our links to each other in six countries – we are bound to be great. The links support the development of students as well as staff, as the teachers who just returned from their KED teacher exchange projects tell you about on the following pages.

There are opportunities to collaborate in every subject, for all ages. I am happy to spread the word about a new KED Buddies project in math between England and the US. In Sweden, the KED Program has become the chosen alternative also for adult education. And in India, KED speaks to the heart of the very youngest in a rapidly increasing number of schools.

Finally, I am proud to direct you to the new "Avatar" of the Kunskapsskolan.com webpage, as a dear colleague of mine in India describes it. Please check out this brand-new feature of our KED community at <http://www.kunskapsskolan.com/>.



From Tyresö to Ties and Tucked Shirts

by Lena Boda

Art Teacher, Kunskapsskolan Tyresö

"Miss! Miss!" It still takes me a while to realize it is me the students are calling. Eventually I turn around and meet three somewhat shy but smiling faces.

It is my fourth day at the Elizabeth Woodville School, and I am quite overwhelmed by all the faces, names, ties, "Sirs", "Misses", tucked shirts, forms, periods, ASK qualities – among other things. And it is just lovely. The impressions of new ways to do things, almost identical strategies, different attitudes towards similar situations – it all reveals a few hidden angles and makes the view of my profession – and of the students – a little bit broader.

I arrived at Heathrow five days ago on a Sunday afternoon. My host Michael immediately confirmed my carefully kept prejudice about the English gentleman (totally regardless he is a Chinese Canadian) as he picked me up at the airport. Forty minutes later we strolled the cobblestoned streets of Aylesbury, which is my home during these days. It is situated 30 kilometers from the school. Apart from cobblestones, and an old and somewhat scary church, there are several cozy pubs. One of these, The

Harrow, has blackboard tables, which made the perfect start of my stay; Michael sketched up the English school system in a blink, and I absorbed.

I work as an art teacher at Kunskapsskolan Tyresö in Stockholm, and I came to England with the intention of broadening my understanding of the various didactical starting points one could have in the subject. The English curriculum emphasizes technical skills more than we do in Sweden, where from an early age there is a strong focus on the idea behind – the concept. In a strongly communicative subject like art, I think it is important to reflect on this, especially considering there is a limited amount of time in which as much knowledge, self-esteem and motivation should be transmitted to the young persons in the classroom.

The Elizabeth Woodville School consists of two campuses: North and South. Both with amazing spaces for art; big, bright, rough and envy provokingly well equipped! The South campus, where I have spent most of my time, is a slightly labyrinthine school consisting of several buildings and around 600 students in smart black suits. I have had a lot of freedom to shape the week based on my research topic, which to a great deal has meant attending various art classes and sneaking around with my camera to capture the working process. Of course, there has been a lot of listening and talking to the students, many of whom I have had the opportunity to record as well. The teachers have been most patient answering my



hundreds of questions about projects, time plans, grading, and so forth.

Finally, I have been writing a lot. If there is one advice I would give to anyone doing a teacher exchange, it is to write down your thoughts the instant you are having them. Because two hours later a teacher has revealed another interesting fact, you have overheard an intriguing conversation about marking and – your previous thought is blown away.

There are a few things that have startled me, such as the minimal time for having lunch and for teachers to socialize, and many things that I am quite enthusiastic about. The weekly assembly, during which 300 students gather in the auditorium to listen to a group giving a mini lecture, was a fantastic experience. It is impressive to create an atmosphere where that many individuals between 11 and 13 years old are completely quiet, respecting the somewhat nervous group at the stage. There was a sense of community in the room, which I think is important to nurture in a school. This is one of many inspiring experiences I will bring home from my KED teacher exchange at the Elizabeth Woodville School.



With KED TEP to India

by Linda Lidzén

English Teacher, Kunskapsskolan Spånga

At the end of October, Clara Lindqvist from Kunskapsskolan Nacka and I travelled to New Delhi, India as a part of the KED Teacher Exchange Program (TEP). Clara was stationed at Kunskapsskolan International School together with her Indian colleague Ramanjit Khinda and I at KS Gurgaon with Ramneek Batra, although we did get to visit each other's schools as well.

During my visit, I got to observe coaching sessions, lessons, and development discussions, and had coaching sessions and lessons of my own. It was a very interesting and rewarding week, to say the least. I would sum up our schools as being "same, same but different". Since every country has its own curriculum that needs to be followed there will obviously be differences between our schools, but it was fantastic seeing how the core was the same nonetheless.

I found Indian pupils to be very dedicated to their studies and that they worked harder on showing off their knowledge to their teachers than the pupils in Sweden do. Although getting the notion that Indian pupils generally study more than Swedish ones, it was also nice seeing how our teenagers are much alike – for both good and bad – when it comes to classroom dynamics, friendship, interests, and goals in life.

I got to talk to many Indian colleagues during the week and it was good fun speaking the same KED language with them, even though our two countries' curricula sometimes vary a lot.

A part of the teacher exchange program is that you live in your colleague's home during your visit. For me, I not only got to learn loads about Indian culture through this; it also made me get to know the lovely Batra family. I could not have had a better stay, and I know Clara says the same about the Khindas. I am very much looking forward to Ramneek's visit to Sweden this spring. After her warm hospitality in India, it will be a pleasure to

show her the school where I work, my hometown Stockholm, and the Swedish culture.

As an extra treat to our stay, the week finished with the celebration of the Hindu festival of lights Diwali. Both the pupils and staff were dressed up in beautiful ethnic wear. We made rangoli patterns on the floor in both the school and at home. At Diwali, you also give gifts, light lots of candles and diyas (small clay oil lamps), eat lots of lovely food and sweets, and set off fireworks.

At Kunskapsskolan we talk about our pupils' personal growth. This week made me grow as a teacher. A big thank you to everyone who made my teacher exchange to India possible and to the fantastic staff at Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon for making me feel right at home at your school. My visit to India truly was an experience of a lifetime!

We recommend you to also check out Clara Lindqvist's blog about her teacher exchange at Kunskapsskolan International:

<http://sextusensjuhundrakmbort.blogg.se/>



Why I Believe in KED

by Sunitha Nambiar

Education Director / COO Kunskapsskolan India

It is a crazy day in the office and I have a smile on my face at the end of the day. My family wonders why? I think back to these last four and a half years since I joined Kunskapsskolan India in April 2012, and it has been one exhilarating roller coaster ride. We began with the vision to open one school in Gurgaon. Today we have four KED schools in India with a fifth on its way.

When I reflect on this journey, there are some events that are etched in my memory: Our first school exhibition, which was our first interaction with our prospective parents. Then, they said:

“How do you pronounce that name?”

“What does it mean?”

“Is it Swiss?”

“My kid will never be able to spell his school's name!”

To this year's event, parents walked in saying:

“We know about you and want this school for our child. Tell us the process for admissions.”

We have walked a distance and I am proud of where we are today.

Thinking back to my first visit to the KED schools in Sweden, and observing the students' confidence, their ability to be responsible for their learning and their sense of purpose, I recollect wondering if we could achieve the same in India. Our context is so

different. Our kids are used to being instructed, guided and hand-held in their learning journey. Now, when I walk into the KED schools in India, I see the same level of confidence and purpose.

It has not been a smooth ride. From getting parents to understand and accept the KED way of doing things, to the nuts and bolts of having a school building ready in time for the school start. It has been challenging. Day one at Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon was a blend of smiles and tears with the two-and-a-half to five-year-olds. Amidst boxes of tissue papers, paints, books and the Learning Portal came a revelation: Kids are the same anywhere!! They just love learning, exploring and being young. It is for us to give them the chance to be themselves.

Our second school in a small town in Punjab was not where I assumed our next footprint to be. How would we find acceptance in a place that was very conservative in its approach to education? Where would we find teachers, who could take on this responsibility? The teachers in that town were our biggest surprise. Their willingness to develop as professionals has aided our KED Inspired school, and it is thriving.

Our biggest challenge has been finding good teachers and keeping them motivated. The process of training, coaching and support to unlearn and relearn a new way of teaching, communication, class leadership and assessment continues. We have taken the first few steps. Every day will bring a new hurdle to be crossed, and goals to achieve. The presence of a strong leadership team makes them manageable and attainable.

Every time I watch a little one skip into class with a smile, hear a child talk about her goals and how proud she is of achieving them, or meet a teacher who expresses joy in her and



her student's growth, it reaffirms my belief in our values.

Kunskapsskolan India's vision is to have five schools added to the network in as many years. I look forward to that journey too.

New Work Buddies From New York

by Nick Jackson

Math Teacher, Poynton High School

"If you had to work with someone from another country for the first time, you could do something like this first before you moved to get the job," said Jamie, a Year 8 student in the UK, reflecting on the video conference he and three of his peers had just had with four students in the USA.

Following the completion of a task comparing the weather in New York, USA, with the weather in Manchester in the UK (which included writing an advertisement for the city in their own country), students got the opportunity to share their ideas with students from the other country.

One of the challenges they faced was that in the US temperature is measured in Fahrenheit, whereas in the UK Celsius is the accepted unit of measure.

"Which city was colder," they were asked, "Manchester in January 2010 (-17.6°C) or New York in February 2015 (2°F)?"

Students began scribbling calculations down frantically on whiteboards to convert between the units, before holding their answers up in front of the webcam to show to their new work buddies across the Atlantic.

"It came out so quickly when they worked it out," said Jamie, "it looked like they had done it before."

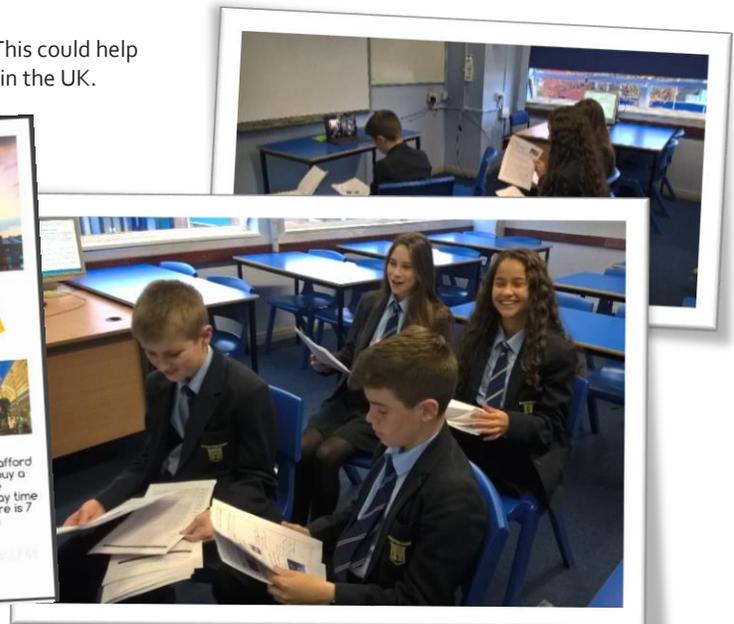
As they discovered, there was very little difference between the two temperatures – less than 1 degree ...Celsius!

Afterwards, excited, the students considered the benefits of collaborating with schools in other countries.

"I want to be an architect. This could help me in the future," said Ben in the UK.

"I'm quite interested in travelling and different cultures," pondered Alyssia, "exercises like this would build your confidence and communication with people."

Although this is only the beginning, for these eight pioneering students the world feels now a little smaller. And it is a world where anything is possible.



Preparing Students for an Uncertain Future

by Michael Thomas Duffy

President of the Great Oaks Foundation, which supports a network of four public schools in the northeastern USA

How do you prepare young people for a world that promises to be radically different than the one we currently live in? How do you develop in students the habits of mind that will serve them well in college and in workplaces that we cannot yet imagine?

These are the questions that led Great Oaks to collaborate with Kunskapsskolan on the design of our school program. The path hasn't been easy – and we are not done yet –

but here are the four big lessons that we have learned along the way.

KED is not the Learning Portal –

When we began our partnership with Kunskapsskolan three years ago, we mistakenly equated the KED Program with the online curriculum that students can access online via the Learning Portal. It took more than a year before we understood that the Learning Portal is in service of the KED Program of student empowerment. The education sector is awash in many powerful online curricula –

they are a means to an end, not an end in and of themselves.

Goal setting is critical – It was one of the meetings that I had with the late Birgitta Ericson, one of Kunskapsskolan's great pedagogical leaders, that helped me to appreciate how critical student goal setting is to the KED approach. It is a deceptively simple, but powerful idea: kids learn when they are driving towards a result that they have chosen, not to one that is imposed on them by a teacher. At Great Oaks, this year goal setting is fittingly called "Dream Chasing".

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Students need guidance – Fostering agency and taking a student-centered approach to learning does not mean that students should be allowed to do whatever they want. Their development and maturity requires a level of direction that the adults in their life, including educators, can provide. This should be coupled with trust and faith in students to be able to take some initiative in their own learning. Doing so requires more work and preparation by the educators in a school pursuing the KED Program, not less.

Effective coaching is hard – Our initial approach put inexperienced tutors in charge of coaching students as they worked towards achieving their goals. Some of these young tutors were effective, but most were not. A good coach knows how to ask the right question, when to allow a student to struggle and how to motivate a young person towards success. Experienced teachers are much better positioned to be successful in this role, a change that is now in place in our school.

By no means have we figured it all out, with challenges that abound. For example, how do you engage a child with a low level of motivation in their own learning, particularly students who are behind their peers? However, I do believe that the level of KED-ness that exists in our school today is a critical component of achieving our mission of preparing students for success in environments like a university or future workplace.

The KED Program Chosen for Adult Education in Sweden

by Mikaela Valtersson
Deputy CEO, Kunskapsskolan Sweden

At the start 16 years ago, Kunskapsskolan was a pioneer in personalized education for school children. Once more, we are pioneering the provision of education in Sweden; this time by offering personalized learning for adults.

The Swedish market for professional and vocational training has not developed much in the past decades. Based on the positive experience of Kunskapsskolan's collaboration with corporate partners at some of our upper secondary schools in Sweden, our partners suggested we extend the collaboration to education for adults. Together, we have now developed a model for adult education to help students acquire the competence that our corporate partners are looking for.

One of the partner companies offers elderly care. They are especially interested in the KED Program's focus on personal coaching, since this is a skill that would help nurses become better care providers. Now we have crafted a two-day course for nurses in how to use coaching techniques, based on how teachers in the KED Program work with personal coaching of students.

In addition, we have extended our established cooperation with Swedish construction company NCC at upper secondary schools, to include education for adults. NCC has great challenges finding and recruiting construction engineers with the right skill set. There are quite a few engineers who recently migrated to Sweden. Many of them have the right engineering skills, but

they lack the necessary skills in Swedish, and need to get introduced to Swedish culture and the "Swedish way of working". We want to contribute to the integration of well-educated migrants by providing complementary education, thus enabling them to fill vital positions in the private sector.

Together with NCC, Kunskapsskolan has developed a one-year education program that combines theoretical courses in language, culture and social aspects, with a practical internship at NCC. The aim is that students will be able to start working for the

construction company after they finish training with KED.

Kunskapsskolan's new practice within adult education operates under the brand "SkillEd", and is currently active at two schools, Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen and Kunskapsskolan Krokslätt, Göteborg. Long term, our intention is to set up a separate infrastructure for adult education based on the KED Program.

Our goal is to operate broadly over all sectors of the Swedish education system for adults, ranging from shorter programs for corporate partners to public education programs running over two years.

