MONEY FOR GOOD GRADES

What is happening? I am at your service.
“Money for Good Grades” is a title of Tiri for the Aga Khan Foundation Development Network Civil Society Project. It includes a series of other comic strip booklets that challenge the reader on the role of ethics and integrity as contributors to success in the conduct of business.

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MONEY FOR GOOD GRADES

Introduction

Corruption levels are high especially in the educational systems of Central Asian countries. It is usual to bribe secondary school principals and teachers to admit the children or during the studying process. One of the reasons for this is low monthly salaries of teachers.

Asel Murzaev’s family is living in the city. Asel wants to choose an appropriate school for their 6 years old son Arslan.

Characters

1) Asel Murzaeva
2) Shalo - friend of Asel
3) Salikh - Asel’s husband
4) Arslan - Asel’s son
5) Elmira Gorokhova - teacher of maths, physics and geometry
6) Mrs. Gulnara Karaeva - school principal
ASEL MURZAEVA CALLS HER FRIEND SHALO AND SAYS

Look, I would like to put my son Arslan in a good school within our district

Well, if I may offer a suggestion, why don’t you take him to school # 27?

And why not to the school # 7? They say kids enjoy a good education there

What are you looking for - a good education or a good school leaving certificate? As far as I know School # 7 is not in the habit of taking bribes - and so you will not be able to buy high grades if your son needs them.
IN THE EVENING ASEL TALKING THIS OVER WITH HER HUSBAND

Look, why don’t we take Arslan to school 27 in our district.

Why in the world to that ordinary school?

It will be easier for him to study there and receive a school-leaving certificate with competitive marks.

All right, let’s do it.
SEVERAL YEARS LATER...

Darling, you have got but fair and bad marks in maths, physics and geometry. What’s going on?

We have a new teacher on those subjects. She is old and very difficult; there’s nothing I can do about this.

ASEL TALKING TO HER HUSBAND

Our son has utterly bad marks in maths, physics and geometry. Something has to be done.

What do you suggest?
I think we will have to grease the palm of that teacher.

Which means we need to bribe her to the amount of 1000 som.

Why precisely 1000 som?

That is the usual amount to bribe teachers.
Yes, I guess you are right

What about Arslan's learning, though?

These days you need high marks in the official documents of the school more than learning

ASEL GIVING ARSLAN AN ENVELOPE WITH SOME 1000 SOM

Make sure to give this envelope to your maths teacher, Elmira Gorokhova
And what if she does not take it?

There, there, everybody needs money and especially teachers

SO ARSLAN TAKES ALONG THE ENVELOPE TO SCHOOL AND HERE ARE THE SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS

This is to you from my mother

Tell your parents I want to see them
The teacher didn’t take it and said she wants to see you.

Why didn’t you accept my present? I know the teachers’ salaries are very low in our country, and I decided to try and help you. In return, of course, you could give good marks to my son, Arslan.

Well, actually I don’t need this type of gift, and furthermore, if you want your son to do well at school you must get him to study more.

OK, it remains to be seen.
This dopey teacher at school does not give in. We need to talk to the principal and have things ironed out.

What is happening? I am at your service.

My son is a schoolboy with your school and we should like him to have good marks in maths, physics and geometry. The problem is that your new teacher Gorokhova does not seem to be willing to give him good marks.

Your problem will be solved. I will see to the matter. So you can feel at ease and go home.
Fetch me Elmira Gorokhova

You have sent for me, Mrs Karaeva?

A student of yours Arslan Murzaev, incidentally, has very kind parents

So what?
I mean to say that you should not disappoint such people; it would help them if you gave good marks to Arslan in your subjects.

But this boy is one of the worst students in the class and besides he is not motivated to study at all.

That does not matter. Make sure you give him extra classes and see that he gets good marks.

What does this mean about the reputation of our school and an honest assessment of learning?
Just stop worrying about that. We are not going to be the first and surely not the last

No, I can't do this. ............

Shall I remind you of the number of those on the list awaiting a new job opening; or you will spare me this? Go and do exactly as I told you, otherwise....!!!

Or what?
By the end of this year I am sure to come up with an appropriate solution.

And what if I go to the Municipal Schools Board?

It won't work. You know why? My nephew is in charge of the District Department on Education.

I'll admit I didn't know.
Then why do you think it comes along all the time that each year our school takes the first or the second prize at Olympiads? Only due to the intellect of our kids?

This is unfair towards other schools

ELMIRA TO HER FRIEND

We have what we have. So go ahead and correct Arslan’s grades. And what’s more, forget about this talk.

If only this school had a kind of Committee on Ethics or something to settle these disputes, I would refer to them as the last resort. But there is no such thing.
So, what are you going to do now?

There is only one way out.

The next day Elmira resigns. She leaves the forms with the secretary and quits that school for good.
QUESTIONS

-Discuss how Elmira acted?

-Do you think Arslan`s parents are right?

-What would you do if you were

a) Elmira
b) Principal
c) Parents?