



"A backpack hanging from the flag outside a Dutch home signifies that a student living there has graduated and can finally let their schoolbag rest"

KED

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A global rhythm, a local season of change

As our Executive Vice President, Christian Wetell, recently said, *"In our global work, the sun is always at its zenith somewhere."* That sentiment perfectly captures the reality of our organization. It is both a privilege and a genuine source of energy to be part of a dynamic community where, somewhere in the world, it is always prime time.

In any case, right now many of our schools are entering a season of transition. It is a time of celebrations and achievements, of important milestones reached, and of looking ahead to a well-deserved break. Across our community, students, teachers, and school leaders are closing one chapter and preparing to begin another. Students are moving on to the next grade level,

completing their secondary education, and preparing to take their first steps into professional life or higher education. Teachers are looking forward to a well-earned break, while school leaders take time to reflect, recharge, and begin shaping the priorities for the year ahead.

It is a unique time of year, both inspiring and demanding, as we balance the pace of everyday work with the promise of slower moments during the holiday season. It is also an emotional period. Many of us who work in education experience a mixture of pride and concern as students leave our care and embark on the next chapter of their journeys.

We can only hope that we have equipped them for an uncertain future:

that they leave us with confidence in themselves, compassion for others, and the courage to pursue their dreams. Time and again, we receive proof that this is indeed the case. Those moments remind us why our work matters and inspire us to give our very best in the academic year to come.

Before then, however, I hope each of you finds a moment of your own, a quiet pause in a hammock, a peaceful afternoon, or simply time to reflect and recharge. You have earned it!

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Boost Borås

In this issue of the KED Newsletter, we are pleased to spotlight Kunskapsskolan Borås, Sweden, a school that has been an active and valued member of the KED Network for many years. Established in 2008, the school provides education from preschool through Grade 9 and has built a strong culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Through its engagement in international projects and professional exchanges, Kunskapsskolan Borås has contributed significantly to the global KED community. These collaborations have not only supported professional learning and school development but have also created lasting relationships and memorable experiences for both staff and students.

Principal Björn Nyman reflects on the value of being part of the network: "I find it highly rewarding and educational for our school, our students, and our staff to be able to build strong collaborations with schools in other countries. There are many outstanding schools around the world that we can learn from, and hopefully we can also contribute to the development of other schools.

It is wonderful to have the KED Network, with its shared foundation of personalized education. Collaboration becomes much easier when we have common ground and share the same vision. Being part of the KED Network is a privilege, and having access to a network like this is unique within the Swedish school system."

This spring alone, several exciting international projects and assignments have been carried out. In the following three articles, teachers Anna-Carin Street, Zrinko Culjak, Helena Sundbaum, Camilla Olausson and Beatrix Jarnelid share their experiences, reflections, and key takeaways from these initiatives.

1. Friendship

From Data:
Talking to friends
Spending time together
Playing games

From Borås to Wigan: The first Pupil Exchange with Shevington High School

Capital of
the North,
Manchester

In March, ten Year 9 pupils and two teachers from Kunskapsskolan Borås visited Shevington High School in Wigan for our first exchange. Shevington is a KED-inspired school with a personalised approach to learning, including the SAIL curriculum and coaching that supports pupil independence.



The iconic Paddan boats, a classic sightseeing experience in Gothenburg

The aim was to build friendships, improve language skills, and help pupils experience a new school culture. Each pupil was paired with a “buddy” and followed a full school timetable. They took part in lessons, including analysing Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet.

One clear difference was the school uniform, burgundy jumpers, ties, and formal clothing, which made pupils feel like they had stepped into a Harry Potter world. They also adapted to addressing teachers as “Sir” and “Miss”, unlike in Sweden.

Teachers observed different teaching strategies, such as “The Countdown” for classroom focus, “I Say, You Say” for vocabulary learning, and Lego-based group activities to develop collaboration skills. Reward and consequence systems were also part of the school culture.

The cultural experience continued in host families, where pupils tried traditional British food such as fish and chips and trifle. A day trip

to Manchester gave insight into the city’s industrial history and the symbolism of the worker bee.

In April, the exchange continued in Sweden. The British pupils experienced a non-uniform school day, Swedish school lunches, and activities such as a guided tour of Gothenburg, orienteering, disc golf, and a barbecue by a lake in Borås. They also visited families for dinner to experience everyday Swedish life. The exchange was a great success, giving pupils new perspectives, stronger language skills, and lasting friendships. We look forward to continuing the partnership with Shevington High School.

Anna-Carin Street and Zrinko Culjak
Teachers,
Kunskapsskolan Borås

The whole group from Shevington in their smart school uniforms.



The enthusiastic teachers who were pleased with the trip.

Kunskapsskolan Borås and VeenLanden College Connect through the global goals

A visit to the new National Holocaust Museum was a significant and profoundly affecting part of the week.

Learning a new language in a classroom is one thing, but putting it to use while navigating a new culture, living with a host family, and building cross-border friendships is a whole different ballgame. This spring, grade 8 students from Kunskapsskolan Borås embarked on an unforgettable cultural and social

exchange with VeenLanden College in Vinkeveen, Netherlands.

The exchange program, funded in part by the Folke Bernadottes Minnesfond, brought together ten Swedish students and 19 Dutch students, all aged 14–15, along with their teachers. The primary goal?

To foster international understanding, build social and language skills, and explore cultural differences firsthand.

A week of discovery in Sweden
The exchange kicked off with the Dutch delegation visiting Sweden. While some stayed with host



Borås-Vinkeveen Global Goals Project 2026,



The students are developing their projects in mixed groups

families, others stayed at a local hostel. The week was packed with collaborative activities designed to break the ice and dive into Swedish culture.

Cultural Highlights

The students explored Gothenburg and visited the Museum of World Culture. Back in Borås, they took a guided art walk and visited the Textile Museum, where they tried their hands at textile printing.

Academic Collaboration

Alongside attending regular classes at Kunskapsskolan, the students visited the Navet Science Center for a lecture on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. This sparked the "Borås-Vinkeveen Global Goals Project 2026," where mixed groups selected a global goal to analyze and compare between Sweden and the Netherlands.

Cycling and canals: The return to the Netherlands

In May, the Swedish students packed their bags for Vinkeveen, where they experienced Dutch life up close, including seeing how one of their peers lives on a houseboat. The Dutch itinerary offered another round of incredible bonding experiences.

Exploring Amsterdam

The group enjoyed a city walk, a canal boat tour, and a deeply moving visit to the new National Holocaust Museum.

Local Life

The students cycled around the beautiful lake in Vinkeveen, took a boat trip with host families, and gathered for a

joint dinner and activities at a Dutch teacher's home.

The Grand Finale

At VeenLanden College, students attended classes and finalized their digital posters for the Global Goals Project, presenting their comparative research to the entire group.

Growing through challenges

While the activities were a hit, the real success lies in the personal growth of the participants. English served as the common language, which the students found immensely rewarding for their linguistic confidence.

Reflecting on the experience, the students shared inspiring feedback:

"I have truly learned more about myself and how I act in certain social situations. I am capable of doing more than I sometimes limit myself to daring to do."

"Through the entire exchange, I have developed a lot and become both more independent and braver in myself."

Parents noticed a significant shift in their children too, praising the program for pushing the teens out of their comfort zones. One parent remarked: "She dared to do something completely new on her own, which made her grow as a person, gain a unique experience, and make new friends." Another added that it builds "a



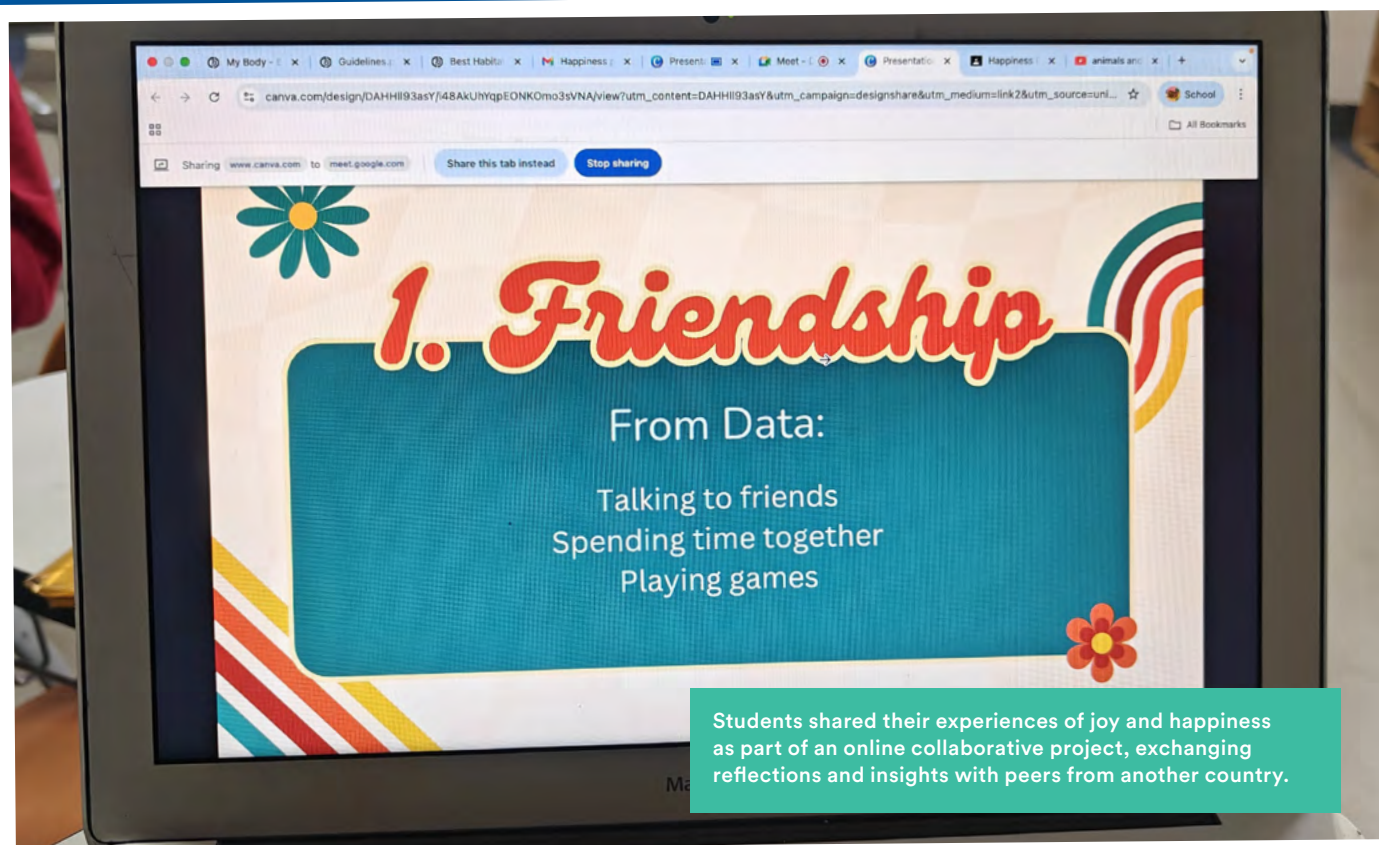
The scenic lake in Vinkeveen was explored, followed by a boat excursion with host families, and the day ended with a communal dinner and activities at the home of a Dutch teacher.

new version of independence, self-awareness, and a sense of responsibility."

Looking to the Future

With Kunskapsskolan Borås covering the remaining costs of the trip, school organizers view this new partnership with VeenLanden College as a massive success. Parents are already highly recommending the exchange to future classes, with some noting that they now have international contacts they hope to visit during future European road trips. This exchange proved that when young people are given the space to be creative, communicate, and collaborate without boundaries, they don't just learn about the world, they grow to fit it.

Camilla Olausson, Helena Sundbaum
Teachers
Kunskapsskolan Borås



Connecting across borders: Project “Happiness”

It is a rewarding experience to give students the opportunity to meet online and take part in a shared international project. Through digital collaboration, they can connect beyond the classroom, exchange ideas, and learn from peers in different parts of the world, making learning both more engaging and meaningful.

A great example of this is the “Happiness” project, where students from Kunskapsskolan Borås in Sweden and Kunskapsskolan Lucknow in India met online to explore well-being together and learn from each other’s perspectives across cultures.

Over four weeks, they combined personal reflection with international dialogue to better understand what well-being means in different contexts.

The students began by reflecting on their own sense of happiness and experimenting with small actions aimed at improving well-being, both through kindness to others and self-care. They later revisited their reflections to see how their perspectives had developed.

A key part of the project was the weekly online meetings, where students shared experiences and discussed their ideas across cultures. These conversations helped them discover both similarities

and differences in how happiness is understood, while also strengthening their communication skills and English language use.

The project encouraged reflection, empathy, and resilience, and gave students valuable insight into how everyday choices can influence well-being. By the end, both schools described the collaboration as meaningful and inspiring, with a strong wish to continue learning together across borders.

Beatrix Jarnelid
Teacher
Kunskapsskolan Borås



During the Quality Days hosted by 2College Ruivenmavo in May 2026, Debby Wernke Deputy Head of school, Jeroen van Schaik, teamleader and Joni Heijboer Head of school Focus Beroepsacademie, were congratulated on becoming a KED Partner School.

Congratulations to Focus Beroepsacademie on becoming a Kunskapsskolan Partner School

It is a pleasure to congratulate Focus Beroepsacademie KED Nederland on successfully completing the onboarding journey and achieving the status of Kunskapsskolan Partner School.

This major step reflects the school's dedication to continuous improvement

and student-centered education. Cecilia Carnefeldt, President and CEO of Kunskapsskolan Education, expresses pride in Focus Beroepsacademie for reaching this milestone:

"It is with great joy that I acknowledge the genuine work that Focus Beroep-

sacademie has done to strengthen its personalized approach to learning. The delegation that carried out the audit were entirely in agreement that it is now a fully accredited Partner School, with all the essential elements and opportunities for students to develop their full potential. Congratulations

“It is with great joy that I acknowledge the genuine work that Focus Beroepsacademie has done to strengthen its personalized approach to learning. The delegation that carried out the audit were entirely in agreement that it is now a fully accredited Partner School, with all the essential elements and opportunities for students to develop their full potential. Congratulations to everyone involved in this strong achievement.”

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Completing the summative audit

The summative audit marks a significant stage in the Kunskapsskolan onboarding framework. While the formative audit identifies strengths and areas for development, the summative audit focuses on evaluating the progress made since those priorities were established.

At its core, the review seeks to answer one key question:

Have the structures, tools, and quality practices identified during the formative audit been further developed and successfully embedded in the school's daily work?

Rather than serving as a completely new evaluation, the summative audit builds on previous findings, the school's improvement plan, and the actions implemented during the intervening

period. Through document reviews, lesson observations, and interviews, the audit team assesses how effectively developments have been translated into practice and whether the conditions for long-term success are in place. The review also examines how existing strengths have been sustained and enhanced while identifying opportunities for future growth.

A journey of growth and collaboration

Over the past year, Focus Beroepsacademie has worked closely with Kunskapsskolan Nederland and Kunskapsskolan Education in a structured school improvement journey.

Following the formative audit and survey analysis, the school developed an improvement plan and translated its goals into practical actions. Staff engaged in collaborative activities with other partner schools, exchanged experiences with colleagues across the

network, and continuously explored ways to strengthen learning outcomes and student development.

Throughout the journey, Focus demonstrated a strong alignment with the principles of the KED Framework, embracing the shared language, organizational structures, and ways of working that support collaboration across the Kunskapsskolan network.

One of the two highly engaged school leaders Joni Heijboer-Luymes, Head of School, expresses “After 10 years of building an educational change and the associated cultural change, we are proud that we can now call ourselves a Partner School of Kunskapsskolan. Such a process comes with ups and downs, but with a clear vision and a motivated team to provide the best education for students, we have achieved this great result.”

We congratulate the leadership team, staff, and students on this important milestone and look forward to continuing our collaboration within the growing Kunskapsskolan community.

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Visits to City Hall in Columbia with the amazing team from the US, together with participants from Sweden (Tina Weiselius, David Glotter, Kristin Arnberg), India (Akanksha Sharma), the Netherlands (Jesse van der Drift), and the UK (Lauren Lindley)

A Historic Exchange and the beginning of a long-term collaboration

Building meaningful international partnerships is one of the most powerful ways to inspire growth, innovation, and excellence in education. As announced in the previous KED Newsletter, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between KED and Charter Institute at Erskine, marking the beginning of an exciting long-term collaboration.

The collaboration gained further momentum in April 2026, when five dedicated teachers travelled to South Carolina, USA, to take part in a mathematics project focused on professional learning, the exchange of ideas, and educational development. This important milestone was followed in May by KED's Executive Vice President- Head of International Operations Christian Wetell's participation in the prestigious Awards

Banquet for leaders, teachers, and students, an event celebrating achievement, leadership, and the transformative power of education.

These experiences represent more than individual visits; they form the foundation of a growing relationship built on shared values, mutual learning, and a commitment to empowering both educators and students. The following articles

offer a glimpse into what was created through these remarkable events.

The Global Math Fellows Program: Kick-Off of a three-year initiative

The week marked the launch of the Global Math Fellows Program, a three-year international initiative led by the Charter Institute at Erskine in collaboration with Kunskapsskolan Education Network (KED) and Teach Right USA, aimed at strengthening mathematics teaching and learning through global collaboration.

As part of the inaugural exchange, five mathematics teachers from Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and India visited charter schools across South Carolina: Royal Live Oaks Academy, Lowcountry Leadership Charter School, American Leadership Academy Lexington, and Midlands STEM Charter School. The visits focused on observing instruction, engaging in classroom-based research, and participating in professional dialogue with principals, teachers, and students.

Across all schools, a consistent culture of strong values, inclusive practices, and high expectations was evident, supported by leadership characterized by presence, humility, and courage. A broader group of participating schools further reinforced this impression, highlighting a shared commitment to improving teaching and learning and a strong culture of collaboration across the network.

The program places Fellows at the centre of a professional learning community designed to strengthen mathematics instruction and improve student outcomes. Through collaborative planning, lesson observation, and the study of global best practices, participants continuously refine instructional strategies and engage in ongoing professional development.

Highlights

The week encompassed far more than can be captured in a few paragraphs. It offered a rich and authentic insight into life in the American South, supported by highly engaged and welcoming leadership throughout.

The experience included a visit to the City Hall, where there was an opportunity to engage in conversation with the senator. Participants also attended a local baseball game featuring the Columbia Fireflies, Visited the enchanting city of Charleston and experienced a school visit where students interacted with animals on a working farm.

Roundtable discussions were complemented by speeches and performances, creating a vibrant atmosphere of exchange and celebration. Throughout the week, educators were warmly received and highly valued, returning to their schools enriched with new knowledge, professional inspiration, and lasting friendships.

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Inspiring student interactions at the schools

In their own words

As noted by Jesse van der Drift, Math teacher at Dr Nassau College Aa en Hunze in the Netherlands:

“The trip to the USA has really made me reflect on whether I get everything out of my mathematics classes that is possible. It strengthened my belief that, with the way our classes are organised timewise, it is difficult to develop deep relational understanding. Achieving that requires us as teachers to design our lessons differently. I have become more aware that we sometimes stay at a rather low level of understanding according to the levels by Hiele*, something I also notice in students’ assessment results. The school visits and the many conversations during the trip have given me a renewed perspective on my own teaching practice and encouraged me to look more critically at how I design lessons to create richer mathematical learning experiences. Thanks again for the opportunity to be a part of this inspiring trip. It gave me a lot to think about.”

*The Dutch educational researchers Pierre van Hiele and Dina van Hiele-Geldof.

Akanksha Sharma, team leader for primary years and Math teacher at KKG, Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon, India expresses:

“This trip was both inspiring and affirming. During our roundtable discussions with educators from different countries, I was struck by how often conversations returned to the same goal: helping every child succeed. It was encouraging to realize that many of the practices being celebrated globally, such as encouraging exploration, maintaining high expectations, and supporting diverse

learning needs, are already integral to the KED programme. As a mathematics educator, the experience reinforced my belief that meaningful mathematics learning is not just about mastering concepts, but about building confidence, curiosity, and problem-solving skills.

Tina Weiselius, Quality and Development Manager at Kunskapsskolan Head Office in Sweden and the project manager responsible for the fellows, answers five questions:

What was your strongest impression from the trip to the USA, the moment that really stayed with you?

It’s hard to pick just one because there were so many memorable moments. But the welcome we got during our very first school visit was something I’ll never forget. The children came running out to greet us, waving flags from Sweden, India, the Netherlands, and the UK. We had absolutely no idea it was coming, and it was such a warm and heartfelt welcome. That moment really stuck with me.

Can you describe a situation during the trip where mathematics came alive in an unexpected or inspiring way?

One thing that really stood out was seeing how naturally students talked about their mathematical thinking. In several classrooms, students were working



Tina Weiselius Quality and Development Manager at Kunskapsskolan Head Office, Sweden, answers 5 questions

together, discussing strategies, challenging each other's ideas, and explaining their reasoning with confidence. It was inspiring to see math as something social and collaborative.

Which experience during the trip gave you new ideas as a Quality and Development Manager?

I'm coming home with lots of new ideas. The conversations we had about different approaches to math education were incredibly valuable, but seeing things in action was just as inspiring.

I've been interested for a long time in what happens when students get up, move around, and work on vertical surfaces; something Peter Liljedahl talks about in *Building Thinking Classrooms*. It was great to finally see this happening in real classrooms and to observe how it encouraged collaboration and mathematical thinking.

I was also really impressed by the way mini whiteboards were used. In several classrooms, they were a natural part of everyday teaching rather than something brought out occasionally. It

was easy to see how effective they are for quickly checking understanding, whether across the whole class or with individual students.

Another highlight was discovering *Teaching Walkthrus* by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli. I picked up a copy when I came home, and it's packed with practical ideas and strategies for teaching and learning. That was largely thanks to our colleague from the UK, who frequently referred to Sherrington's work on instructional coaching during our discussions. I can already tell it's a book I'll keep coming back to.

Was there a person, school, or environment that particularly influenced the way you think about teaching?

Honestly, I'd like to highlight every school we visited, every school leader, every teacher, and especially the students. It's impossible to choose just one. The students shared so many thoughtful reflections and asked such insightful questions. I was genuinely impressed by their curiosity and engagement. After all these visits and conversations,

one thing is clearer than ever: running a school is one of the most important jobs in the world (a big shout-out to all principals!), and teaching is one of the most meaningful professions there is. Every day, educators have the chance to make a real difference in students' lives. If you had to sum up the whole experience in the USA in one feeling or image, what would it be?

Togetherness.

More than anything, this trip reminded me that real learning happens when people connect with each other. Whether it's a teacher and a student in a classroom or colleagues from different parts of the world sharing ideas, those human connections are what make learning meaningful. That's something no technology or system can ever fully replace.

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There is a strong commitment to personalized learning at the Charter Institute at Erskine. Christian Wetell delivered an inspiring talk

Charter Institute at Erskine Annual Awards Banquet and Teacher Recognition

The Charter Institute at Erskine

Annual Awards Banquet is an annual celebration held in Columbia, South Carolina, honoring achievement, leadership, and service across its network of public charter schools. The event brings together educators, students, school leaders, and staff from across the state to recognize excellence in education and community impact.

"The energy in the room was a powerful reflection of what education can achieve"

Each year, the banquet features performances, presentations, and formal award ceremonies that highlight accomplishments from both traditional and virtual learning environments. A key part of the program is the Teacher of the Year recognition, which honors outstanding educators for their instructional quality, leadership, and commitment to student success.



In addition to teacher awards, the event also recognizes students, volunteers, and staff working in areas such as student services, administration, and school leadership. These honors reflect the Institute's broader mission of valuing contributions across the entire school community.

Overall, the banquet serves as a platform to celebrate achievements and reinforce the organization's commitment to high-quality public charter education. This year's banquet featured Christian Wetell, Executive Vice President-Head of International Operations, as the

guest of honor, and he summarized the evening as follows:

"The energy in the room was a powerful reflection of what education can achieve when communities come together with a shared purpose. Seeing students, teachers, and school leaders gathered under one roof was a strong reminder of why this work matters every single day. The pride and professionalism across the network were truly inspiring and speak to the strength of a shared educational mission. Events like this reaffirm the commitment to building schools where excellence and belong-

ing go hand in hand, and there is deep gratitude for the dedication of educators and the achievements of students, which were on full display throughout the evening."

Christian was invited to participate in a week-long program of activities, during which he joined Executive Leadership Roundtable discussions on personalized learning in a global context alongside Vamshi Rudrapati, Chief Operating Officer and Cameron Runyan, CEO and Superintendent.

Like the participants in the Math Fellow program, Christian was deeply impressed by the outstanding hospitality, generosity, and guidance provided throughout the visit. He particularly highlights the warm welcome and support offered by Tracey Williams, Christy Junkins, and David Crook, whose commitment helped make the experience both inspiring and memorable.

Looking ahead

This partnership between the Charter Institute at Erskine and the Kunskapsskolan Education Network is only just beginning.

Together, we are shaping the next steps, strengthening research, deepening school partnerships, expanding teacher exchanges, and preparing for the 2027 Global Math Summit.

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