



KED

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Personalized Learning as a Human Right

In this issue you can read about how Kunskapsskolan students learn hands-on about inter-governmental movements such as the United Nations (UN) and non-governmental initiatives to support peace and sustainability through cooperation.

The UN has a specialized organization for Education, Science, and Culture, known as UNESCO. Two years ago, UNESCO brought together experts from 45 countries to assess the state of education in the world. Peje Emilsson, Founder of Kunskapsskolan, is a mem-

ber of the Advisory Board for this global study (formally named International Science and Evidence based Education Assessment).

The take-home messages and recommendations from the report indicate that personalized learning is on the rise: "Every learner learns differently [...] Receiving a personalized learning experience is an entitlement and a human right for every learner," UNESCO states. Kunskapsskolan's 20 plus years of experience of personalizing learning is a unique asset as the entire world moves in this direction.

Another conclusion is that the definition of education is expanding beyond pure subject knowledge towards a holistic view of the brain, including skills, personality and responsibility for oneself and others. The KED Program's emphasis on skills in addition to subjects is in line with this broadened definition of what a school should do.

You will soon be able to read a full interview with Peje Emilsson about the UNESCO project and his vision for Kunskapsskolan going forward.

Cecilia Aronsson
KED Network Director
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Kunskapsskolan Sweden Adds Younger Year Groups

Most Kunskapsskolan schools in Sweden start from Year 4. Until this fall, the Swedish KED schools have not educated students younger than that. But this year marks a new beginning. Kunskapsskolan Borås in western Sweden has expanded with a new building that now houses students from kindergarten to Year 3. Currently there are about 120 students in these four grades, comprising six base groups. The new facilities are very spacious and there is plenty of room for additional base groups for younger students in the coming years.

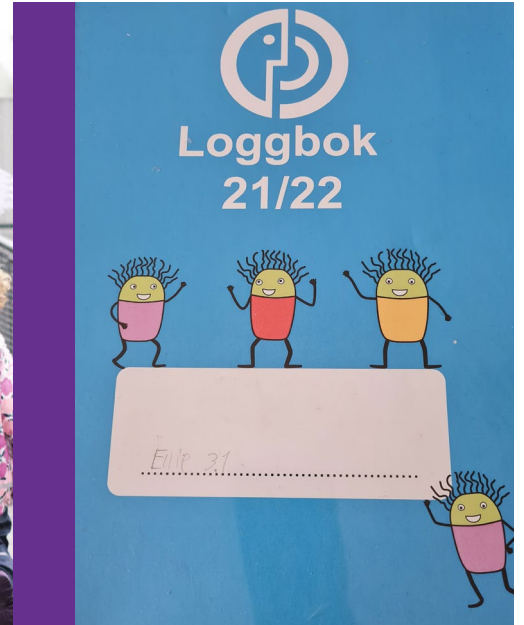
Since adding the four younger grades in August 2021, Kunskapsskolan Borås has close to 700 students in the age span 6 to 16. This makes it the largest KED school in Sweden.

The KED schools in India have educated younger students from the start. This provided a good case study what it takes to educate young students in

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the KED Program. The pedagogy is the same; based on personalized learning to meet every student’s different needs.

The young students have a customized logbook to set goals and plan their schoolwork. They are divided into base groups that meet for a regular morning session to start the day, familiar to everyone in Kunskapsskolan. The rooms are designed with soft colors and furniture for a good learning environment that makes students comfortable. The idea is to let every student grow their own identity in a safe context with strong connections and supportive relationships with the other students and teachers – just like for older students that Kunskapsskolan in Sweden has educated for 21 years. >>



But the youngest students have their unique needs that require some new practical solutions by the school, such as creating space for storing more clothes and outdoor gear for break time and reducing that extra noise made by young people in the dining hall.

Kunskapsskolan Borås is set on old military training grounds. The buildings are solidly built and used to a lot of people in action. Now, they have been rebuilt according to classic Kunskapsskolan design, still taking advantage of the heavy-duty materials of the original buildings.

The young population at Kunskapsskolan Borås have got a mascot to bring them good luck. It is called Bubblan (meaning the bubble in Swedish). With some luck and hard work, we will see more KED schools in Sweden welcoming children from their very first school day in kindergarten. ■

Cecilia Aronsson
KED Network Director,
Kunskapsskolan Education



International Youth Empowerment for a Sustainable World

In October, 27 students from fourth to ninth grade at Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg, Sweden, participated in an out of the ordinary learning experience. As members of the school's sustainability committee, or "Green Team", they represented their classes to join a Virtual Earth Summit with seven schools in Sweden and England. Kunskapsskolan Lund was the other Swedish school that participated. It was an inspiring session, filled with great enthusiasm and optimism.

The students in Trelleborg concluded the long day with a reflection session. Here are just a few of the sentiments shared by them:

"It feels good to know that we aren't the only ones caring to make a difference."

"The engagement by people my age is much more than I could ever imagine. It's bigger than I thought, and I feel that something even bigger is going to happen." >>

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The Summit was a continuation of an international Youth Empowerment Sustainability Summit, YESS, which was launched in New York, USA just before the onset of the pandemic in early 2020. Four students and a teacher from Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg travelled to New York to join YESS. The group brought back three climate goals to be implemented at the school. During the past 18 months, this collaboration between youth in Sweden, England, and the US to tackle climate change persisted, despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic.



However, the international collaboration over the past one and a half years is only the start. In March next year, a group of young changemakers from the three countries will physically meet at an Earth Summit in Lund, Sweden. For three days, students will work together on their respective climate actions, while defining additional global goals to concentrate on. Until the 2022 Sum-

mit, each participating school will intensify their work to create sustainable change within their schools.

You can follow the work on Global Goals by Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg on their Instagram: [kssweden](#).

Dujaporn Palmberg
Teacher of English and Swedish,
Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg

KED Students in Jeddah Start Plogging



Kunskapsskolan students around the world want to contribute to a sustainable society. Since 2018, there is a yearly World Cleanup Day gathering support from people around the world standing up against the global trash problem by cleaning up waste in their local communities. This year, millions of people in 180 countries participated in this event. In Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Kunskapsskolan Nün Academy students and their parents were part of this global environmental initiative to help clean up the planet. 82 families and 26 team members participated, making it extra special after the long period of lockdowns.

“We are thrilled that we were able to see our students and parents in person,” says Karey Goodall, Head of School, Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan.

With the increasing use of plastic, human-created waste in the ocean is a growing problem. The students in Jeddah focused their effort in collecting litter that had accumulated on their beach and coastline, fighting back the global problem of marine debris.

Throughout history, people have volunteered in cleanup efforts after floods,

earthquakes, and other devastating experiences. The act of moving about and picking up litter started as an organized activity in Sweden around 2016. It has spread around the world as a sport called plogging – a combination of the Swedish words plocka (pick up) and jogga (jog).

World Cleanup Day is coordinated by the global organization Let’s Do It! World, originating in Estonia. It is held annually on the third Saturday of September. The next World Cleanup Day is 17 September 2022. So, how many KED schools join forces plogging then? ■



Cecilia Aronsson
KED Network
Director,
Kunskapsskolan
Education

Our New Dutch Buddies



I have been teaching English for about six years now and I always try to come up with new ways to motivate my pupils. One thing that made my pupils do a little “happy dance” today was when I told them that we are starting our new letter project this week.

The last time I did this with students, I contacted a school in Senegal and then we sent letters there. This time, me and my colleague wanted to do this again but felt like it would be even more fun to do this together with a Kunskapsskolan partner school in another country.

With a little help from KED, we got in contact with a school in the Netherlands and a few weeks ago we had a video conference with two teachers there. We immediately started planning our project and got

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excited when we brainstormed all the possibilities that we have with this project.

The pupils will get a pen pal and we will give them different topics to write about every time. We also talked about having the kids record themselves and send each other vlog entries, and maybe even a video call in the future. In my experience, this type of task feels meaningful to the pupils, which makes them more motivated and willing to learn.

Hanna Svensson
Teacher of English,
Kunskapsskolan Jönköping



KED Model United Nations Planning Next Round

KED Model United Nations, an initiative of Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon, India, began in 2019. The ideals of the KED philosophy are intertwined with the workings of Model United Nations (MUN). Considering the KED value 'Education for Life', KED MUN aims to help students explore contexts and patterns of issues affecting countries at a global level, to interpret these events, and to expand their boundaries to develop perspectives and propose solutions to problems.

Catering to the importance of skill-based learning, which is at the core of the KED Program, KED MUN has given impetus to the skills of research, debate, and deliberation. Started at the national level for schools around New Delhi, KED MUN has expanded its horizon to invite

schools from the KED Network across India, Sweden, and the Netherlands since 2019. This expansion has provided an excellent platform for students to learn, enabling them to reciprocate their ideas in a real international forum.

Since its initiation, KED MUN has upheld its rationale of preparing students as future global citizens, who are well-versed in local and international politics. This event has been and will continue to be an excellent way to be exposed to global affairs and understand diplomacy, multilateralism, and global cooperation by bringing young voices together. In 2020, KED MUN was carried out online with participants from KED schools in Sweden and the Netherlands. Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon now plans for the next round in



2022, welcoming teams from all the other KED countries to join. Virtually, or in real life – time will tell. ■

Shweta Rana
Social Science Teacher and
Team Lead Year 11–12,
Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon

Guts

Leadership

Love

Guts, leadership, and love in education. These words are frequently mentioned nowadays. To indicate an existing deficiency, perhaps. Or, as a call to action inspired by the National Education Program, a new subsidy to invest in education to repair students delays in progress, recently launched by the Dutch government. Or, in reaction to the call of prominent educational organizations in the Netherlands to create structural improvement to better adapt to the rapidly changing world. And to get rid of embarrassing statistics in relation to reading and math skills.

Few professionals operate more consciously, involved, critically and passionately than people in education. But at

the same time, most must work within a complex and almost archaic structure, in which the added value of their relationship-driven profession is to a considerable degree defined by numbers. Culminating into a true educational paradox.

Breakthrough

Most educational professionals have the ambition to create a breakthrough. Demanding further development. Prepared as they are to deviate from traditional paths and to learn from science. Acknowledging that digitalization is not in any way contradicting the fact that education is and will continue to be people's work. But it needs guts to get going. Principals and teachers alike. Especially now. Facing the corona-cre-

ated crossroads that – through the mentioned National Education Program – offers financial room for creating the necessary structural improvements.

Inspire

Guts accompanied by leadership. Because development is all about inspiring professionals and taking them along for the ride. Providing confidence. Creating a solid learning culture in the team. Getting your head around the development and putting a clear and ambitious marker on the horizon, accompanied by an appropriate quality model to realize it.

Management alone is unable to trigger this. Because, as the American leadership guru Stephen Covey once said:

“Managing is like climbing the social ladder and discover at the top that you’ve put the ladder against the wrong wall.”

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Creating structural improvement simply does not go without leadership. Either learned through extensive courses, through devouring libraries full of books or through learning by doing with both feet in the dirt.

Room

As Heidi van den Berg, Head of School at van Kinsbergen college in Elburg, puts it:

“Ultimately, there always has to be someone who bears the responsibility and makes the decisions. But in the process towards that, you need to give people space. Enable them to express their views and share their arguments. Besides, there is nothing wrong with trying out things. Because they always yield extra insights. The only thing that you should always be very clear about to everyone is: the direction.”

“When we moved to personalized education, I gave everyone a dummy ‘public transport subscription card’. And said: it is entirely your choice whether you want to board this train or not. And frankly, I don’t care whether you choose the slow train, or the intercity. Because different development speeds are perfectly fine with me. But please be aware: getting on the train means that you have decided to take the jour-

ney with us. With the effect that, at present, every team member works according to the principles of personalized education. I find that wonderful to see.”

Common sense

Heidi van den Berg continues:

“I’m convinced that leadership is primarily a matter of using common sense. So, I have started to divide leadership amongst several expert teachers. Teachers who know the direction we take, understand the coherence of things, and can focus on the development of their colleagues. We presently guard the progress together now. In effect proving that good leadership doesn’t really differ from our weekly coaching of students.”

“That’s why I always say, when colleagues with ambitions regarding personalized education visit us: if you, as a leader, do not support and live the chosen direction, you will be unable to succeed in realizing your ambitions. Good education isn’t a trick. It requires a sound choice, consistent action, inspiring your people, building their confidence, and taking everyone along for the ride.”

Love

In education, it is undeniably true that the love for the profession, and the will to provide young people the best possible start in life, are universal characteristics that all education professionals share. And yet, structurally improving education requires more than that. It also needs the willingness to talk and listen to each other. Not to convince, but to share. Within school organizations, and the entire educational field. And in that respect, there is still a lot to gain.



Heidi van den Berg
Head of School,
van Kinsbergen college

Take the relationship with parents for example. It is way too blunt to cure the present shortage in reading and math skills among young people only in schools. The development of these skills is a crucial task of parents as well.

“There is a need to involve parents intensely in the education of their children. Not in brief ‘ten-minute conversations’ when a problem has already arrived. But on a structural basis at the beginning and end of each learning period, together with the students,” says Heidi van den Berg.

The Dutch Kunskapsskolan community has chosen the outward mantra ‘if you can’t share, you can’t multiply either’. Based on the belief that we should cooperate to achieve the desired structural improvement of Dutch education. Combining guts, leadership, and love into a solid springboard for all students.

Koos Woltjes

Communication Manager,
Kunskapsskolan Nederland