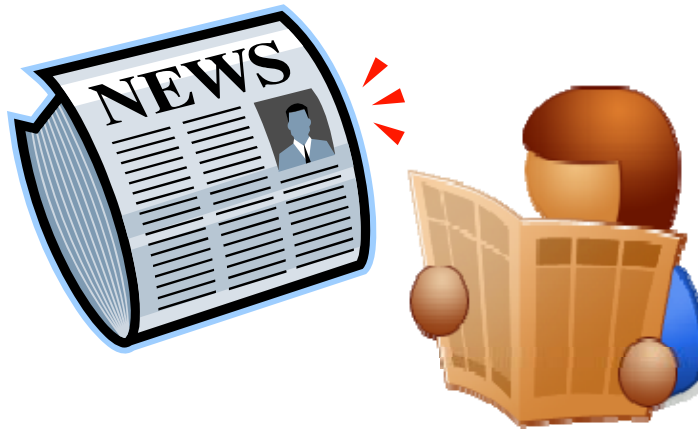


School Rag

A Newsletter of KZV Administration

Issue 1, Friday, August 10, 2007



Dear Parents,

With this issue I would like to introduce “School Rag”, a newsletter of Krouzian-Zekarian-Vasbouragan Armenian School’s administration. During its initial period, school rag will come to you either electronically, in hard copies, and/or via KZV’s soon to be updated website. Indeed with the rapid pace of technological developments, it is a bit tough to specifically determine which of the three mentioned options, or combinations thereof, we will deploy to get this newsletter into your hands; for now, probably the first two. What is important, however, is that you should expect to get it once every two or three weeks. What is also important is that you let us know of your thoughts in regard to the quality of this rag, as it begins to carve its own niche in the ongoing life of our school. School Rag will strive to bring to your attention important developments

within your school, be they curricular, pedagogic, or cultural. Doing so, it will also inform you of significant goings on at KZV from my vantage point as principal. In time I will also ask KZV School Coordinator, Ms. Mannik Kostanian, and KZV Dean of Faculty, Ms. Siran Nahabedian, to submit their thoughts and concerns to School Rag for your consideration. It is my hope that for the time being, along with our scheduled sessions of “Meet with the Administration” nights, this newsletter will contribute to further improving the existing channels of communication between parents and administration at KZV.

*With Best Wishes for a New School Year for Everyone,
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Principal, KZV Armenian School*

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Introducing KZV New Faculty & Staff



As the summer quickly progresses, we have reached a point where I could provide you with more detailed and helpful information in regard to the line up of our new faculty and staff; also to update you on the changes you will notice concerning aspects of educational and cultural life within KZV when classes resume in late August.

Justin Stephenson: Mr. Stephenson is joining our community after having completed a 3 year full time teaching tenure at *Saint Catherine of Siena Parish School*. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology, and a K-6 Multiple Subject CLAD Credential from *California State University of Stanislaus*. Mr. Stephenson's teaching experience is in IT and Math. In addition to developing an IT Curriculum for KZV, he will be teaching computer technology to our 1-8 graders, and math to our 4th and 6th graders. Mr. Stephenson will also guide and support our faculty in

integrating computer technology into their curriculum, and work with our middle school students in publishing a biweekly newsletter.

Lulu Strongheart: Ms. Strongheart comes to KZV having rejected a substantially higher salary offer at another school. As an elementary school teacher Ms. Strongheart's previous teaching experience is in the public school system, *James Denman Middle School, San Francisco*, where



she taught 6th grade. Ms. Strongheart holds a Masters Degree in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico, and a Preliminary

Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in California. She will be our 5th grade self-contained classroom teacher in charge of teaching the core curriculum for the grade.

Karen Elizabeth Huff: Ms. Huff's elementary school experience revolves around the work she has done with 2nd, 3rd, and 5th graders. She joins KZV's faculty from Oakland's *Acorn Woodland Elementary*, a public school, where she continued to develop her abilities in integrating subject matter and writing. Ms. Huff holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English/Creative Writing from San Francisco State University and is in possession of a Preliminary Multiple Subject Credential, which she obtained at California State University Hayward. We entrust the critical work of guiding and supporting the educational growth of our first graders to Ms. Huff in a spirit of confidence and certainty. Ms. Huff, along with a few other KZV teachers, among them Ms. Gertmenian and Ms.

Karpanian, will also take charge of resurrecting and running the KZV Library.

Richard Gabri: Mr. Gabri, a parent at KZV, is a stage director, a screenplay writer, and a teacher with a keen interest in a variety of subject areas and disciplines. Holding a Masters of Arts Degree in English Literature from San Francisco State University he will teach English to our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Mr. Gabri has taught English to 8th graders in the past, at *Potrero Middle School*. He has also substitute taught his subject of specialization while advancing his educational and artistic goals on the side. We are very pleased that Mr. Gabri was able to receive outstanding recommendations from our former English teacher Ms. Nestel in whose class he staged Shakespeare's *A Mid Summer's Night Dream* last year.

Noushig Mikayelian: Our new 6th, 7th, & 8th grades Armenian language, literature, and history teacher is a fluent speaker of both the Western and Eastern dialects of Armenian. **Ms. Mikayelian** who will be coming to KZV directly from Yerevan is a graduate of Yerevan State Pedagogical University's faculty of Armenian language and Literature; she has also received higher training in voice at the Gomidas Yerevan State Conservatory. In addition to her formal teaching assignments Ms. Mikayelian will be preparing our 7th graders for their next year's trip to Armenia, and will collaborate with Mr. Stephenson in producing the Armenian component of the middle school newsletter. Ms. Mikayelian has published two volumes of poetry, as well as a number of articles, poems, and essays in such Armenian newspapers and magazines as *Azg Daily*, *Zartonk* (Beirut), etc. Her third volume of poems is to appear soon. We welcome Ms. Mikayelian, due to arrive on August 18,

to our school community. ***Should you be interested in providing Ms. Mikayelian support to settle in quickly, you may contact the KZV Office at your earliest convenience.***

Maime Wong: Ms. Wong holds a Bachelors of Art Degree in Anthropology from San Francisco State University, and she has had a number of educational internships in school's and other educational establishments during the past three years. We know Ms. Wong's work through her substitution assignments at KZV during the academic year 2006-2007. **Ms. Wong** and I (**Yeprem Mehranian**) will team teach social studies to the 7th graders. As this arrangement allows me to be in the classroom on a limited basis, I will be able to think and act more proactively on issues of curriculum design and implementation, as well as to interact more closely with our students.

Edita Horoupian: Ms. Horoupian, KZV's Special Projects Coordinator, will join the school community as part time staff. Ms. Horoupian has lived in the United States since 2002. She holds a Masters of International Journalism from Yerevan State University. With an extensive repertoire of published articles to her credit, and several years of experience in public relations, Ms. Horoupian will directly report to the principal. Her work is to begin by focusing on alumni relations and by networking within the Armenian communities of the Bay Area, aimed at increasing KZV enrollment.

Other School and Curriculum Related Developments at KZV

Nanor Ekmekjian: I am pleased to announce expanded teaching responsibilities for **Ms. Ekmekjian**. This year Ms. Ekmekjian will not only take

charge of teaching Armenian to our first and second graders, but will also increase her hours as art teacher by providing weekly art classes for the children of the same two grades. We welcome this development, as exposure to art form a very important part of young persons' growth and maturity. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Chinchinian who acted as KZV's second grade Armenian teacher last year.

Ninet Moradi: Ms. Moradi has decided not to return to KZV for next year. Instead, Ms. Nadia Harutyunian, who served as teacher's aid in pre-school last year, will be assisting Ms. Karpanian in the kindergarten.

Ms. Christine Saryan: Ms. Saryan, last year's ESL teacher at KZV will also not be returning. We thank Ms. Saryan for her hard work and wish her success in her soon to begin graduate studies.

Ms. Balabanian: Yeretsgeen Balabanian will continue with her volunteer efforts at KZV for yet another year. She will be at school every Monday, to offer her music lessons to our students and to conduct Jeboor, the KZV Choir. We are thankful to Ms. Balabanian for her dedication to the educational and cultural well being of Armenian children and youth.

Ms. Arsine Arakelian: Ms. Arakelian, KZV's new and old volunteer—she has a long standing relationship with the school—will return for another year of tutoring students and helping out in the library. We thank her for her selfless commitment to the school and its community.

Ms. Guillermo Rey: Mr. Rey will return for another year of teaching chess to those with an interest in this powerful game. Incidentally, I keep wondering

why last year there were only boys who took chess!

Siran Nahabedian: Beginning the school year 2007-2008, **Ms. Nahabedian**, in addition to her teaching responsibilities, will assume the role of “**Dean of Faculty**” at KZV. In this role Ms. Nahabedian will make sure that channels of communication between the administration and the faculty, as well as among the members of the faculty itself, remain effectively open and that problems and glitches, as they arise in these domains, are facilitated. Ms. Nahabedian will also lead KZV in its effort to prepare for the next round of WASC accreditation visits scheduled to take place in the year 2009.

Mannik Kostanian: Starting September 2007 **Ms. Kostanian's** official title will be that of “**School Coordinator**”. In this role Ms. Kostanian whose teaching hours have been purposely reduced will assume a range of administrative duties, allowing KZV Principal increased time to pay more careful attention to the curricular, pedagogic, cultural, and networking aspects of life in the school. As school coordinator some of Ms. Kostanian's duties would revolve around such issues as, scheduling (includes continuous effort to expand KZV substitute teacher list), mentoring and supporting KZV teachers, facilitating parent-faculty relations, paying careful attention to various parental concerns before they reach the principal, coordinating some of KZV faculty meetings, taking charge of organizing professional development workshops, assisting Ms. Nahabedian with WASC, working with the PTA, and generally coordinating details germane to most KZV academic, social, and cultural events, functions, and traditions (Parent-Teacher Conferences, Student Council operation and functions, Graduation, etc.).

SAT 9 Scores: The scores are in. We have looked at them and will share them with our faculty when they return from their summer break. Mr. Armen Sedrakian, the KZV Education Committee chair, has prepared a longitudinal survey of the test results, complete with graphs and charts, which he will discuss with the parents during the first “Meet with the Administration” night, scheduled for OCT 5, 2007

After School Program: We are still in the process of finding a suitable teacher/teachers for our after school program and will keep you abreast this development as it unfolds. There will be no Homework Hall this year, but the after school program will include within it a 30-45 minute segment dedicated to homework. This year the KZV After School Program will not be free of charge.

School Starting and Ending Times, and Lunch Break: I am pleased to announce that this year our students are going to have an additional 10 minute period added to their lunch break. We have noticed that lunch is often consumed in degrees of unacceptable haste by many KZV students. This does not provide for a healthy habit and the school needs to address it. Those of our faculty who are assigned to lunch duty on a given day will make sure that the added segment is used for dining, and not to adding more time to the play period that follows lunch. This change, however, is going to mean that classes at KZV will begin **5 minutes** earlier, **8:15 am**, and end **5 minutes** later, **3:35**, than customarily. **Please take note of this very important change!**

The Process of Hiring New Faculty & Staff: Finally this is a good moment for a few words of clarification concerning the process through which we in the administration made decisions to hire

our new faculty and staff. Each new employee was asked to participate in two interviews, a preliminary and a more final interview, which in the case of our faculty also included representation on the part of KZV’s education committee. In addition, each newly hired member of the faculty was asked to teach a “demonstration lesson”, which was observed and assessed by the principal and by other members of KZV administration/faculty. In the case of Ms. Mikayelian, the interviews were conducted on the phone and the teaching was observed and assessed through the use of a video recoding of a lesson she taught in Armenia, specifically tailored to fulfill the requirements of her application to KZV. I believe that further institutionalization of such processes as hiring faculty and accepting students could go a long way to professionalize the overall culture of the school, irregardless of the administration in charge.

Thanks!
See you in a few weeks.

