

What: Islamic Schools' Admins' Meeting

Date: Monday, June 1, 2020

Host: Shaza Khan, ISLA joined by Dr. Patricia Salahuddin and Admins (28 participants)

Agenda:

- I. Racism in America; Islamic Schools' role and response
- II. Pre K & Early Elementary School: Reopening considerations
- III. Misc

I. Discussion on Racism in America, our Schools' Role & Response:

George Floyd's murder; social unrest; racism in America

What can ISLA do to support Islamic schools in addressing racism in their schools?

Nuha (IN):

- School is isolated from rest of community
- How can we connect with our neighbors to improve relations?
 - Send cookies as goodwill gesture, begin relationship-building

Khadijah Hankton, Tarbiyah Academy:

- Implicit and explicit bias training
- Celebrating diversity through the curriculum
- Deliberate examination of inclusion in our schools
 - Marketing, videos

Sadeeyah, Mohammed Schools of Atlanta

- Literature
- Addressing racism head-on when incidents occur
- Focus on the Prophet's teachings
- Help students become conscious of how their actions impact their thoughts: Songs kids are listening to, etc

Patricia, ISLA Board

- Starting with ourselves: What are our biases, prejudices?
- All of this is happening so that we can grow (we need to respond to this call/reminder from Allah)

II. Pre K & Early Elementary

Huda- Aqsa School (IL)

- Small school, only 3-4 years old
- How will we really socially distance kids this young, is this logical?
- Are we really going to be safe?
- Who will we follow/listen to in reopening?

Heba (IN)

- Different plans for reopening based on scenarios
- 2 days for different grades on campus, 2 days off campus
- They have a committee comprised of teachers, parents, students (staff recommends the students and parents who will join this committee); they are looking at the re-opening options. When they begin meeting, they will break into sub-committees or assign specific tasks or research items
- They have state-level resources to assist them:
 - On my way Pre-K
 - Child Care Development Funds
- Governor will provide guidance in JULy

Ardell:

- Their school is using focus groups to help with options and re-opening plans
- Know that their youngest students need hands-on curriculum
- She thinks that since the beginning of the school year is always focused on rituals and routines, maybe that's what will happen this year too, but with new rituals and routines focused on COVID-19 prevention practices
- They are examining how challenges can be addressed with all stakeholders (engaging parents too)

Marwa: Leaders Prep (Orlando, FL)

- Recognizes that it's hard for the parents to handle the students on their own, but it's also hard for the school to open with all the CDC standards... trying to find a good balance

Elizabeth Tonnon:

- Challenge they face is that they need more enrollment for financial/budgetary reasons, but they know that limiting class sizes will be important due to COVID-19
- Hardest thing is owning the decision as this has implications for health and safety

Nuha (IL)

Their school is a choice school, so the governor won't let them stay virtual if that is what's decided by state

Ardelle

- Their board chairperson is a physician so she is advising them on school re-opening
- Other schools can ask medical practitioners to join their school re-opening committees and focus groups

III. Misc

Heba's school had PD via Zoom with The Family and Youth Institute, Dr. Madiha Tahseen, on "Understanding & Mentoring Muslim Youth" - 2 day workshop; she highly recommends it!