II. Unique Features

These are the specific characteristics which support our school model and create a unique learning experience for our students.

A. Arts/Science Integration: *Hear more deeply, see more appreciatively, discover possibilities.*

Definition

The Kaleidoscope model integrates all subjects with equal rigor and importance. The arts & science provide the framework for meaningful educational experience by integrating content, skills, and national standards in the arts—dance, music, drama, and visual arts, and science through inquiry—with core subject outcomes.

Why

KSAS is designed with an emphasis on the arts and science as the cornerstone to meaningful understandings of the world around us. These values are outlined in our Core Beliefs.

Integration purposefully engages students in meaningful learning experiences that engage them at a deeper level of understanding.

Integration . . .

- nurtures meaningful learning.
- Demonstrates how the world is connected
- Promotes critical thinking, problem solving, analysis, self-realization, conceptual thinking, and **creativity**.
    - Creativity is the association between existing ideas and new, divergent thinking

Resources

- Snyder, Sue. *Integrate with integrity: music across the elementary curriculum.*
- Snyder, Sue. *Total Literacy: The arts in the literacy classroom.*
- Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.
- Mantione, R. and Smead, S. (2002). *Weaving Through Words: Using the Arts to Teach Reading Comprehension Strategies.*
- Cornett, C. (2010). *Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts.* New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Worth, K., Winokur, J., Crissman, S. (2009). *Science and Literacy, A Natural Fit.*
- Chaille, C. and Britan, L. (2002). *The young child as a scientist: a constructivist approach to early childhood science education.* Boston: Pearson Education.
- Project Zero http://www.pz.harvard.edu/
- Artful Thinking http://www.pzartfulthinking.org/index.php
- Arts Edge: http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/
- Project 2061 http://www.project2061.org/
- Science lessons aligned to our curriculum: http://sciencenetlinks.com/
- Total Learning/ Total Literacy/ Dr. Sue Snyder http://www.totallearninginstitute.com

Appendix

- Sue Snyder Integration Graphic
- Sue Snyder Multisensory Strategies

B. Collaboration: *Working together to share our common vision.*

Definition

Collaboration is not the same as planning. For integration to be effective, our values and mission must remain at the forefront when constructing learning opportunities. Collaborating involves the additional dimension and expertise from the specialist teachers. To be effective as a whole school, time for collaboration may extend beyond contracted hours.

- Process of collaboration is driven by inquiry-dialogue-reflection, not used for daily classroom planning
- KSAS schedule is driven by collaboration and integration
- The complexity of collaboration limits teachers' autonomy for flexibility
- All teachers are expected to share expertise and have an obligation to bring ideas and resources to collaboration meetings
- Collaboration allows opportunities for team teaching across a variety of learning spaces

Why

Our purpose of collaboration is to successfully integrate:

- arts and science
- "being there" experiences
- conceptual key points
- essential questions
- social action
- thematic planning

Learning is not determined by the walls of the classroom; a certain time or place. Classroom teachers and specialists deliberately collaborate to create learning experiences that connect across all learning spaces. In doing so, children create more solid and deeper ideas that last and are meaningful.

Resources

Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.
Snyder, Sue. *Integrate with integrity: music across the elementary curriculum.*

C. Constructivism: *Pedagogy of listening.*

Definition

Constructivism is a theory of learning that posits that children construct knowledge through interaction between their own ideas and experiences in the social and physical world. Constructivism is grounded in Piagetian theory and enhanced by Vygotskian theory. Constructivism is not a method, a curriculum model, or a series of appropriate practices. Constructivism is the theory that underlies the choices and decisions we make about how we set up the classroom, choose the curriculum, and respond to children's work and ideas (Chaille, 2008).

Comparison of Traditional classrooms and KSAS classrooms rooted in constructivist theory

Traditional Classroom	KSAS Classrooms
Teacher directed (didactic dissemination of information)	Learner-centered. Teacher as facilitator – students construct knowledge through critical thinking, manipulatives, primary resources, and hands-on activities.
Student works independently.	Student works collaboratively in groups, independently or in partners.
Small parts first. Big idea at the end.	Big idea first. All parts support big idea.
Correct answers are the goal.	Thinking and support of thinking are the goals.
Assessments are tests; separate from learning task.	Assessments are observation, conferences, daily work, portfolios and included in learning tasks.
Worksheets, workbooks, basal readers.	Books, journals, real-world situations, workshop approach.
Teacher evaluator.	Self-reflection, student evaluator and teacher evaluator.
Product based learning: All students will learn on demand the same thing at the same time aka. One-size-fits-all approach.	Process based learning: Learners create meaning and context by exploring new ideas and experiences, generating hypotheses, problem solving.
Teacher talks to (at) students; students expected to listen and absorb knowledge.	Teacher-student dialogue through conferring, questioning, and wondering.
Teacher makes all the decisions.	Shared responsibility and decision making.
Students answer questions. Empowered teacher.	Students ask questions. Empowered learner.
Individual learners.	Community of learners.

Why

Children are naturally curious learners and thrive in a well- rounded educational environment that includes the freedom to think, question, reflect, interact with ideas and objects- in other words, to construct meaning (Brooks and Brooks). Collaborative relationships with adults to expand thinking and learning are essential.

Constructivist Guidance and Discipline

Kaleidoscope views guidance and discipline as helping children learn personal responsibility for their behavior. Teaching for moral autonomy is the constructivist approach People who are autonomous are able to make decisions themselves; taking into account relevant factors and being guided by their own beliefs and perceptions. Children who are working toward developing moral autonomy are making decisions based on their own internal constructions of right and wrong (DeVries, 1999). ***Their***

decisions are not influenced by the threat of punishments or the promise of rewards. A morally autonomous person will be respectful of others regardless of what authority figure may be watching (Fields & Fields, 2006). This is an example of one of our Lifelong Guidelines, trustworthiness.

Some considerations for success in the classroom:

- The emphasis is on cooperation versus competition.
- Establishing a relationship of mutual respect between students and teachers and among students
- Facilitating and modeling peer problem solving strategies, empowering students to solve problems independently
- Refraining from rewards and punishments
- Offer students opportunity for restitution
- Addressing the causes of children's undesirable behavior and assisting them in understanding the effects of their behavior, rather than only punishing the behavior itself
- Teaching self-regulation strategies (i.e. instead of telling students what not to do, help them learn how to make wise choices about what they should do)
- Natural consequences

Resources

Chaille, Christine (2008). *Constructivism across the curriculum in the Early Childhood Classrooms: Big Ideas as Inspiration.* Boston: Pearson Education.

Chaille, C. and Britan, L. (2002). *The young child as a scientist: a constructivist approach to early childhood science education.* Boston: Pearson Education.

Fields, M. and Fields, D. (2006). *Constructivist guidance and discipline.* Boston: Pearson Education

Kohn, Alfie (1996). *.Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community.* Virginia: ASCD.

Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.

Marlowe, B. and Page, M. (2005). *Creating and sustaining the constructivist classroom.* California: Corwin Press.

Murdoch, K. and Wilson, J. (2008). *Creating a learner- centered primary classroom.* London: Routledge.

Appendix

Procedures Posters
Playground Procedures
Lifelong Guidelines and Lifeskills

D. Continuous Growth Model: *The only constant is change.*

Definition

Assessments are aligned to our instructional design. A variety of assessment tools, including the development of a portfolio, observations, conferences, and daily work are used to track student progress throughout the year.

Why

We believe the purpose of assessment is to inform instruction; not to categorize students. In order to become independent learners, students must learn how to assess their own work. Students can feel freer to use their creativity when their grade is not determined by how well they have satisfied the teacher's vision for their work.

It is time to stop behaving, albeit under pressure, as if the end goal of schooling is correct answers on tests. Instead, we should be acting as if our lives depend upon ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to be successful, contributing members of society (Kovalik, 2005).

Resources

Authentic assessments

Formative assessments

Summative assessments

Keeley, P. (2008). Science: *Formative Assessment*. CA: Corwin Press.

E. Highly Effective Teaching: *"It takes courage, integrity, and perseverance to bring the very best of what we know to all children."* -Susan J. Kovalik

Definition

The HET model provides us knowledge of how the human brain learns (the biology of learning) and guides or informs us about what's worth teaching as we develop curriculum and instructional strategies. We must develop curriculum and instructional strategies illuminated by brain research not by educational tradition and habit.

The Nine Bodybrain-Compatible Elements provides pathways to understanding for students.

1. Absence of Threat/Nurturing Reflective Thinking
2. Meaningful Content
3. Enriched Environment
4. Adequate Time
5. Immediate Feedback
6. Movement
7. Choices
8. Collaboration
9. Mastery/Application

Why

The HET model provides a rich, brain compatible, safe and real word experience that enhances the student's learning and higher level thinking.

"Being There" experiences are an integral starting point to developing curriculum at KSAS. A "Being There" experience occurs when real things are studied in their real world context. The "Being There" site must be visited frequently in order to build deep understanding and unforgettable learning. *Page 1.11 in HET book*

Field Trips or Study Trips are different in design; they provide a one-time visit to a site with a specific goal or topic in mind.

Resources

Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.
Olsen, K. and Pearson, S. (2000) *Character begins at home: Family tools for teaching character and values.* WA: Susan Kovalik and Associates.
Pearson, Sue. (2000) *Tools for Citizenship and Life: Using ITI, Lifeskills, and Lifelong Guidelines in your classroom.* WA: Susan Kovalik and Associates.

Appendix

9 Body Brain Compatible Elements
6 Kinds of Sensory Input
Input Pathways

G. Multiage: *The world IS multiage.*

Definition

Multiage classrooms are an intentional heterogeneous mix of children that is balanced by gender, grade levels and developmental levels. Children spend two or more years with the same teacher and core group of classmates, with older students exiting at years end and new students joining each fall term.

Why

- Multiage is a more natural way of grouping children and provides strength to a learning community.
- There are many opportunities for children to work together.
- It is effective academically because less time is spent each year getting to know students.
- Older students are role models and help younger children.
- Students experience a wider range of roles in the classroom.
- The focus is on success as each individual moves forward building on their own prior knowledge.

Resources

www.**multiage-education**.com
http://kaleidoscope.blogs.kpbsd.k12.ak.us

H. Planning: *Time for teaming takes commitment.*

Definition

Planning is not the same as collaboration. Planning for thematic, integrated teaching involves two tiers of preparation. Planning occurs with your immediate team members on a regular basis. To be effective as a whole school, time for planning may extend beyond contracted hours.

Why

Planning is necessary to occur between teachers of like grade levels to accomplish connectedness to arts and science, "being there" experiences, conceptual key points, essential questions, social action, and thematic planning. Regularly scheduled team planning is vital to successful implementation of integration.

Resources

Fellow staff members

Berger, R. (2003). *An Ethic of Excellence: Building a culture of craftsmanship with students.* NH: Heinemann.

Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.

Marlowe, B. and Page, M. (2005). *Creating and sustaining the constructivist classroom.* California: Corwin Press.

I. Professional Development and Learning: *There is no end to this chapter.*

Definition

Continual learning that supports our instructional design, mission, vision and core beliefs.

Why

Our team approach to teaching requires a shared commitment to professional learning. We believe in lifelong learning, modeled through continual professional development.

- Each staff member should commit to seeking out and engaging in professional learning opportunities.
- Staff are expected to share professional skills, talents, and knowledge with the entire KSAS community
- Enter into professional learning opportunities with an open mind and positive attitude
- Continual learning inspires our teaching.

Resources

Professional Development Committee

- Assists with coordinating opportunities to strengthen our school and personal professional goals
- Dedicated budget to professional development in and out of district

Avatar District Professional Development website

J. Process vs. Product : *The journey is the story of the destination.*

Definition

We value the process of learning, guiding students to develop skills, strategies and concepts through inquiry, dialogue and reflection. Learning is exhibited in a variety of ways. The products are often child-driven such as a skit, story, poem, visual art piece, dance, musical composition, or presentation. Products are rarely an end to a unit of study, but rather a celebration of learning.

Why

Connected concepts lead to deep, meaningful understanding. We honor different learning styles and interests through this learning process.

Resources

Berger, R. (2003). *An Ethic of Excellence: Building a culture of craftsmanship with students.* NH: Heinemann.

Murdoch, K. and Wilson, J. (2008). *Creating a learner- centered primary classroom.* London: Routledge.

K. Thematic Learning: *Together we learn. Together we connect.*

Definition

The theme integrates curriculum by using a concept to pull together content and skills from multiple subject areas. The integrity of each discipline is maintained. The theme allows children to explore the curriculum in a meaningful way. Every classroom participates in the school wide theme. The current classroom theme is evident upon entering the classroom.

Why

Application and synthesis of ideas from one discipline to another is encouraged, leading students to develop deeper understanding and critical thinking through comparing and contrasting of ideas.

Resources

Kovalik, S. and Olsen, K. (2005). *Exceeding expectations: A user's guide to implementing brain research in the classroom.* WA: Books for Educators.

Appendix

Yearlong plan, sample
Yearlong plan, template
Quarterly plan, sample
Quarterly plan, template

L. Whole School Approach: *Lifelong learning inspires our teaching.*

Definition

Every staff member is an equal player in educating the whole child. All school staff must commit to the mission, vision, core beliefs and the philosophy of KSAS

- You are always part of team rather than autonomous
- Decisions are primarily made collectively
- Attendance and participation during time dedicated to planning and communication is imperative
- Time extends beyond school hours
- Classrooms are not defined by walls, but by the space we share

Why

- Common language and expectations are practiced within the entire school community
- Yearlong themes keep us connected

Resource

Berger, R. (2003). *An Ethic of Excellence: Building a culture of craftsmanship with students.* NH: Heinemann.

Constantino, S. (2003). *Engaging All Families: Creating a positive school culture by putting research into practice.* UK: First Rowman and Littlefield Education.