

SCHOOL PROFILE



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF KINSHASA

Excellence in Education since 1961

TASOK Mission

Drawing on the strengths of a committed and culturally diverse community, The American School of Kinshasa aims to provide a high quality American primary and secondary education for English-speaking students living in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Founded in 1961, TASOK serves mainly English-speaking expatriate students from the international, missionary, diplomatic, and business communities. The school is located on a 42 acre campus provided in 1965 by the auspices of the United States Embassy in Kinshasa. The U.S. State Department of Overseas Schools sponsors TASOK and usually provides a small annual grant primarily to offset the expenses of hiring expatriate faculty from the U.S. TASOK is fully accredited in the United States as a Kindergarten through Grade 12 school by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The majority of the TASOK faculty is certified in the United States.

Within the campus are 40 air conditioned classrooms, two science labs, two computer labs, two art classrooms, and two separate libraries for elementary and secondary students with a total of 18,000 volumes. There is a wireless intranet throughout the campus, providing Internet access in all classrooms, both computer labs, both libraries, and all offices. In the 1980s TASOK had a student body of over 600 with separate facilities for Elementary, Middle, and High School. At present with a student population of approximately 250, TASOK uses the Elementary and High School portions of the campus. Housing for foreign-hired faculty is also on the compound.

The campus also contains good sports and arts facilities. The Cultural Activities Center (CAC) is a theater seating about 300 people. There are two volleyball courts, two cement basketball courts, two soccer fields, a 25 meter pool, and special rooms for art, music, and drama. The secondary basketball court is covered and has bleacher seating.

Despite the turbulent times in the DRC since 1991, TASOK has remained open continuously, with only temporary closures. The school has maintained its U.S. accreditation throughout these times and has consistently offered a U.S. quality curriculum to TASOK students. The current period of stability in this part of the DRC has produced an influx of new students and a steady growth in population.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The TASOK school year is divided into two semesters, August to January and the end of January to June. Each semester is divided into two quarters. Reports are issued four times per year for each student, and face to face parent conferences are held once each semester. Each school year has 180 instructional days. School for all students begins at 8:00 and concludes at 14:30.

TASOK uses a standards based curriculum that meets all U.S. requirements. The high school curriculum is geared toward preparation for university. Students who successfully meet the written TASOK Graduation Requirements earn a U.S. High School Diploma. The American honors program, the Advanced Placement Program (AP), is available in many high school subjects. TASOK students are regularly admitted to schools in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Students who speak and are literate in English but whose skills are not yet fluent may be admitted to TASOK provisionally, dependent on their enrollment in TASOK's English as a Second Language (ESL) program. All students applying for admission to TASOK are subject to assessment by the school before being admitted.

GRADE LEVEL PLACEMENTS

Students wishing to enter Kindergarten at TASOK must be age 5 before November 30 of the year chosen for entry. Students wishing to enter grade 1 must be age 6 before November 30 of the year chosen for entry. Based on assessment, TASOK reserves the right to place students at a grade level below their usual level. In particular, students whose English level is below fluent may be placed one level below their age indicated grade in order to provide time for appropriate language acquisition. Our aim is always the success and good adjustment of the student.

Students who transfer in January to TASOK from southern hemisphere school or other schools with a January to December calendar are generally placed in the grade just completed. The labeling of grade levels varies from nation to nation. In general, U.S. Kindergarten is the equivalent of Primary 1 in the U.K. and most European systems. Thus, Grade 5 at TASOK is the equivalent of Primary 6 or Class 6 in other systems.

TASOK reserves the right to determine the grade level placement for a newly admitted student.