

## *Curriculum Overview*

The following is a summary of content areas through which concepts are learned and instruction is delivered at KSAS. These specifics are intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades. The skills and standards for this foundation are provided and informed by KSAS developed curricula, KPBSD curricula, The Alaska State Content Standards, GLEs and National Standards.

### **The Arts**

At KSAS, we believe that creative expression develops higher level thinking and deeper application of skills. When children learn through the arts they exhibit socially acceptable behavior which contributes to creating a civil, joyful learning community. The Arts include: Movement and Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts.

As a testimony to its commitment to arts education, the KSAS staff developed the KSAS Art Curriculum Guide under the guidance of an artist and art education consultant. It is unique and exceptional in that it goes far beyond the typical. The KSAS Art Curriculum Guide was published in 2012.

Community Partnerships have existed with many, varied arts groups and will continue to grow. Kenai Peninsula Orchestra, Kenai Visitors and Cultural Center, Kenai Fine Arts Center, and the Kenai Performing Arts Society, Kenaitze Indian Tribe have contributed to KSAS Arts program in the past.

### **Dance and Movement**

The dance/movement program at KSAS nurtures students' natural affinity for movement by developing students' kinesthetic and spatial intelligences, providing opportunities for self-expression and problem solving, supporting creative and critical thinking, and fostering aesthetic appreciation. Dance/ Movement at KSAS is taught using a conceptual approach where the dance concepts of time, space, energy/ force (also called 'effort'), and body are integrated into the curriculum, especially science and the arts, allowing students to develop a deep level of interdisciplinary understanding. Dance/ Movement at KSAS is brain compatible, meaning lessons are designed with the child's physical, emotional, and brain development in mind, thus maximizing each student's full potential.

Dance Movement/ lessons may include structured improvisations, opportunities for students to create dances individually and in small groups, dance technique/ motor skill development, folk dances, and dance/ movement songs and games.

Dance and Movement instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to:

- Gilbert, A. (2006). *Brain-compatible dance education*. Virginia: National Dance Association.
- Gilbert, A. (1992). *Creative dance for all ages*. Virginia: National Dance Association.
- Gilbert, A. (1977). *Teaching the three R's through movement experiences*. Minnesota: Burgess Publishing Company.

Snyder. Susan (1999). *Total Learning*

Music Resources for Dance/ Movement include, but are not limited to:

Music for Creative Dance, Volumes 1-4, by Eric Chappelle

Brain Dance, by Eric Chappelle

Multicultural Folk Dance Treasure Chest (Volumes I and II) by Christy Lane

Shenanigans (all volumes)

## **Drama**

The drama curriculum centers on creative drama, an approach that allows and encourages children to create their own scripts or lines. Drama includes the use of voice and body as a way of communicating thoughts, ideas and emotions. Activities can include improvisational activities as well as Readers Theatre, story-telling, script-writing, role-playing, mime, as well as creating simple costumes, sets and sounds to enhance the performance. Materials from stories, folk tales, rhymes and poems, as well as drawn the thematic units that the children are studying.

Drama instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to: *Total Learning*, Susan Snyder. High quality literature, classroom materials, media.

## **Music**

The KSAS music curriculum, written and published in 2013, centers around the philosophy of Orff-Schulwerk. (Music for Children). This approach is based on the central idea that music, movement, and speech form an inseparable unit. In Orff, speech refers to the spoken and sung word and may include rhyme, poetry, drama, song and story.

The Orff process of imitation, exploration and improvisation is complementary to the KSAS learning process of inquiry, dialogue and reflection. Skills and concepts are spiraled through the grade levels around the elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, form and timbre.

Singing, speech, body percussion, pitched and non-pitched instruments, listening activities, reading notation, movement, and drama are used in developmentally appropriate ways through the curriculum and grade levels to teach concepts and skills. The music curriculum is integrated within classroom thematic units and/or the conceptual keypoints, while maintaining the integrity of the music itself.

Music instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Materials, activities and songs are chosen for their quality and for their embedded skills and objectives. Resources may include, but are not limited to: *Music for Children*, Orff/Keetma; traditional rhymes and folk songs; classroom materials and multiple musical instruments.

## **Visual Arts**

The visual arts are a vehicle for investigations and connections across disciplines in and out of the classroom. The visual arts program at KSAS follows the philosophy and practice of the

Discipline Based Art Education (Getty Institute). Important components of DBAE are: creating and producing works of art; the study of historical and cultural roles of art works/images; aesthetic scanning; critique of art according to criteria ; and the study of beauty and meaning in one's own and other's works of art. These components are taught in their own right and for their own sake and are further integrated into and throughout the curriculum.

Imaginative and critical thinking are taught and practiced to produce original art, learn skills and techniques in order to create in the following mediums and areas of artistic expression:  
Drawing, Painting, Print Making, Collage, Sculpture, Fiber Arts, Artist Study

Arts instruction at KSAS is guided by national, state, district and school standards, and the KSAS Art Curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, but connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to: ProjectARTiculate.org; ARTsedge.kennedy-center.org; KPBSD Media Center: art prints, arts kits available for loan; *Total Learning*, by Dr. Susan Snyder.

## Science

The vision of Kaleidoscope School of Arts and Science is to have the arts and the sciences permeate the KSAS student experience. This vision has led to distinguishing innovative practices throughout the school where curiosity is nurtured in all young scientists. KSAS believes that inquiry based science instruction provides unparalleled opportunities for students to actively engage in their learning. Science instruction at KSAS is based on the belief that children need to wonder, explore, make connections and reflect through integrated, intriguing and inquiry-based, hands-on science experiences.

Published in 2011, the KSAS Science Curriculum Guide is designed to establish a framework for guiding science instruction both in the classroom and science lab. The KSAS Science Curriculum aligns with the National Science Education Standards, the American Association for the Advancement of Science Benchmarks, and the State of Alaska Grade Level Expectations. At the present time, KSAS is examining the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

At KSAS science learning focuses on meaningful inquiries into the natural world. Authentic opportunities are offered weekly in a designated science lab with the full time Science Specialist and integrated into individual classroom instruction. The KSAS Science curriculum deliberately reflects the school's focus on integration by centering on the school-wide and yearlong conceptual key points. The Science Specialist meets with classroom teachers weekly to plan science investigations, assess progress and growth and examine curriculum. Integrating science with all other curricular areas is a high priority. Every opportunity to combine and enrich science with math, language arts, social studies, music, visual arts, drama, dance and physical education is pursued. Integrated science learning extends from the science lab into all spaces shared with students: the classroom, the nature trail, the gym, the playground, places around the community as well as the various art studios in the school: music, visual arts, movement and dance.

Core science concepts that are taught at KSAS are: (1) Earth System Science/ Space Science: The Cosmos; Structures of the Earth; Processes that change the Earth. (2) Life Science: Living Things; Structures and functions; Ecosystems. (3) Physical Science: Matter, Forces, Energy,

Waves. (4) Engineering Science: Tools and Technology. Process Skills/Integrated Skills that are taught and practiced in the lab and classroom are: observing, classifying, measuring, inferring, predicting, and communicating. Further processes and skills are: making models, defining operations, collecting data, interpreting data, identifying and controlling variables, formulating hypotheses and experimenting

Resources may include, but are not limited to: Online resources found in the KSAS Curriculum; ScienceSaurus; FOSS; Insights; AIMS Math and Science.

Partnerships have existed with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Kenai Watershed Forum, Department of Soil and Water Conservation. Other community resources include, but are not limited to, Kenai Wildlife Refuge; The Challenger Center; Seward SeaLife Center; Islands and Oceans Center in Homer. KSAS continues looking to establish new community partnerships to enrich students' understanding of the world around them.

## **Language Arts**

The Language Arts program emphasizes integration of the arts and science. It is a literature based and literature rich program that includes a balance of oral and written language, direct instruction, group work and independent work. Differentiated reading instruction is meaning based and encompasses systematic and explicit teaching of emergent literacy skills, phonics, spelling, and vocabulary development, along with comprehension strategies and critical thinking skills. Using the highest quality literature, fiction, nonfiction, prose and poetry, is a top priority at KSAS. In addition to the KSAS Media Center and Library, a library of leveled books is available for all to access.

The KSAS teachers provide read alouds, interactive read alouds, shared and guided reading instruction, differentiating and individualizing as needed to meet the needs of all students. Learners may work in small cooperative groups, in pairs or trios as well as by themselves. The practices that build content and literary knowledge include shared reading and shared writing, strategy lessons, explicit phonics instruction and word study. These practices provide a strong foundation for reading and learning to read. Literature Circles, Author Studies, storytelling and personal research projects scaffold readers' learning and growth towards independence and understanding about language.

Students read, write and share their work daily, guided by various instructional best practices. Students and teachers use the language of 6+ Traits Model to learn to write and to learn how to talk about writing as they become independent writers, revisers and editors. They utilize writing process tools to improve the structure and organization in their writing.

Reading Workshop and Writing Workshop provide predictable and highly productive structures for whole group instruction, small group instruction and as well as time for independent work. Reader response groups, writers' circles, sharing journals, interactive writing, choral readings and readers' theatre offer opportunities to publically present written work and develop speaking and listening skills.. These engagements and cooperative communications support projects across all curricular areas. As authentic purposes for writing arise they are taken advantage of. Writers model, practice and critique real world uses of writing in this project based approach.

Language Arts instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to: *First Steps*, Education Department of Australia; *The Daily 5*, Boushey & Moser; *Total Literacy*, Susan Snyder; *Performance Literacy*, Brett Dillingham. Influential research and publications by Fountas & Pinnell, Ralph Fletcher, Sylvia Chard and Lillian Katz, Dr. Bear, Scholastic Guided Reading.

## **Mathematics**

The goals of KSAS mathematics program are to create a foundation of solid conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency while fostering the students' ability to apply the math they know to solve problems in and out of the classroom.

Students analyze problems and communicate findings, both orally and in writing, and make connections to the bigger world. Priority is placed on thinking mathematically and making sense of mathematics in everyday life. As with all core subjects at KSAS, mathematics is integrated across the curricular areas with emphasis in arts and science.

Mathematical instructional practices include using manipulatives, teaching mental math, playing conceptual math games, sharing thinking while exploring multiple strategies for solving problems. The mathematics instruction at KSAS provides a continuous regime in a spiraling cycle of complexity. Students and teachers practice and reinforce mathematical concepts throughout the year and up through the grade levels. Integration of mathematical concepts and problem solving across the content areas, in science and art especially, enhances students' skills and practice while showing understanding of how math is used in their world.

Mathematics instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to Accelerated Math; SuccessMaker; FOSS Kits; *Math Games for the Primary Grades*, by Nancy Norman; *Everyday Mathematics*; Marilyn Burns publications.

## **Social Studies**

Social Studies at KSAS offers a strong framework and foundation for robust integration of the Yearlong Theme and Conceptual Key Point. The goals of the social studies curriculum are to have children participate as responsible citizens and lifelong learners. This is accomplished through the process of inquiry, dialogue and reflection as learners use appropriate Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines to positively affect their personal best, each other and the world.

Students examine their world, making connections to the Year Long Theme and the Conceptual Key point through the study of Geography, History and Government. Social Studies concepts weave across all the disciplines at KSAS. Like Science at KSAS, Social Studies is not factoid-driven, but strives to develop inquiring, contributing citizens through essential questions, conceptual key points and social action.

A critical part of the integration of Year Long Theme in Social Studies is the *Being There* Experience. A *Being There* Experience is a study trip, a hands on, often outdoor, engagement that asks learners to actively and consciously connect with what they already know at the beginning of study and throughout the study to highlight how the learning connects to the bigger broader world. These connections are explicitly identified and utilized to anchor knowledge and learning. It gives students a context off of which to build their understanding of new information, thereby assisting in forming questions and wonderings, promoting inquiry. The context might be a physical location, and event or a situation.

The key to *Being There* experiences is that students return to them often so that a depth of understanding can develop. *Being There* locations allow for doing, not just looking. On these study trips, students ask questions, compare answers, delve into behind the scenes information all related to the conceptual key point. Examples of *Being There* locations are: KSAS Nature Trail; No-Name Creek; exploration of school busses, inside and out, top to bottom;

Learners model, practice and critique real world issues in this project based approach.

Another element of the Social Studies program at KSAS is a yearlong project which calls for social or political action. This facet the program prepares students for informed, active citizenship. Two questions drive this call to action:

- (1) How can knowledge empower students?
- (2) How can they use knowledge in real world situations?

Social or political action projects, community service, special classroom and school-wide events provide realistic opportunities to practice citizenship and tie everything together for a purpose. These projects require students to apply what they've learned in a personal way to the real world.

Social Studies instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on the variety of sources that provide rich, meaningful, connected learning opportunities across all curricular areas. Resources may include, but are not limited to: Nonfiction books from the District Media Center, Kenai Community Library, KSAS Media Center as well as KSAS Leveled Book Library; *Kids Discover Magazine*; Rand McNally Classroom Atlas; *America's Story* (Harcourt Brace). In addition, current, online resources such as DiscoveryEducation.com are very carefully selected and utilized to maximize connections with the real world problem being investigated.

## **Media**

The media program supports the goal of Kaleidoscope to educate the whole child through the process of inquiry dialog and reflection. This inquiry provides a framework for learning. Successful learners will inquire, think critically, draw conclusions, and create new understandings. Information literacy, through simple and sophisticated technologies, continues to expand and increase in complexity. Competent learners must acquire thinking skills allowing them to use information in ethical, independent, and meaningful ways.

Reading is a window to the world. The KSAS library houses a vibrant collection of high-quality, current fiction and non-fiction books to provide beauty and enjoyment for

readers, as well as access to new ideas, and information to explore. The importance of literacy and the need for quality literature, presented in meaningful ways, are at the heart of the library program. The teacher-librarian will develop collections to support classroom concepts and themes, and collaborate with staff to integrate the library media program into the classroom.

Each classroom has a small bank of computers for students' use. A computer lab easily accommodates an entire classroom of learners. In addition, computers on Wheels (COWs) provide laptops for students' use.

Standards for Library and information literacy programs at Kaleidoscope are guided by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) standards for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner.

## **Physical Education/Health**

The physical education and health program at KSAS develops skills and in depth knowledge of sports and movement for life long fitness and health. Physical education utilizes a variety of cognitive, affective, and motor practices that focus on teaching students the importance of being active throughout their lives. P.E. is closely connected to and supports other disciplines by implementing movement with mathematics, spelling, geography, science and health. Collaborating with classroom teachers on the yearlong theme enables students to connect and reinforce prior classroom knowledge while at the same time increasing large motor skills, cardiovascular, and strength skills.

Physical education and health instruction is guided by national, state, district and school standards, but emphasis is placed on integration to provide rich, meaningful, and connected learning opportunities. The KSAS Lifelong guidelines are an integral part of each P.E. class. All students at KSAS have two P.E. periods weekly for a total of 60-90 minutes. Additionally, upper grade students receive 20-30 minutes of health instruction once a week. The health program provides students with information and skills to make healthy and positive choices that enrich health and well-being for the rest of their lives.

