

KUA News

February 2024 newsletter



Empowerment Through Opportunity

Our mission: to break down barriers for students by providing more instructional time, enriching programs and a high-expectations, no-excuses environment to ensure high school graduation, college success and career readiness are reasonable goals for all students regardless of race, language, ethnicity,

gender, economic status or zip code.

Administrators' Message

Kids Unlimited Academy has filled this short month with educational and family-friendly activities!

Mathematics standards in kindergarten through second grade inspired schools' first 100 days celebrations more than 40 years ago. Observed in all kinds of ways with diverse themes, lesson plans, even special outfits and costumes, festivities have gone mainstream in educational settings across the United States. At KUA, we're commemorating our 100th day of this academic year — Feb. 5 — with custom T-shirts for K-2 students and staff, plus fun activities.

Putting the fun in learning math can be an everyday activity at home. KUA math instructional coach Cheryl Graham shared some of her tips and strategies for building strong math skills.

"The number one question I get from parents is 'How do I better prepare my child(ren) to be successful in middle school and/or high school math?'

"The answer will sound simple, but after teaching for 30 years I can tell you the key to mathematical success is knowing the multiplication facts!"

It takes practice and persistence, but knowing multiplication facts boosts students' confidence and, as they progress, builds upon math skills more easily as the subject matter becomes more complex. Get out the index cards and markers to make flashcards at home or purchase them at the dollar store. Then practice, practice and practice some more.



Here are more of Graham's math tips:

- Build conceptual meaning around numbers with short, daily "number talks." Students learn to calculate quickly and visualize problem-solving. Count clouds in the sky, guess the height of a fence or a tree. Ask "How many is that?" or "What would half of that look like?" Older kids can prepare a recipe and adjust the measurements for a double batch. Or build something together, using tools and calculations to determine measurements.
- When talking about math, avoid negative messaging that could create anxiety or transfer it onto your children. Instead, try focusing on the difficulty and effort involved by saying things like: "I understand how challenging this is. It was hard for me, too. I'm confident we can work it out together."
- Help students see the patterns in numbers by skip-counting — counting forward by numbers other than 1. Instead of saying numbers in sequential order, you "skip" a certain amount of numbers each time: 2, 4, 6, 8 or 5, 10, 15, 20. Multiples of 7, 11 or other less commonly used numbers make the exercise harder for older students. You can also skip-count backwards.


Speaking of skipping, hopping and jumping ... KUA will "leap into literacy" Feb. 29 — leap day — for our annual Family Literacy Night. Come to KUA's Upper Gym from 5:30 to 7 p.m. for a special presentation from local children's author Robert Young, plus activities and books to take home. This event is the culmination of our weeklong book fair, which kicks off Feb. 26.

Build literacy at home with these tips from Erin Monteith, KUA's instructional coach for English language arts:

- In the car, ask children to identify shapes, colors, letters or words. Ask them if you will be turning left or right or going straight.
- While out and about, play the "ABC game" with objects. Name an object that starts with A, then B and so on.
- Have children help write grocery lists. If possible, allow children to locate items at the store and place them in the shopping cart.
- Read a book with your child(ren). Set a timer for 5 minutes the first week. Add 1 minute each day after that. If you can't read with them, have your child read out loud to you or other children while cooking or cleaning.
- Trash-ketball: Find a clean trash bin and some paper. Pick 8-10 words from your child's spelling or vocabulary list from school and write each word on a piece of paper. Crumble each one up and place into the bin. Ask your child to take a piece of paper out, read the word, then crumble it back up and spell it without looking. For each word they spell correctly, they can try to shoot a basket. Continue until each ball has made it into the basket.

As winter is winding down, we are seeing an increase in students coming to school when they are unwell. While attendance matters, certain conditions are reasons to stay home, according to guidelines from the Oregon Department of Education and Oregon Health Authority. Generally, students should attend if they are healthy, feel well and can participate in usual day-to-day activities.

Children can go to school even if they:

- Have a cold, which may include a runny or stuffy nose and cough.
 - Have a mild stomach ache.
 - Haven't had a fever in 24 hours and they have not taken fever-reducing medicine during that time.
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Please see the [complete health guidance](#) for going to school on ODE's website.

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Harry & David mixed nuts
donation



Why year-round school?

We can't speak highly enough of our year-round [academic calendar](#), which is overwhelmingly supported by our families. Below are a few key reasons why we decided in 2021 to become Oregon's first year-round public school.

- Students retain what they learn all year, rather than experience summer learning loss.
- Additional time for authentic hands-on learning opportunities, excursions and field trips.
- Additional school days help to close the achievement gap.
- Increased opportunities for extra help and tutoring.
- Consistent routines lead to better-adjusted students — and teachers
- Easier access for vacations during the school year.
- Decreased teacher and student absences.



Attendance matters!

Regular school attendance promotes school success and is **required by Oregon Law**, which mandates that students miss no more than 15 school days each academic year. Any student absent for 10 or more consecutive days will be dropped from KUA enrollment. **Your child may lose his/her spot at KUA.**

ATTEND TODAY
ACHIEVE TOMORROW



The loss of learning that takes place when your child is absent cannot be replaced. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades. If you need help getting your child to school on time, please reach out to us!

Always notify the school, by calling the office between 7:30 a.m. and 9 a.m., when your child is absent or going to be absent for any reason. Please provide the student's full name, grade and reason for absence. A doctor's note is required for absences of longer than 3 days.

Medford: 541-774-3900

White City: 541-500-0700



What's cooking?

Our new Food Program keeps bringing variety to students' plates.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner menus through March correspond to a theme that rotates each quarter. Pulled pork sliders and potato and sausage soup are new recipes to complement favorites like taco salad and chicken and cheese enchiladas. Check out the [menu](#) at kuaoregon.org/menu

All KUA students are eligible for free breakfast, lunch and dinner — cooked from scratch using fresh ingredients in our on-site kitchen. We are an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Our nationally recognized, award-winning food program is unique in the Medford school district, and we take pride in providing students' daily nutrition. Build your kids' healthy habits at home with whole foods instead of processed ones.

February isn't just a month for candy hearts. It's also American Heart Month, designated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Heart Association and other organizations.

Bake a sweet treat with a heart-healthy twist using cooked black beans instead of flour. These gluten-free brownies also are packed with protein and fiber, even more if chopped nuts are incorporated.

Black Bean Brownies

Ingredients:

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans or 1 3/4 cups cooked, cooled black beans
- 3 large eggs
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup chocolate, peanut butter or butterscotch chips, or chopped nuts (optional)



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Coat a 9-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a colander, drain and rinse the beans.
3. In a large bowl using a fork, whisk the eggs, oil and vanilla. Add beans and mash with fork until beans are barely visible (this can take 5 or more minutes of mashing). Stir in the sugar and cocoa, blending with a rubber spatula until mixed. Stir in the chips or nuts, if using.
4. Pour batter into baking pan. Bake until a knife inserted into brownies' center comes out clean, for 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool completely before cutting into 16 squares.

Makes 16 servings.

Recipe from cookingmatters.org

Upcoming dates

02/05 — 100th day of school!
02/08 — Site Council, 5:45 p.m., Medford Pre-K building
02/09 — No school for teacher professional development
02/19 — No school for Presidents Day
02/21-22 — Royals Assemblies
02-26-02/29 — Book Fair
02/29 — Literacy Night, 5:30-7 p.m.

Check out some pictures from January!



Bingo/Loteria



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Sarah Lemon

Sarah is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

