

KAIS EMS—*Smart Education*

In the mornings: 50/50 Learning: Math and Literacy

In the afternoons: Collaborative Learning: Themes and Projects

Mornings: What is 50/50 Learning? In traditional schools, students are expected to do most of the heavy lifting of learning on their own. They decode textbooks, write essays, and conduct research at home with little or no guidance from an instructor. Some students, those who have a private tutor or a parent to help them, do manage to succeed in such a learning environment. But many children in traditional schools soon fall behind, grow frustrated, and lose confidence in their ability to learn.

This is very different from the type of learning practiced at KAIS EMS. Our students do the bulk of their schoolwork in the second half of each class *at school*. They do it in the presence of an instructor who assists, guides, answers questions, and motivates them *as they study*.

In the KAIS EMS 50/50 model, *everyone* learns. *Everyone* finishes his or her assignments on time. Children who need extra help and support, or those who want to learn at a faster pace, can complete their lessons in our afternoon teacher-guided Homework Assistance Lab. What this means is that *all our students* leave our campus at the end of each day happy knowing that they have understood and finished the day's lessons. They have no lingering deadlines, no arguments with Mom and Dad about homework, no evenings of frustration to worry about.

Study Skills

Getting organized, taking notes in class or from textbooks, reviewing vocabulary, studying for tests—these skills are often very hard for students to learn on their own. Yet that is exactly what many traditional schools ask students to do. But not KAIS EMS. We don't expect children to somehow master these skills without sufficient guidance. *We teach these skills* as we would any other skill using the following unique process:

At KAIS EMS:

Step 1: Teacher models the study skill

Step 2: Teacher and students perform the study skill together

Step 3: Students perform the study skill in pairs or small groups

Step 4: Students perform the study skill on their own

This process is repeated as needed until the skill becomes part of each student's habitual learning behavior. As students grow older and the subjects they study become more advanced, these deeply ingrained positive study and thinking habits will remove many of the obstacles that can get in the way of their success.

Here's what a sample schedule at KAIS EMS looks like:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9:20- 9:45	Morning Meeting and Prep Time
9:45-10:15	Math
10:15-10:30	Break—Chess and Other Strategy Games
10:30-11:00	Math Homework Tutoring and Lab
11:00-11:10	Snack Break and Discussion
11:10- 11:40	Literacy Skills—Interactive Lecture
11:40-11:50	Free Break
11:50-12:20	Literacy Skills Homework Tutoring and Lab
12:20-1:00	Lunch Break/Park Time
1:00—3:15	Themes (history, literature, music, art, computer skills, NILE)
3:15-3:45	Homework Assistance Lab/Japanese Study (twice weekly)
3:45	Announcements and Goodbye

Wednesday

9:20-9:45	Morning Meeting and Prep Time
9:45-10:15	Literacy Skills I (science reading)
10:15-10:30	Discussion Break
10:30-11:00	Literacy Skills II (science reading, oral summary, written summary)
11:00-11:10	Snack Break
11:10-12:20	Science Lab
12:20-1:00	Lunch/Park Time
1:00-2:00	Art (at park on some sunny days)
2:00-2:15	Break and Preparation
2:15-3:15	P.E. (at park on some sunny days)
3:15	Announcement and Goodbye

Morning Meetings and Prep Time

Students at KAIS EMS will start their day off with a brief meeting during which they will go over the day's schedule and set goals. They will then have a few minutes to ease into their day—to read a book, gather their materials, play a game of chess or checkers, or simply chat with their friends or teachers. These morning meetings at KAIS EMS will be a relaxed, friendly time that every student will look forward to.

Literacy Skills

Our literacy skills courses are based on Kikokushijo Academy's highly successful English program. Like all KAIS courses, Literacy Skills is interactive and collaborative, fast-paced and goal oriented. The focus is on making *daily* improvements in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Emerging English speakers will receive individualized assistance with the long-term goal of achieving grade-level fluency.

Literacy is the foundation for success in any course. For this reason, such essential skills as note-taking, summarizing, and deconstructing reading passages into notes will be reinforced not only in Literacy Skills, but in all KAIS-EMS classes.

Assessment:

Grade-level English speakers will be assessed according to the California Core Standards. All other students will be assessed based on their improvement and attainment of goals.

Math

KAIS EMS will take a traditional approach to the teaching of mathematics, with one significant exception: the homework component will be done *in school* under the guidance of a tutor. Those students who need extra support can get all they need in the afternoon Homework Assistance Lab. Those who wish to work at a faster pace can ask their tutor in the Homework Assistance Lab to give them extra, more challenging work.

Assessment:

Math classes aim to reach California Core Standards. Traditional A-B-C grading will be given in accordance with those standards.

Themes Courses

Our Themes Courses are built around a central historical theme, synthesizing components from history, music, literature, art, speech, and drama. The theme for the fall term of 2014 will be Ancient History—the civilizations of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. By the end of the course, students will have learned all about the people who lived in these great historical eras. Students will read and enjoy Egyptian, Greek, and Roman myths and legends. They will create maps of these peoples' countries, recite their poems, sing their songs, and cook their food. And, through our N.I.L.E. course, they will in effect *live these ancient peoples' lives*.

What is N.I.L.E.?

Narrative-based Interactive Learning Enrichment

In simple terms, N.I.L.E. is similar to a play without a script with students taking on the role of characters. As the teacher narrates the play, describing the background and setting up challenges, the students work together to overcome these challenges and achieve their goals. In the fall of 2014, students will become time travelers who must go back to ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome to recruit some of the greatest thinkers in history. These philosophers, poets, and dramatists will then take part in a “think tank” that will try to find solutions to the problems of today. During the adventure, students will be given a variety of tasks to carry out. For example, they will have to use the Internet or other reference sources to look up and then memorize the names of Egyptian gods. Or they will write letters of request to the Library at Alexandria. Or they will give a speech in defense of Socrates during his trial. N.I.L.E. courses are fun, exciting, *and* educational because they immerse students in other worlds. They ignite students' imaginations and help them to understand that the people and challenges of the past are in many ways not so different from those of today.

Assessment for Themes/N.I.L.E.

In Themes Courses, students will be given comment-based grades based on:

- Communication—oral and written
- Collaboration and Contribution
- Interpretation and Processing of Information
- Strategy and Planning
- Leadership and Support
- Decisiveness
- Learning from Loss
- Learning from Success
- Mastery of Content
- Graded assignments
- Final Portfolio or Project

Class Lengths and Breaks

Most of our lessons last about thirty minutes. This type of shorter, focused instruction is much easier for children to process and remember than longer “traditional” lessons that breach the limits of their attention spans and capacity for retention. Shorter classes also encourage teachers to hone their message, to eliminate wasteful practices that can cause children to grow bored. Our students also get lots of breaks, which allows them to maintain focus and avoid stress.

Homework Tutoring and Labs

In our tutoring labs, teachers will sit down with students *as they study* and offer guidance and support while at the same time preparing them step-by-step for independent study. Teachers not only help students to understand the content of the day’s lesson, but they also strive to instill in students positive study habits such as: **knowing clearly what the goals of the study session are; making sure all tools and resources (books, pencils, erasers, dictionaries, etc.) are ready for use; eliminating all distractions; creating a reasonable and flexible time limit for the various stages of the study session.**

KAIS-EMS teachers also monitor students *as they study* looking for habits that are preventing them from effective, efficient learning. Some students are easily distracted. Others lose focus when they come across an unfamiliar word or a challenging phrase. Still others simply have low expectations of themselves. By helping a child become conscious of his or her negative thinking patterns and self-limiting assumptions, our teachers provide goals and strategies that will help the child develop greater confidence so that he or she can learn faster and with deeper understanding.

P.E.

For the 2014/2015 school year, P.E. classes will center on health and concentration through a fitness and karate course that develops balance, control, and conditioning.

Art

Students will learn to draw and paint for creative individual expression as well as for specific projects connected to our Themes and N.I.L.E. Courses. In 2014, to solidify their understanding of the term’s Ancient History theme, students will create art projects centering around Egyptian, Roman, and Greek gods and heroes, learn how to draw accurate maps, and design related covers for their portfolios.

Music

Music classes will focus on both music appreciation and music composition. In addition to learning music through singing and playing musical instruments, students will learn to use Audio Logic, a popular music-sequencing program, to create their own music for their portfolios or video projects.

FAQ

Q: Where is KAIS EMS located?

A: In 2014, KAIS EMS will operate out of the original KAIS location, seven minutes from Jiyugaoka Station where Kikokushijo Academy currently operates. In the fall of 2015, KAIS EMS will move to its new facilities in Toritsu Daigaku.

Q: Does KAIS EMS offer financial aid?

A: For families who cannot afford the standard KAIS tuition, KAIS EMS does offer some financial aid. Those wishing to apply are asked to submit an annual family income statement.

Q: It seems as if KAIS EMS never gives out homework. Is that true?

A: KAIS EMS limits the amount of schoolwork children must do at home, but we do not eliminate it completely. Reviewing material, reading literature, watching videos, and performing tasks such as interviewing family members or drawing common objects are examples of some of the “work” we ask children to do at home.

Q: What goals does KAIS EMS have for its students?

A: We want our students to grow up to be inquisitive, intelligent, inspired, and happy adults who never lose their passion for learning. Our progressive approach towards education reflects this goal. On the other hand, we understand that for our students to be successful in university and beyond, they will need mental toughness, practical skills, and a strong foundation in academic subjects such as mathematics and language arts. Our morning classes are designed to give students all this and more—to help them become both collaborative and independent learners.

Q: My child’s experience in English is limited. Will you still accept her?

A: Our guiding principle for admission is this: we only accept students we are certain we can help. Students with limited English skills are welcome at KAIS so long as at the time of application we have the necessary space and resources to ensure a positive learning experience. In cases where we need to hire a private tutor to raise your child’s English level, we may ask for an additional fee, although we will try to avoid this whenever possible.

Q: How many students are you accepting in 2014?

A: Until we move to our new facilities, we will only accept a maximum of eight students per grade, and only students in grades 3,4,5, and 6. Students in grades 7 and 8 who wish to apply for the 2014 school year are asked to apply at KAIS Junior and Senior High School in Meguro.

