

The Huda Academy

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WHERE GUIDANCE PROMOTES EXCELLENCE

STAFF HANDBOOK

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School Description and Governance

School Description

The Huda Academy is a Pre-kindergarten through Sixth Grade elementary school. We primarily serve central Arkansas' Muslim immigrant and revert community. All students are welcome regardless of religious and/or ethnic background. We serve approximately 80 students and our student to teacher ratio is eight to one.

Mission Statement

Our primary mission is to give students a strong sense of belonging to the Muslim community, to provide excellent well-rounded education in a healthy Islamic environment, and to provide students with a solid grounding in Islam and Arabic which will enable them to live God-conscious lives.

Governance

The Huda Academy consists of three governing levels: The Huda Academy School Board, Principal and Vice Principal, and Teachers. The School Board's main responsibilities lie in policy making, long term strategic planning, and fund raising. All day to day activities are the responsibility of the Principal, Vice Principal, and Teachers.

Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Teacher Status Definition

All staff, paid teachers, volunteer teachers, and volunteers are considered teachers for the purposes of evaluating teaching performance and accountability. All teachers must follow the policies set forth in this handbook.

Equal Employment & Non-Discrimination

Equal opportunity shall be provided for all teachers and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability, competence, and academic qualifications

without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age.

Positive Work & Learning Environment

The Huda Academy is committed to providing a positive work and learning environment where all individuals are treated fairly and with respect. Intimidation, harassment, and gossip have no place in a positive work and learning environment (Islamic environment).

Dress Code and Personal Appearance

Discretion and good judgment on the part of employees in their style of dress and personal appearance are essential to the professional image and the safe operation of The Huda Academy.

Employees are expected to dress in a professional manner and a modest attire to work that is consistent with the Islamic values of The Huda Academy.

Jeans and Jump/jogging suits are not allowed during school business hours at The Huda Academy. Dark Denim or semi formal denim is allowed.

E-Mail and Mailbox

It is The Huda Academy's expectation that employees will check their email and mailbox on a regular basis and respond to messages in a timely manner.

Phone Use

The school phone may be used for school business only. Teachers should answer the phone by saying "Assalamu alaikum. Thank you for calling The Huda Academy. How may I help you?"

Cell phones may be used in the office, but should be turned off during teaching or student supervisory hours (including recess and lunch duty). Cell phones may also be stored in the office.

Review of Lesson Plans

Teachers must have lesson plans for the next week reviewed by the Principal or Vice Principal by 3:30pm of each Thursday.

Parent Communication

Teachers must regularly communicate with parents in writing no less frequently than on a weekly basis. Teachers must ensure students write down homework in such a way that parents are able to understand their student's responsibilities. Messages from parents must be replied to within one school day, e.g., written notes, phone messages, and email.

Computer Utilization

Internet use in the classroom is allowed with office approval. Teachers must submit a lesson plan with detailed information regarding why the internet access is need.

Unauthorized or excessive personal use of computers or equipment is prohibited if it overburdens the computer network, results in substantial use of system capacity, or otherwise subjects the institution to increased costs or risks.

Users of school computer resources have the responsibility to respect intellectual property rights of authors, contributors and publishers in all media and to protect user IDs, passwords, and systems from unauthorized use. They must also adhere to the terms of software licenses and other contracts and to other school and data access policies.

Release of Teacher Information

The following information regarding your employment may be released in response to requests received from outside the school:

1. Name
2. Verification of current or past employment
3. Position or job title

Other teacher information is considered confidential and may be released to individuals outside the school only upon authorization of the Principal.

Probationary & Qualifying Periods

All new, regular teachers must serve a probationary period of three months. During the probationary period, you must demonstrate your ability to satisfactorily perform the job for which you were hired. If your work is judged to be unsatisfactory, you may be dismissed.

During the probationary period, if you experience problems in performing duties which are assigned to you or you have concerns about your performance, you should discuss this with the Principal.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are important to The Huda Academy. Every teacher is expected to work when scheduled and to arrive on time. Student learning depends on people working together and coordinating their efforts.

Tardiness

Teachers must notify the Principal if they anticipate being late to work. However, there are times when unforeseen circumstances occur. If the teacher arrives late, the Principal must be notified when the teacher has arrived.

Late arrival, leaving for non work related reasons, and leaving work early will be grounds for deducting time from annual personal leave or paycheck.

Absence

Teachers must notify the Principal of an anticipated absence with as much notice as possible. Teachers absent without previous permission or without notifying the Principal are subject to disciplinary action, including termination. A pattern of tardiness and or absence is grounds for termination.

Student Attendance

Teachers are responsible for tracking student attendance; including tardies and leaving early.

Before School Duty

Teachers are expected to arrive no later than 7:45am. Teachers are considered tardy if arriving after 7:55am.

Teachers will be assigned before-school duty at 7:30am on a rotating basis. This is part of the Teacher's commitment to the school. Students must be supervised at all times.

During the morning assembly, teachers must stand near their home room students to ensure they behave appropriately.

Recess Duty

At least two Teachers must be on recess duty at all times. Teachers must ensure students do not engage in dangerous activity or damage school property. Teachers must direct students to put away all playground equipment at the end of recess. Cell phone use is prohibited during recess duty. Students must be supervised at all times.

After School Duty

Teachers must remain at school supervising their students until their students have left; no later than 3:45pm. If students are enrolled in a club or after care program, the Teacher may leave once their students have begun their after school programs. Students must be supervised at all times.

Pre-kindergarten Break Schedule

Teachers are assigned to cover Pre-kindergarten breaks and classroom help on a regular basis.

Children of Teachers

Teacher-parents should avoid contact with their children during the school day as not to negatively impact classroom management and student learning. Every effort should be made to have all students in assigned classrooms.

Paid Holidays

Labor Day
Shortened Ramadan Schedule
Eid-ul-Fitr
Thanksgiving

Eid-ul-Adha
Winter Break
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Spring Break

School Leave

Teachers are prohibited from leaving school premises during school hours. This includes planning periods.

Personal Days

All regular full-time teachers receive 3 days of paid time off per year. This time may be used as half days and for any purpose at the teacher's discretion.

Sick Leave

All regular full-time teachers receive 5 days of sick leave per year. These days accumulate at the rate of four hours per month. The teacher may request sick leave for personal illness or injury and, if necessary, for medical or dental appointments. If the teacher must use sick leave for such appointments, requests should be made as far in advance as possible. Appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.

Teachers are expected to be on the job at all times. If a teacher must be absent, s/he must notify the Principal as soon as possible. If s/he cannot call, a family member or friend should call. Classroom instruction must continue and arrangements must be made for someone else to assume instructional responsibilities. Teachers must notify the Principal as to when s/he will return to work.

Jury Duty

If the teacher is called for jury service, s/he must notify the Principal as soon as possible of the dates of absence and, when possible, the probable length of time involved. The teacher will be excused from his or her job, without loss of pay, for the reasonable period of time required for such jury service. In addition, the teacher may keep any pay s/he receives for required jury service.

Resignations & Terminations

Teachers terminating employment must give at least 30 days advance notice in order to resign a position in good standing. In turn, teachers will be given 30 days advance notice if being terminated because of circumstances for which they are not responsible, such as, discontinuation of job, reorganization, etc.

Advance notice is not required when termination is a result of incidents which in and of themselves are so serious as to justify immediate termination. Advance notice is also not required if there is a failure to meet punctuality or attendance standards, misconduct, abuse of privilege, violation of school policy or when progressive discipline has been followed. Upon termination, teachers must return any supplies or equipment issued to them to perform their job.

Complaint & Grievance Procedure

Teachers who have questions or problems related to employment are encouraged to discuss such matters informally with the Principal to obtain appropriate answers or advice.

If the informal discussion does not satisfactorily resolve the matter, the teacher should submit a written complaint to the Principal. If the complaint involves the Principal the informal verbal or written complaint should be submitted to the school's Grievance Committee point of contact (Sara Tariq).

When a complaint reaches the Grievance Committee, it will convene and respond to the issue within three calendar days. Both parties will be notified of any decisions and appropriate courses of action in writing (email or postal mail).

During the course of any grievance issue, all parties should remain courteous and professional.

The Grievance Committee is comprised of two School Board members, two parents, and the Vice Principal. All Grievance Committee issues will remain confidential.

Professional Development

To provide support for work-related success, The Huda Academy offers a broad range of training and development programs. These include courses and seminars. Many programs are scheduled during work hours while others are held during off-duty hours. When professional development activities are offered, they are mandatory.

Tuition Fee Reduction for Dependent Children

Teachers are entitled to a 50% discount for student tuition fees. The registration fee will automatically be waived. There is no discount on the \$300 book fee.

Classroom Management

Disciplinary methods must be provided to the Principal and parents in grades from Pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Students who fail to use good manners and follow directions should be sent to the Principal's office.

Classroom Interruptions

Every effort should be made to avoid classroom interruptions during instructional time. Messages should be given to Teachers and students between periods, during recess, or after school.

Professionalism

Teachers serve as role models for students. Teacher snacking in the classroom should be avoided. Care should be given to use appropriate body language and voice levels. Students look to adults for examples of proper behavior and speech.

Parking

Teachers should park in the Islamic Center of Little Rock parking lot or in the lot adjacent to the school. Parking in the school playground and street parking are prohibited.

Confidentiality, Privacy, & Respect

Every reasonable effort should be made to maintain the privacy of personal student issues, e.g., grades and family issues. Speech regarding student performance and family issues should be limited to other Teachers directly involved in specific incidents and should never take place in front of students, parents, or family members. School staff must be respectful of everyone in the school community.

Media and Public Relations

Under no circumstances should Teachers make contact with news media, e.g., TV, radio, or newspaper journalists, without the prior consent of The Huda Academy School Board via the Principal.

Tolerance

Tolerance refers to an attitude of respect given for the differences that exist among people. For example, when teaching and discussing the differences that exist between Muslims and other religious groups, teachers must speak thoughtfully and respectfully. They must be careful to not introduce religious bigotry and arrogance. Students are always listening and watching for models of behavior and manners.

Planning Periods

Planning periods are provided to give Teachers time for planning and grading during the school day. Full-time teachers may not leave during the school hours.

Evaluations

All staff will receive written evaluations on a quarterly basis as well as an annual evaluation to be followed with a contract renewal in March of each year. The Principal or Vice Principal will observe at least one class per teacher per quarter.

Drug & Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited on all school-owned or controlled property and at school sponsored or supervised activities. The Huda Academy has an obligation to provide a healthy and safe environment for all students, teachers and visitors.

The Huda Academy offers the following resources to teachers and students: education and information about the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse; programs which address unlawful controlled substances and alcohol use, including personnel actions that may result from such violations; self-referrals, as well as supervisory referrals, to drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation programs available through community agencies. Drug tests may be administered on a random basis.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as: unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual activity by anyone involved with the school.

The Huda Academy, in accord with providing a positive discrimination-free environment, mandates that sexual harassment in the workplace or the educational environment is unacceptable conduct. Sexual harassment is subject to discipline, up to and including termination from The Huda Academy.

The Huda Academy prohibits retaliation against any person who brings an accusation of discrimination or sexual harassment, or who assists with the investigation or resolution of sexual harassment.

The Huda Academy may discipline an teacher or student who has been determined to bring an accusation of sexual harassment in bad faith.

Criminal Background Checks

To determine suitability for employment or continued employment, The Huda Academy has the right to check the criminal conviction records of any teacher or applicant for employment. Consideration will be given to the relationship between the conviction and the responsibilities of the position that is or will be held. A relevant job-related conviction is grounds for termination of employment or non-selection of an applicant.

Conviction is defined as including all felonies and misdemeanors except minor traffic violations in relation to any position which does not require driving. For positions that require operation of a motor vehicle the term conviction shall include minor traffic violations. Falsification of application materials, including failure to disclose criminal convictions, is grounds for termination employment or non-selection of an applicant.

Violence in the Workplace

The Huda Academy strives to provide a safe and secure work environment for all teachers. Toward this end, intimidation, threats and acts of violence, with or without the presence of a weapon, will not be tolerated. Individuals found to engage in behavior in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Teachers, who are the victims of violence, believe they may be the recipients of violence, or who have knowledge of potential violence against others, are encouraged to promptly notify the Principal or contact the Little Rock Police Department (911).

Mandatory Staff Meeting Schedule 2010

January	8	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	22	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
February	5	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	19	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
March	5	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	19	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
April	2	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	16	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	30	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
May	14	Friday 2:30-3:30pm
	28	Friday 2:30-3:30pm