



Kuwait American School

Middle School Curriculum Guide

MISSION

KuwaitAmericanSchool is a caring, values-based school committed to delivering international education to the highest academic standards. We seek to educate the whole person towards the highest level of human consciousness in a learning environment of intercultural understanding and respect. Our mission is to serve our one world community by empowering valuable members of society.

PHILOSOPHY

- We believe all children are gifted. Our foundation for all learning is LVRUS – love, Valuing each person, Respect, Understanding, and Safety.
- We believe that character development is especially important to support academic success.
- We create a positive environment where the diversity of the student body and staff creates interest and respect for different cultures, ideas, beliefs, and backgrounds.
- We provide a challenging and creative academic environment where learning is a never-ending pursuit.
- We strive to develop independent and creative thinking and expect our students to be able to question, analyze, and evaluate.
- We are dedicated to student intellectual achievement and holistic learning emphasizing the social awareness, mindfulness, and spiritual integrity that are central to an appreciation of applying our natural talents, living our values and learning for life.

The Kuwait American School is a happy, welcoming, and hard working family school where we teach by example, learn with all our hearts to respect, and value each other for whom we are, as well as live our lives to the fullest.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents,

As Principal of Kuwait American School, it gives me great pleasure to extend to all our new and returning students, faculty, staff, and community a warm welcome to our school. KAS is one of the premier schools in Kuwait with a rich tradition of excellence. Since its inception, KuwaitAmericanSchool has consistently provided educational excellence to its diverse student populace. Our greatest assets have been our educators, whose commitment and dedication to KAS is evident in the value our parents and students hold for them.

As your Principal, I am committed and determined to provide our students with a safe and challenging environment. Our administration and staff will continue to hold high expectations to be met by our students. It is in the spirit of meeting this challenge, that I invite all of our parents to partner with our students, their instructors, coaches, guidance counselors and administrators in collaborating to help pave the path to the endless new horizons of greater student achievement. I personally look forward to seeing all of you at our school functions throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Peter
Principal

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Students attend school between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Each period is 45 minutes in length, with a total of 8 periods per day. Student recess is from 10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Lunch is scheduled from 1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are encouraged to attend school on a daily basis. In the event of an excused absence, students are expected to return to school with verifiable documentation. Excused absences provide students with an opportunity to make up missing assignments in a timely fashion.

STUDENT SERVICES

Students may frequent the guidance department to engage in academic planning or to find meaningful resolutions to other daily needs. Staff members are available to mentor, and provide opportunities for overall student development.

GENERAL INFORMATION

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT

As a part of our mission, KuwaitAmericanSchool expects its graduates to demonstrate a working competence with Information Technology. All students must show proficiency in collecting and analyzing relevant information via the Internet, access Jupiter web pages for assignments and course information, and use e-mail systems for communication.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

1. Each student will be scheduled for at least seven courses. In all cases, at least four of the courses must be categorized as academic. This pattern ensures optimum flexibility for breadth and depth, both of which are necessary for sound comprehensive college preparation.
2. English must be taken each year. A student with a final average below D is required to repeat English in order to advance to the subsequent English course.
3. Mathematics is required in grades 9-11.
4. Many colleges require more than two years of a language; therefore, we encourage additional studies. Arabic is a part of student required classes.
5. Practical work in the science lab is required.
6. Ancient World History, Modern World History, and U.S. History are required.

7. One credit in Fine Arts is required. This is a one-year course.
8. Two credits of Physical Education/Fitness is required.
9. Re-enrollment and promotion to the next grade is considered using final grades in each course. A grade of D or better is considered passing. Successful completion of a course requires taking the semester examination. In some cases failure in a single course may be made up during the summer, but each student's academic status is evaluated individually with respect to re-enrollment. Students who make up a course during the summer are required to take and pass a re-sit examination in September of the next school year.
10. All subjects are graded on a scale of A-F.

GRADES

KuwaitAmericanSchool utilizes an Alpha System for reporting student grades, (A, B, C, D, F). The minimum college certifying grade is C-. The use of plus (+) or minus (-) more clearly defines the specific level of achievement attained. Students who receive an incomplete in a course have two weeks from the end of the grading period to make up the work or may receive a failing grade in the course.

Each academic department within the School establishes evaluation standards. Any required course in which a grade below D- is earned must be repeated before proceeding to the next level of that subject.

CUMULATIVE G.P.A.

For computing cumulative G.P.A, the following chart is used.

A	4.00
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.00

ACADEMIC HONORS

KAS recognizes students' academic achievement in a number of ways. One of these is the designation of First and Second Honors. Students qualify for this recognition based upon quarter grades.

High Honor Roll

No grade below a B in any course

Minimum GPA of 3.5

Honor Roll

No grade below C+

Minimum GPA of 3.0

Overview of ELA Courses

General Overview of ELA in 6-12

The ELA curriculum at KAS is based on the Common Core State Standards.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy build on the best of existing standards and reflect the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in college, career, and life. Understanding how the standards differ from previous standards—and the necessary shifts they call for—is essential to implementing the standards well.

The following are key shifts called for by the Common Core:

1. Regular practice with complex texts and their academic language
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from texts, both literary and informational
3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

Overview of Reading

The reading standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. Lexile ranges are used as an additional tool for determining grade-level complexity. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Overview of Language and Writing

The language and writing standards for grades 6-12 offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. *Students advancing through the grades*

are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Kuwait American School has chosen to adopt the **6+1 Writing Traits Program** to enhance writing instruction in Grades 1-12. It is interwoven with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Writing Expectations to ensure that students are both meeting CCSS targets while important writing traits are continually modeled, taught, and assessed.



We also strive to ignite a passion for learning, thinking, and expressing one's views through exemplary writing and speaking. We seek to expand the students' global perspective and self-awareness through the doors of literature, thoughtful discussions, and student-centered learning activities.

WORLD LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

In world languages, our major goals are to provide our students with the necessary communication skills in the language and to prepare them for subsequent courses in the college environment. This preparation gives students a practical knowledge, which will allow them to put the language into use in travel or in their chosen profession.

Our program specifically involves working with students in the four skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing, while developing an awareness of and sensitivity to the cultural aspects of the target language.

Arabic I, II, III, IV

Arabic classes and AFL classes are mandated by the Kuwait Private Ministry of Education. Details regarding the specific information covered in these courses may be obtained from the Arabic department chairperson at KAS.

Overview of Mathematics Courses

General Overview

The mathematics curriculum at the Kuwait American School is based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were written to ensure that math is taught with more depth and that an opportunity for conceptualization of mathematical concepts and finding applications to everyday life is clearly provided. We have made some adjustments (additions and omissions) to

the CCSS to meet our learners where they are at and ensure that they have plenty of time to master necessary skills.

Mathematics | Grade 6

In Grade 6, instructional time is focused on four critical areas:

1. Connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems.
2. Completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers.
3. Writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations.
4. Developing understanding of statistical thinking.

Mathematics | Grade 7

In Grade 7, instructional time is focused on four critical areas:

1. Developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships.
2. Developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations.
3. Solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume.
4. Drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

Mathematics | Grade 8

In Grade 8, instructional time is focused on three critical areas:

1. Formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations.
2. Grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships.
3. Analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

Overview of Science Courses

General Overview

The science curriculum at the Kuwait American School is based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which are the leading cutting-edge, research-based standards used by most states in the United States of America. The NGSS were written to ensure that there was a balance between both acquiring scientific content and engaging in scientific discourse and projects that require application of scientific and engineering skills, such as those outlined in STEM.

At the Kuwait American School, we use the NGSS performance expectations as evidence of learning of our science curriculum. We meet the Middle School NGSS by creating three consecutive domain based courses:

- Grade 6: Earth Science
- Grade 7: Physical Science
- Grade 8: Life Science

The Middle School core content on oceans is met at the Elementary level in Grade 5, and was therefore omitted from the Grade 6 Earth Science course.

Grade 6

Textbooks: *Science Fusion – Modules E, F, G*

Students in Grade 6 continue to develop their understanding of the three disciplinary core ideas in the Earth and Space Sciences.

The Grade 6 performance expectations in Earth Space Science, based on Next Generation Science Standards – Middle School Earth Science, build on the elementary school ideas and skills and allow students to explain more in-depth phenomena central not only to the earth and space sciences, but to life and physical sciences as well. These performance expectations blend the core ideas with scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing useable knowledge to explain ideas across the science disciplines.

Unit	Topic
A	The Dynamic Earth
B	Earth's Water and Atmospheres
C	Space Science

Grade 7

Textbooks: *Science Fusion – Modules H, J; and Teacher Created Packet to replace Module I*

Students in Grade 7 continue to develop understanding of four core ideas in the physical sciences.

The Grade 7 performance expectations in the Physical Sciences, , based on Next Generation Science Standards – Middle School Physical Science, build on the K – 5 ideas and capabilities to allow learners to explain phenomena central to the physical sciences but also to the life sciences and earth and space science. The performance expectations in physical science blend the core ideas with scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing useable knowledge to explain real world phenomena in the physical, biological, and earth and space sciences.

In the physical sciences, performance expectations at the middle school level focus on students developing understanding of several scientific practices. These include developing and using models, planning and conducting investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, using mathematical and computational thinking, and constructing explanations; and to use these practices to demonstrate understanding of the core ideas. Students are also expected to demonstrate understanding of several of engineering practices including design and evaluation.

Unit	Topic
A	Matter and Energy
B	Motion, Forces, and Energy
C	Sound and Light Waves

Grade 8

Textbook: *Holt Science and Technology – Life Science*

Students in Grade 8 develop understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of life science. The ideas build upon students' science understanding from earlier grades and from the disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts of other experiences with physical and earth sciences.

The performance expectations in Grade 8, based on Next Generation Science Standards – Middle School Life Science, blend the core ideas with scientific and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts to support students in developing useable knowledge across the science disciplines.

Unit	Topic
A	The Study of Living Things
B	Cells
C	Heredity and Classification
D	Simple Organisms, Fungi, and Plants
E	Animals
F	Human Body Systems

Overview of Social Studies Courses

General Overview

The Social Studies courses at KAS are based on the New York Social Studies State Standards. In Middle School, there is a focus on direct instruction of geography skills blended with other social studies strands. In High School, the focus is primarily on history.

Grade 6 Course Description: *Ancient Civilizations*

This course is focused on Ancient Civilizations. Students will learn about Ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt. They will also learn about Kuwait and the formation of the Arab League as part of the Kuwait Ministry of Education Curriculum. Students will focus on picking out and describing the important features of societies in history and use a range of sources to support or challenge a statement. They will also give a range of reasons why something has happened by describing the causes and describe how the past has been shown in different ways by different people.

Grade 7 Course Description: *World Geography 1*

This course is focused on the study of geography, history and culture of various regions in the world such as: the Americas, Europe and Russia, Central and South East Asia. They will also study the history of the Islamic World as part of the Kuwait Ministry of Education Curriculum. They will learn about the world by locating places and environments using globes, atlases and maps whilst describing and explaining physical and human features of the areas.

Grade 8 Course Description: *World Geography 2*

This course is focused on the skills of geography and the interaction between human and physical landscapes in situations like erosion, flooding and urbanization. They will identify trends and future implications of global warming and global poverty. Students will develop their map skills by using various forms of maps and images and explain the spatial patterns of features, places and environments at different scales.

COMPUTER SCIENCES

Information Technology 311, 312, 313 Grades 6-8

The Information technology sequence within the middle school is designed to prepare students for high school. Curriculum strands include; technical skills, design and graphics, programming and coding, and accessing and assessing information. Students are also instructed in Microsoft Office and begin using the suite of programs to prepare documents through the use of interdisciplinary projects.

FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT

Because the Fine Arts are an integral part of human history and experience, we believe that every student should be proficient in at least one of the arts disciplines in order to gain a broad cultural and historical perspective. Through the study of the performing and visual arts, KAS students are more able to communicate clearly, analyze abstract images, make discriminating judgments, and understand their world. Moreover, in the arts we seek to maximize each student's expressive potential.

The curriculum in each area of the visual and performing arts offers a logical progression through the varied tools, techniques, and skills necessary for successful translation from idea to final form. In addition, all courses explore the conceptual, historical, and theoretical aspects of the art form. Technical experience and artistic expression are enhanced through frequent practice, exhibition, or performance, and evaluation of one's own work and the work of others.

To help instill an appreciation of all the arts, each course will require the viewing of a performance or showing each semester (introductory courses require one viewing and written evaluation; all other arts courses require two viewings and written evaluations). These may include an exhibition in the gallery or performance on campus or other activity with the permission and approval of the instructor.

Special Note: Because arts classes are essentially lab classes, it is always difficult and often impossible to make up work from missed classes. REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS COURSES.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

We believe that physical fitness and health is essential to students' growth. Sports and teamwork is a part of everyday life at KAS. Physical Education is taken every year in Middle and High School.

AEROBICS/SPORTS

Class activities meet at least (2) days a week. Quarter grades will be based upon student participation, preparedness in clothing, promptness to class, and attitude. Attitude is a culmination of incentive, cooperative spirit, and effort.

Students are required to dress in appropriate physical fitness attire and participate in class daily. During cold weather, KAS sweat clothes are required.

There are two components of the PE program.:

A. Cardiovascular Unit: The Cardiovascular Unit has as its goal general improvement of each student's cardiovascular fitness. Each student will participate in various cardiovascular activities such as walking, running, and aerobics for the entire semester.

B. Sports Unit: Students will engage in a variety of sports including, but not limited to, volleyball, American football, football (soccer), basketball, and badminton. The goals of this unit is to gain an appreciation and knowledge of a variety of sports, to practice the physical skills required by the sport, to demonstrate good sportsmanship and teamwork, and to engage in and gain competency in physical activity.