



# KED

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# The Law of Attraction

## Students choose Kunskapsskolan.

In Elburg and Enköping, Jeddah and Jönköping, and more than a hundred other places around the world, Kunskapsskolan keeps attracting different learners with the same appetite for personalized education à la KED. And the students are not alone.

Kerstin Wirstedt recently retired from a long career with Kunskapsskolan. In February she returns as the country manager for Kunskapsskolan Sweden. Read her story on the next page.

Despite the pandemic turmoil, people represented by a long row of flags gathered in Dubai a few weeks ago to learn more about Kunskapsskolan and how the KED Program can help improve students' literacy skills that others have neglected. We give you the news.

In the Netherlands, traditional schools decide to make a complete changeover to start teaching and learning according to the KED Program. It is not an easy switch, but the Dutch embrace the challenge, as you can read about now.

Kunskapsskolan is attractive to many individuals. In philosophy, the law of attraction means that like attracts like and that positive thoughts bring positive experiences into a person's life. Indeed, the multitude of talent and creativity attracted into the KED Network give me positive thoughts about all that we can achieve.

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# She is the New Leader for Kunskapsskolan Sweden

Translation of the interview 'Kerstin Wirstedt blir Sverigechef för Kunskapsskolan' by Kunskapsskolan Sweden.

**Kerstin Wirstedt, former Head of Secondary Schools,** becomes the New Head of Kunskapsskolan Sweden when former CEO Fredrik Lindgren leaves for a new job as CEO of the Royal Swedish Opera. In February 2022, Kerstin Wirstedt starts her new job to continue developing the schools' work with the KED Program while safeguarding the solid company culture.

Kerstin Wirstedt is an experienced school leader. Already in her 20s, she got her first managing position and many years later, when she was working as Head of School in the district of Rosengård in Southern Sweden, she was recruited as Head of School for Kunskapsskolan Lund.

"I had witnessed many children failing to reach their full potential in traditional schools that didn't personalize education according to the students' needs. Kunskapsskolan's idea of placing the student at the center was totally new back then. Today, we have come a long way, but our determination to make every learner succeed is equally strong," says Kerstin Wirstedt.

She advanced from Head of School to regional manager, and then Head of Secondary Schools nationwide. In 2020,

Kerstin Wirstedt retired from Kunskapsskolan Sweden after 16 years in managing positions. But the retirement did not last long. Within months, she was recruited to the Board of Directors for Stockholm City Mission's school trust, and soon afterwards she was appointed as its acting CEO. But in February, Kerstin Wirstedt returns to her previous employer Kunskapsskolan.

"Today, we have come a long way, but our determination to make every learner succeed is equally strong."

"I like to work! Retiring was not for me. I'm so excited to start leading such well-functioning operations back at Kunskapsskolan," says Kerstin Wirstedt.

Cecilia Carnefeldt, CEO of Kunskapsskolan Education and Chairman Kunskapsskolan Sweden, is pleased with the comeback:

"It is obvious that Kerstin wasn't done working. Now we get an extremely experienced and knowledgeable person

rooted in Kunskapsskolan's practice, who knows us well and can promote development while upholding our culture," says Cecilia Carnefeldt.

Kerstin Wirstedt describes herself as a goal-oriented person who likes to twist and turn issues together with others to find solutions. She is particularly looking forward to resuming collaboration with the Kunskapsskolan team. Collaboration is characteristic for Kunskapsskolan, she adds:

"Collaboration is an effect of putting the student at the center. There is a team around each student and that is the basis of our culture, which benefits the students' progress and creates an inspiring workplace."

Cecilia Carnefeldt's role as CEO of Kunskapsskolan Education is now going to include Kunskapsskolan Sweden as well:

"Kunskapsskolan is part of a company group and there are issues to be handled by the parent company, such as financing. So, it makes sense to have the same CEO for both companies. As a result, Kerstin can focus entirely on establishing the best conditions for our secondary and upper secondary schools," says Cecilia Carnefeldt.



# Personalized Education is Smart Education

**Kunskapsskolan’s approach to personalized education** is implemented in schools of different character with distinct curricula in diverse places around the world. In January, KED organized a seminar at Expo Dubai to present what the KED Program can do for students and teachers in the Arabic-speaking World.

As Nirmeen Alireza, Academic Director at Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan Jeddah, ascertains: Education is a social experience at heart. Learning occurs when teachers and students interact in meaningful ways. However, the KED Program can help schools overcome obstacles to learning, according to schools that are using it.

According to Huda Sraieb, Head of Arabic Department at Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan Jeddah, students

learning by the KED Program have developed a better command of their mother-tongue, while becoming fluent in English at an early age. The KED Program’s practice of setting goals and monitoring students’ progress towards goals, along with regular personalized support, have been effective factors in this improvement.

“Kunskapsskolan’s values align with ours,” Nirmeen Alireza starts her answer.

“The academic goal may be the same but different students reach these goals in different ways,” says Huda Sraieb.

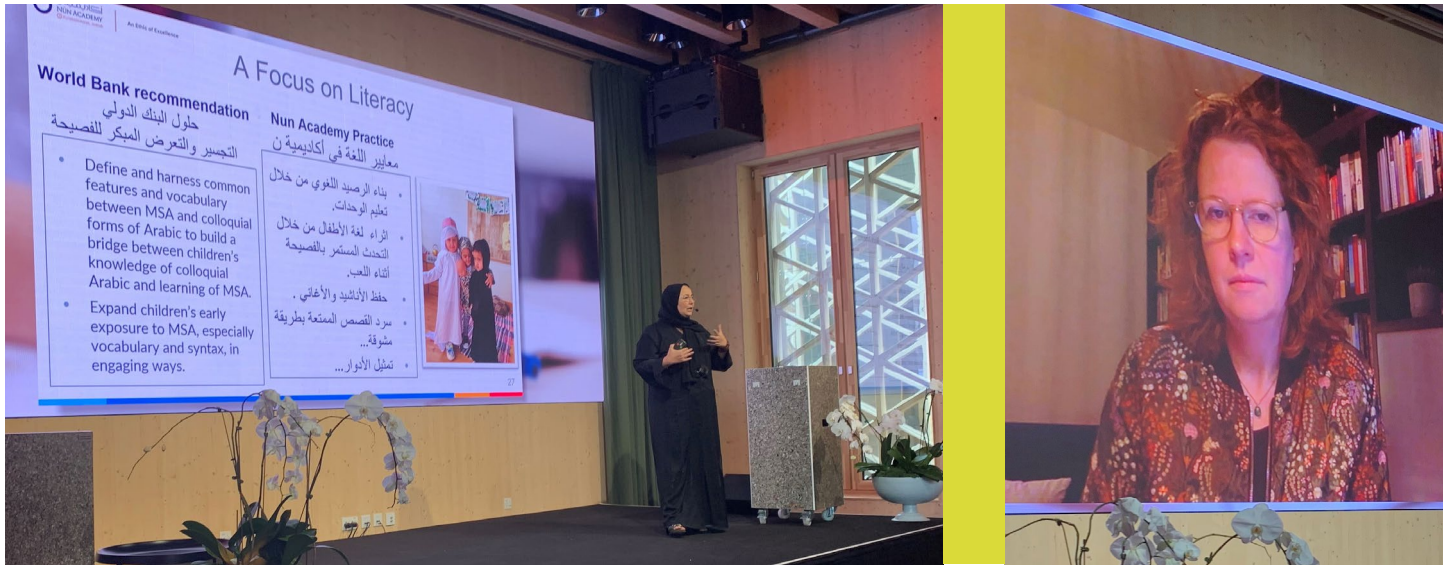
**So why would a school in Saudi Arabia choose to work as Kunskapsskolan?**

“Kunskapsskolan’s values align with ours,” Nirmeen Alireza starts her answer.

Each child is unique and has the right to an education that offers them the opportunity to reach their own potential, according to the KED Program:

“The KED Program lets us meet the unique needs of each student and supports Learning Portals that are adapted to each country and its curriculum. The KED Network is also important – to learn together with schools in other countries that use the same tools and





face the same challenges,” Nirmeen Alireza continues.

That means a school like Nün Academy can combine local traditions with global insight.

Representatives for a number of countries in the KED Network participated in the Dubai seminar. They agree that Covid-19 presents a catalyzing force to change education in a productive way.

John Baumber, who has worked with Kunskapsskolan for over 20 years, and now the Head of International Centre for Educational Enhancement at the

Kunskapsskolan and its way of personalizing learning can be the start of a new era of education in the Arabic-speaking world, according to Kunskapsskolan’s founder Peje Emilsson.

University of Bolton, emphasizes that Kunskapsskolan’s approach to education can enable all young people to not only catch up, but also to radically improve their outcomes as the world struggles to repair what was lost during Covid-19. Authentic relationships, high expectations, a problem-solving approach, and collaboration are core parts of the KED Program, and those factors provide real improvements for students, according to John Baumber.

Kunal Bhadoo, Director Kunskapsskolan India, tells us that the most important thing is to prepare young people to master their future, not the past, and the hybrid model alternating online learning sessions and time in school could be the most effective learning situation for each learner even after the pandemic.

Looking to the future, Willemien Noordhof, Educational Director Kunskapsskolan Nederland, adds that the KED Program naturally encourages a good relation between teacher and student. Teachers work as a team for each student and have an overview of and insight in the learning progress and well-being of each student by the personal coaching sessions, base group

sessions and other fundamental parts of the personalized learning model.

The skill of taking responsibility that is a natural part of studying in the KED Program is also important. Representatives for the KED Network think this skill will be increasingly important after Covid-19 entered our new reality.

Kunskapsskolan and its way of personalizing learning can be the start of a new era of education in the Arabic-speaking world, according to Kunskapsskolan’s founder Peje Emilsson:

“Each student is unique. We mix different kinds of learning situations, and the blend is different for every student to accommodate their personal way of learning.”

“The idea behind the foundation of Kunskapsskolan 22 years ago was that human beings are equal but different. Each of us learns in a different way. The key in education is not to compete against others, but to make sure that you make the best use of your own personal resources.”

**Cecilia Aronsson**  
KED Network Director

# Boarding the KED Ship

\* “Verbeelding is belangrijker dan kennis” means “Imagination is more important than knowledge”.

Switching from traditional education to the KED Program for personalized learning is quite a thing in the Netherlands. The KED Program comes with high expectations of students as well as the quality of their schools. Therefore, Kunskapsskolan Education has designed a system of audits to help schools in their transition to become a certified KED partner school.

“At the time of our first audit, we were not yet sure whether we wanted to become a partner school. There were some doubts in the team,” says Marga Hoohenkerk, Head of School for the Veenlanden College in Vinkeveen.

But the doubts faded.

“The audit is an outside-in perspective on what we are doing and that is extremely useful. You might think that you are doing everything right,



“Their enthusiasm, like-mindedness, and willingness to explain are great,” says Marga Hoohenkerk.

“but is that really the case? We found several things that can be improved, and in that, we greatly appreciated the involvement of the Swedish colleagues on the audit team who have long experience of the KED Program. Their enthusiasm, like-mindedness, and willingness to explain are great,” says Marga Hoohenkerk.

The Swedish audit team praised the atmosphere and working environment at her school.

“But it turned out we need to express our expectations of students more clearly. So, we are going to be more explicit going forward.”

2College Ruivenmavo in Berkel-Enschot started its transition to the KED Program five years ago.





“The audit renewed our awareness about what we had achieved and what steps we still have to take,” says Heidi Hoop, team leader and teacher at 2College Ruivenmavo.

Willemien Noordhof, Educational Director Kunskapsskolan Nederland, is pleased:

“A KED audit is not an exam. It’s a boarding process for schools, intended to help them adopt the KED Program and meet the KED quality standards regarding leadership, communication, student



Heidi Hoop, team leader and teacher at 2College Ruivenmavo.

care, personal coaching, teaching, grade management and technology.”

The audit process is customized to each school. Based on the outcome, the school develops a plan, outlining necessary steps in terms of quality, skills, tools and planning to achieve the requirements. Transitioning schools can join the local and global KED Network, to learn from schools that are more used to the KED Program.

“I noticed that my colleagues were quite nervous about the audit. One should not underestimate what it takes to switch to the KED Program. It’s not something you do from one day to the next,” says Heidi Hoop.

2College Ruivenmavo Head of School Lian Derks is proud of their achievement and pleased with the practical guidance how to develop in each area:

“We are in line with our goals when it comes to personal coaching and

student well-being. Then we still have some work to do in the areas of workshop and leadership,” says Lian Derks.

Kenneth Nyman, Director International Operations Kunskapsskolan Education, is actively involved in the Dutch audits. He is particularly impressed by the way Dutch teachers shape the coaching relationship with students:

“It is wonderful to see, and it surely helps students achieve better results.”

“We also learn from the issues faced by the Dutch schools in their transition to the KED Program and the different strategies they use to implement our methods at the desired quality level,” Kenneth Nyman continues.

The approach with KED audits in the Netherlands could be used in more countries in the future to help schools develop.

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