



مدرسة الكويت الأمريكية  
Kuwait American School  
We build minds, character & futures

# Kuwait American School

**Middle School Curriculum/ Course Descriptions Guide**

**Updated June 2024**

## **MISSION**

Kuwait American School 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 hardworking family school where we teach by example, learn with all our hearts to respect, and value each other for who 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, Kuwait American School 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 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,

Ms. Janice Dennis  
School Principal

## **SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

Students attend school between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Each period is 50 minutes in length, with a total of 7 periods per day.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are encouraged to attend school daily. 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, Kuwait American School 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 for email and for communication, and Google Classroom for assignments and course information.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL REQUIRED COURSES**

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 high school preparation.
2. English must be taken each year. A student with a final average below D is required to repeat English to advance to the subsequent English course.
3. Mathematics is required in grades 6-8.
4. Practical work in the science lab is required.
5. A Social Studies course is required each year.
6. Students in grades 6 and 7 study one semester of Music and one of Art. Students in grade 8 choose an Elective which is taught for the whole year.
7. Physical Education/Fitness is required yearly.
8. Arabic and Islamic studies are required yearly. (Non-Muslim students study Arabic as a Foreign Language but are exempt from Islamic Studies)
9. To be promoted in Middle School (Grades 6-8), students are required to pass ELA, Math, and Arabic classes with a D or higher. In the event that they do not pass, they are required to re-sit for a pass/fail comprehensive exam in that subject area. If they pass, they are promoted. If they do not, they are required to repeat the year. Students take a science class and social studies class each year in Grades 6, 7, and 8. They are required to pass at least two classes of each subject throughout their three years in middle school in order to be promoted to high school. This means that the first time they fail a course in science and/or social studies, they will still be promoted. However, for the second time, they will be required to take a resit exam. The same conditions will apply for promotion.
10. All subjects are graded on a scale of A-F.

## **ACADEMIC HONORS**

KAS recognizes students' academic achievement in several ways. One of these is the designation of Honor and High Honor Roll. Students qualify for this recognition based upon quarter grades.

### **High Honor Roll**

No grade below a B- in any course Minimum GPA of 3.7

### **Honor Roll**

No grade below C Minimum GPA of 3.3

## **ELA COURSE OVERVIEW**

The ELA curriculum at KAS is based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy build and reflect the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in middle school through:

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

### **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. Throughout middle school, students will be exposed to a variety of novels, short stories and poems.

### **Language and Writing**

The language and writing standards for grades 6-8 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 ensures that the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Writing Expectations and targets are met while continually modeling, teaching and assessing. Students will compose a variety of narrative, expository and persuasive essays reflecting the themes within the reading materials. Learning activities include oral and visual presentations reflecting analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

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.

## **ARABIC LANGUAGE OVERVIEW**

In Arabic language classes, we aim to provide students with the necessary communication skills in either their native language or as a foreign language to prepare them for subsequent courses in the high school environment. This preparation gives students a practical knowledge, which will allow them to put the language into use in travel or in their daily lives.

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 Arabic language.

Arabic classes and Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) classes are mandated by the Kuwait Ministry of Education. The Ministry provides both the Arabic curriculum and coursebook.

## **ISLAMIC STUDIES COURSE OVERVIEW**

All Muslim students are required by the Kuwait Ministry of Education to study Islamic Studies and Quran throughout the middle school years. Islamic as a Foreign language (IFL) is provided for non-native speakers. Islamic and Islamic as a Foreign Language classes are mandated by the Kuwait Ministry of Education. The Ministry provides both the Islamic and Quran curricula and coursebooks.

## **MATHEMATICS COURSE 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.

The fundamental purpose of middle school courses is to formalize and extend the mathematics that students learned in the elementary grades. Each unit deepens and extends basic understanding of mathematical concepts. The Mathematical Practice Standards apply throughout each course and, together with the content standards, prescribe that students experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Each course will cover grade appropriate skills and concepts in the four major mathematical strands:

- Numeracy
- Data and Probability
- Geometry and Measurement
- Algebra

## **SCIENCE COURSE 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. In Middle School NGSS there are three consecutive scaffold-based courses in Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Middle School Social Studies Program at KAS is adapted from the New York Social Studies State Standards. In Middle School, there is a focus on direct instruction of history and geography skills. Lessons are integrated with other curricular areas whenever possible. Assessments take the form of projects, presentations as well as written tests and end of year examinations.

Kuwait Social Studies is also taught in Grade 6 and is set by the Ministry of National Education.

# **INFORMATION AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY**

## **(ICT)**

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Middle School ICT standards are adapted from the Long Beach Unified School District and the Fresno County Office of Education Recommended Digital Literacy and Technology Skills to Support the California Common Core State Standards. It is designed to introduce students to 21st century ICT skills that prepare them for high school and ensure that they remain on the cutting edge of technological advances. Students will be introduced to age appropriate coding, web-site design, robotics and scratch and more.

A digital citizenship component from commonsense.org is integrated into ICT units.

### **FINE ARTS COURSE OVERVIEW**

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 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 or performance.

In grade 6 and grade 7, students will study Art for one semester and Music for one semester. This will help prepare them for grade 8, when they will choose one area of study for the whole year. Drama classes are offered in grade 8 as an elective course.

#### **ART**

This is the introductory visual arts course where students learn the basic skills necessary to translate ideas into visual statements. Composition, color theory, perspective, and scale will be studied as the basis for work in all art media.

#### **MUSIC**

The Music Curriculum is adapted from the New York State Standards for the Arts. It involves the elements of melody, harmony, rhythm and form and includes the experiences of singing, moving, listening, performing, composing/improvising and literacy of music. Students have the opportunity to listen and learn about music from different cultures, time periods, and styles as well as a focus on their own musical cultural background.

This course will build on the skills learned in elementary as well as introducing students to a variety of instruments, such as keyboard, wind, percussion and stringed instruments. Students will learn the basics of playing and reading

music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Physical Education Curriculum is derived from the standards in SHAPE AMERICA. Physical education focuses primarily on the body and health of each student to develop their general well-being and fitness. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of sports activities and games to develop basic skills and enable them to successfully interact with their peers. Furthermore the curriculum will provide students with a fundamental understanding of how to live a healthy active life.

Classes meet twice a week. Quarter grades will be based upon student participation, readiness in the school PE uniform, promptness to class, and attitude. Attitude is a combination of incentive, cooperative spirit, and effort.

Students are required to dress in appropriate physical fitness attire and participate in all classes. During cold weather, KAS sweat-pants may be worn.

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 Units: Students will engage in a variety of sports including, but not limited to, volleyball, American football, football (soccer), basketball, and badminton. The goal of these units is to gain knowledge, skills and competency in a variety of sports, as well as demonstrate good sportsmanship and teamwork.