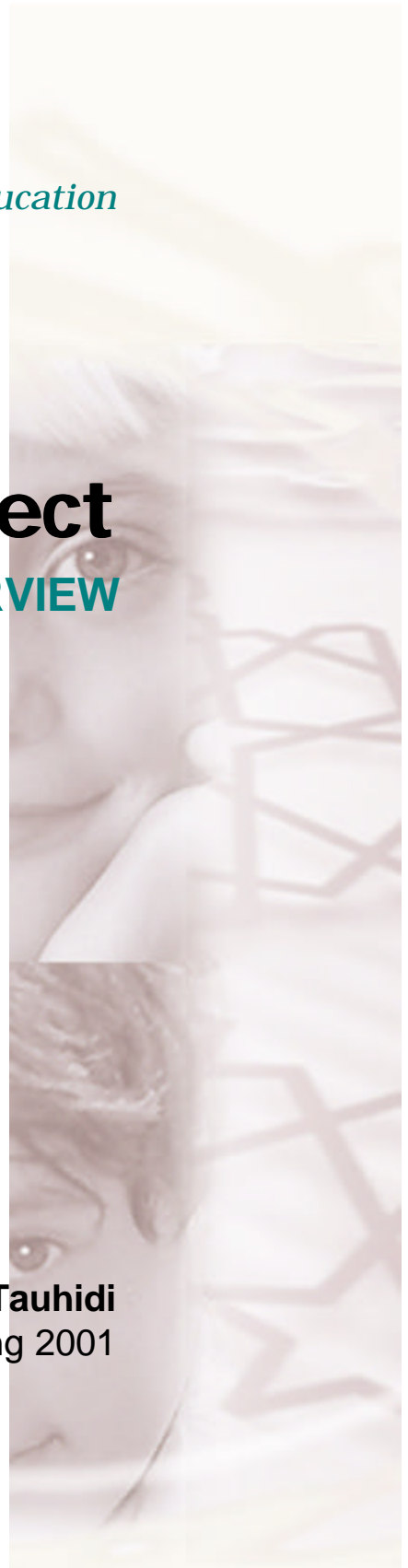


Towards a Renewed Vision of Islamic Education

The Tarbiyah Project

AN OVERVIEW

Dawud Tauhidi
Spring 2001



The purpose of this document is to propose a framework for reform of Islamic education for school-age children and youth, particularly those growing up under the influence of Western culture. One essential step in achieving reform of Islamic education is to reshape the curriculum. This document seeks to address two important and closely related questions about Islamic education, namely, *what* to teach and *how* to teach it. The document suggests a more effective paradigm for teaching Islamic values to today's Muslim youth based on the concept of *powerful ideas* and *authentic instruction*.



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The Tarbiyah Project

A Renewed Vision of Islamic Education



Overview

The Tarbiyah Project is a vision, a framework, a set of programs, and a strategic plan for reform of Islamic education in North America.

Vision. The Tarbiyah Project is first a concept and a vision—a concept of what Islamic education is suppose to be (its principles and goals, its content and its approach) as well as a vision of what Islamic education must become in practice, if we hope to secure our children Islamically.



Framework. Second, the Tarbiyah Project is a framework—a framework for designing and structuring the curriculum of Islamic education, both “what” is taught and “how” it is taught. The Tarbiyah Project has a clearly-defined vision of the proper content, structure, and strategies for Islamic education.



Program. Third, the Tarbiyah Project is a set of programs—programs that focus on teaching Islamic values and encourage creative approaches to Islamic teaching and learning. Three such programs are currently being field tested in the member schools of the Tarbiyah Consortium.



Strategic Plan. Fourth, the Tarbiyah Project is a strategic plan—a plan for developing curriculum resources for Islamic education in North America, including a plan of curriculum development, staff and parental training and development, and a program of publications in the field of Islamic values education.

Vision

CURRENT CHALLENGE

Islam is founded on the principles of *belief* and *righteous conduct*. This connection between values and practice lies at the very heart of the Islamic way of life. Nevertheless, a crisis in values and character development exists throughout the Muslim ummah today that is working to undermine the fabric of the Islamic spiritual, moral and social system. Lacking a clear moral compass, Muslims today find themselves marginalized socially, disoriented spiritually, and generally in a quandary about their role and responsibility in modern society. Without a proper understanding of the Islamic value system, there is little hope that the true goals, or *maqasid*, of Islam can be achieved.

Furthermore, the system of education in Muslim society has played a major role in the lack of strong character development among today's Muslim youth. This includes the system of Islamic religious education as well. Many Muslim educators and practitioners would acknowledge that Islamic education, as it is taught today, has been ineffective in teaching and inspiring Muslim children to adopt and adhere to Islam as a way of life and a system of personal and social values.

The crisis of modern-day Islamic education is rooted, in large part, in the way we teach our children about Islam. This approach, which focuses primarily on conveying “information” about Islam, has failed to capture the hearts and minds of our youth. A renewed approach is therefore needed—one that addresses the real needs and concerns of students themselves. The field of Islamic values education—with its focus on beliefs, values, manners, feelings, attitudes, and moral literacy skills—should be the focus of contemporary Islamic education, as it was in the time of the Noble Prophet (ﷺ).

Fortunately, a sense of renewal is in the air today and enlightened Muslims are eager to find real solutions to the problems and challenges facing the Muslim community and, if necessary, to re-examine traditional paradigms within Muslim society—including *how* and *what* we teach our children about Islam. To achieve this goal, a unified and concerted effort is needed. Muslim educators, practitioners and families must increase and unify their efforts to find creative solutions that will effectively bridge the gap between values and practice in the upcoming generation of Muslim youth. Islamic schools have a crucial role to play in developing solutions and programs that will help foster this

VISION

“The crisis of modern-day Islamic education is rooted, in large part, in the way we teach our children about Islam.”



HISTORY

The Tarbiyah Project began out of a concern for the direction and approach to modern-day Islamic education.

PRINCIPLES

The Tarbiyah Project makes an important distinction between teaching “about Islam” and teaching “about being Muslim”.

understanding among students and promote the role and responsibility of the family in the process of Islamic *tarbiyah*.

HISTORY OF THE TARBIYAH PROJECT

The Tarbiyah Project began several years ago when a group of individuals involved in the field of Islamic education met to reflect on the direction and results of current Islamic educational practice. As a result of these early meetings and discussions, a national awards competition was sponsored in 1995 by Dar al-Islam Corporation in Islamic character education. The purpose of this competition was to encourage ways of strengthening the connection between values and practice in Islamic education and to explore ways of unifying the efforts of Muslim educators, practitioners and families in this area.

The top winners of this competition were awarded grants of \$10,000 a year and were invited to join a consortium of Islamic schools that would work collectively in the area of Islamic values education. This led to the formation of the Tarbiyah Project in 1996. The purpose of the Tarbiyah Project is to bring together the talents of Muslim educators and intellectuals in order to find creative and effective ways to inculcate the Islamic value system in the hearts and minds of today’s Muslim youth. The project founders believe strongly that a program of Islamic values education is the heart of the Islamic education process and the best cure for the moral crisis of Muslim society today. The goal of the Tarbiyah Project is to expand our knowledge of successful practices in this area and to encourage and disseminate the most effective *tarbiyah* projects for others to learn from and implement.

TARBIYAH PRINCIPLES

The vision of Islamic education proposed by the Tarbiyah Project makes an important distinction between teaching “*about Islam*” and teaching “*about being Muslim*.” This is based on the view that the goal of Islamic education is not to fill our children’s minds with information “*about*” Islam, but rather to teach them what it means really to “*be*” Muslim. The project has set for itself the ambitious goal of developing a systematic curriculum to teach students the meaning of “*being Muslim*.” The framework of this curriculum is the area of Islamic values education—which focuses on beliefs, values, manners, rights and responsibilities, feelings, attitudes, and moral literacy skills.

Assumptions

Several assumptions about the nature and scope of Islamic teaching and learning undergird the work of the Tarbiyah

Project and its vision of Islamic education. These include the belief that Islamic education, first and foremost, must focus on teaching values and must emphasize issues of Islamic identity and self-esteem, that it must address the real needs and concerns of students, that it must emphasize and provide for training in leadership, and that the involvement of parents is essential for achieving the goals of Islamic education.

Effective Teaching & Learning

The vision of Islamic teaching and learning proposed by the Tarbiyah Project is based on a dynamic, rather than static, view of Islam and Islamic education. This view is rooted in the belief that the mission of Islam is to positively effect and transform the world, and that the purpose of Islamic education is to prepare young men and women capable of carrying out this mission. According to this view, effective Islamic teaching and learning must have the power to *inspire* and *transform* students in the process of Islamic *tarbiyah*.

Several factors are essential for effective teaching and learning to occur. Muslim educators and practitioners must become better aware of the important role these factors play in effective instruction and future programs in Islamic education should be evaluated in light of these or similar principles. These factors include the following:¹

Meaningful. Students should feel that the content they are studying is worth learning because it is *meaningful* and *relevant* to their lives. Students must see the usefulness and potential application of this knowledge to their everyday lives.

Integrative. Instruction must be integrated--encompassing and engaging the whole child (spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually and physically). It must be integrative in the broad range of topics it addresses and its treatment of these topics; integrative across time, place and culture; integrative across the curriculum; integrating knowledge and values with action and application. These integrative aspects have the far-reaching potential of truly enhancing the power of Islamic teaching and learning (and thus making it genuinely "tauhidic").

Values-based. Instruction should focus on values and considering the ethical dimensions of topics. In this way, Islamic education becomes a powerful vehicle for character development, thus achieving its true goal. Educators must realize also that every aspect of the teaching-learning

"Effective Islamic teaching and learning must have the power to inspire and transform students in the process of Islamic tarbiyah"



¹ The following paragraphs are adapted from *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*. Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1994., pgs. 162-170.



experience conveys values and provides opportunities for students to learn about values.

Challenging Students must be challenged to thoughtfully examine what they are studying, to participate assertively in group discussions, to work productively in cooperative learning activities, and to come to grips with controversial issues. Such activities and experiences will help foster the skills needed to produce competent Muslims capable of presenting and defending their beliefs and principles effectively.

Active. Effective Islamic teaching and learning should demand a great deal from both the teacher and students. The teacher must be actively and genuinely engaged in the teaching process—making plans, choices and curriculum adjustments as needed, rather than mechanically following a manual. Muslim teachers must be prepared to continuously update their knowledge, adjust goals and content to students' needs, take advantage of unfolding events and teachable moments, develop examples that relate directly to students, and other such practices that facilitate active and meaningful instruction. Furthermore, effective instruction must emphasize hands-on and minds-on activities that call for students to react to what they are learning and to use it in their lives in some meaningful way.

In addition, educational research suggests that certain instructional standards must be in place for meaningful and authentic teaching and learning to occur, and that student achievement increases when these standards of instruction are implemented.² These are no less true for Islamic Studies instruction.

Authentic Instruction

Higher-Order Thinking — involves the manipulation of information and ideas by synthesizing, generalizing, explaining, hypothesizing, or arriving at conclusions that produce new meaning and understanding.

Deep Knowledge — involves addressing the central ideas of a topic or discipline with enough thoroughness to explore connections and relationships, and to produce complex understanding.

Substantive Conversations — involves dialogue and extended conversational exchange with experts and with peers about a particular subject matter or topic in order to build shared understanding.

² See: *A Guide to Authentic Instruction and Assessment: Vision, Standards and Scoring* (Fred Newmann, Walter Secada, and Gary Wehlage).

Real-world Connections — involves making connections between the knowledge gained through participation in a community of learners and the larger issues of the community and world outside the classroom.

Authentic Assessment

Organization of Information. Students are asked to organize, synthesize, interpret, explain or evaluate complex information in addressing a concept, problem or issue.

Consideration of Alternatives. Students are asked to consider alternative solutions, strategies, perspectives, or points of view in addressing a concept, problem or issue.

Disciplinary Content. Students are asked to show understanding and to use ideas, theories or perspectives considered central to the academic discipline.

Disciplinary Process. Students are asked to use methods of inquiry, research or communication characteristic of an academic discipline.

Elaborated Communications. Students are asked to elaborate on their understanding or conclusions through extended written or verbal communication.

Connection to the World. Students are asked to address a concept, problem or issue similar to one they are likely to encounter in life beyond the classroom.

Audience Beyond the School. Students are asked to communicate their knowledge, present a product, or take some action for an audience beyond the classroom.



CONTENT

"The Tarbiyah Project believes that the content of the Islamic Studies curriculum must be linked to the real needs and concerns of students and to the larger issues facing the world in which they live."

Framework

CONTENT

The Tarbiyah curriculum draws much of its content from the foundational disciplines of Islamic Studies (such as *Aqidah*, *Tafseer*, *Fiqh*, etc.). However, it believes that this content must be linked to the real needs and concerns of students and to the larger issues facing the world in which they live. This is the challenge of modern-day Islamic education.

The Tarbiyah Project curriculum is designed around nine specifically chosen content areas essential to character development. These include the areas of *beliefs*, *rights*, *duties*, *values*, *manners*, *feelings*, *attitudes*, and *moral literacy skills*.

Below is a brief description of these nine content areas.

Beliefs (إيمان). Every system of values is based on a system of beliefs and on a particular view of the world. A society's values necessarily derive from its beliefs about God (ﷻ), nature, man, society, life and death. The first component of a *tarbiyah* curriculum must therefore be an examination of the Islamic belief system and its views on these key issues. The focus, however, should not be theological or philosophical, but should be practical. That is to say, "What are the implications of these beliefs for my life and what impact should they have on my life as a moral person?"

Rights (حقوق). Citizenship in any group or society is based on a complimentary set of rights and obligations. To be a responsible member of the Muslim *ummah*, students must understand their rights, as well as their duties and responsibilities Islamically. Many of the problems in Muslim society today result from a failure to appreciate and abide by this fundamental principle of citizenship. Students must be led to understand the interconnection between these two sets of values and their role in effective Islamic citizenship.

Duties & Responsibilities (فرائض و مسؤوليات). The study of Islamic religious duties, or *arkan*, is another important component of the proposed program. It is not coincidental that the Quran emphasizes that the real purpose of these religious duties is to develop character (see Quran 29:45, 2:183, 9:103, 2:197). In the traditional curriculum, the emphasis is placed on the mechanics, or *how to*, of performing these religious duties; little time is given to their real importance in the process of character development. In a *tarbiyah*-centered curriculum, the moral and social dimensions of these religious duties would be emphasized. Focus would also be given to other religious, civic and social responsibilities.

Virtues (رِعْءِل وِفْعٌ). Virtuous conduct and character development is the heart of Islamic education, the central purpose of Islam, and the mission of our Noble Prophet (ﷺ). To elucidate this, the Holy Prophet said, “*Verily, I was sent to foster noble character.*” The key focus of Islamic education must therefore be the teaching of values.

Prohibitions (نَهْيٌ). Along with learning about the virtuous qualities that a Muslim seeks to acquire, students must also be taught about the immoral qualities and prohibited actions that a Muslim must avoid in life. Students must be led to internalize the belief that a Muslim’s life, and Muslim society, can only flourish and develop by shunning such immoral and prohibited actions.

Manners & Etiquette (تَأْدِيبٌ [تَدْبِيرٌ]). Proper Islamic manners and etiquette are another essential component of a comprehensive *tarbiyah* program. The proper etiquette of talking, greeting others, eating, etc. are a sign of a well-educated and refined human being. Nowadays, however, most of our children learn these manners from their friends, television and popular culture. With the breakdown of traditional family values, it is essential that Islamic etiquette be taught as an integral part of a comprehensive *tarbiyah* program.

Feelings (مَشْرُوعٌ). Equally important, a successful *tarbiyah* program must provide opportunities for Muslim children to talk openly about their feelings—feelings of love, happiness, fear, anger, loneliness, etc. This has not been a formal part of the curriculum of Islamic education—and why we lose the interest of many of our children. Wholesome and genuine moral development only occurs in an atmosphere of support and acceptance. Through the *tarbiyah* approach, Muslim children can be free to express their feelings—and in the process learn how to deal constructively with their many feelings and emotions in a way that best serves them individually and collectively as Muslims.

Attitudes (مَبَازِغٌ). *Attitudes* are another important part of a comprehensive *tarbiyah* program, since they influence and direct a person’s behavior. No *tarbiyah* program can be complete without a discussion of Islamic attitudes on such issues as war, violence, sin, guilt, oppression, dating, abortion, etc. It is through a discussion of these types of real issues that Muslim children will see and believe that Islam is relevant to their personal lives.

Moral Literacy Skills (مَبَازِغٌ). The goal of education is to train children to be capable of functioning successfully in life when they grow up. As the world becomes increasingly more complex, Muslim children will need a set of critical skills that will allow them to survive Islamically in the society





APPROACH

"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand."

Ancient Chinese Proverb

of the 21st-century³. Therefore, most important of all, an Islamic values education program must raise Muslim students who understand moral issues and their moral implications; must teach them how to think morally on their own, how to weigh and decide between competing values, how to defend their beliefs; and must equip them with the skills to understand, face and solve the moral problems facing them and society. This must be the real aim of Islamic education.

STRUCTURE

Modern-day Islamic education is faced with a tremendous challenge. The demands of modern, secular society, as well as the practice of traditional Islamic learning, place considerable pressure, both positive and negative, on the framework of the curriculum. These competing, and oftentimes conflicting, demands require an underlying organizing principle around which to build a coherent and unified curriculum.

The central goal of character education and personality development serves as the organizing principle for the Tarbiyah curriculum. The Tarbiyah Project believes that Islamic education is concerned essentially with personality development, i.e., values, identity, self esteem, belonging, leadership, and other issues centering around developing a strong Muslim personality, capable of fulfilling its responsibility of stewardship, or *khalifah*, in society. The Tarbiyah curriculum is therefore structured to meet the overall goal of service to God, *ubudiyah*, and responsible and effective citizenship in society.

The proposed curriculum is therefore built around twelve *powerful ideas*, or themes. It is believed that these twelve powerful ideas represent the essential components for building a strong Muslim personality and represent the key, critical concepts of Islamic education around which the curriculum should revolve. They include the following items found on Table 1 below.

APPROACH

Children become moral individuals through *understanding*, *seeing* and *doing*. By cultivating their minds and souls, and by giving them opportunities to see and practice values, students

³ It is worth noting that classical Islamic education did, in fact, provide the early Muslim community with problem-solving skills (such as *ijtihad*, *qiyas*, *ijma'*, *istihsan*, etc.) that equipped them to face the challenges of their particular time. This is the legacy of true Islamic education. In contrast, "traditional" Islamic religious education--as it has been taught for centuries now--has failed to equip Muslim youth with the critical skills necessary to face the difficult moral and social dilemmas of modern society. Without such a set of critical thinking and judging skills, moral illiteracy and cultural stagnation will result.

Powerful Idea	Content Strand	Goal
▪ God, the World & Me	Belief & Piety	God Awareness
▪ Knowing Yourself	Self-concept & Well-being	Self Confidence
▪ Becoming a Moral Person	Moral Development	Moral Reasoning
▪ Understanding & Being Understood	Communications	Mutual Understanding
▪ Getting Along with Others	Relationships	Cooperation
▪ A Sense of Belonging	Family & Community	Belonging
▪ Drawing Strength from the Past	Culture	Inspiration
▪ Islam for All Times & Places	Change & Adaptability	Resilience
▪ Caring for Allah's Creation	Justice & Peace	Justice
▪ Facing the Challenge	Contemporary Issues	Facing Challenges
▪ Making a Difference	Action & Responsibility	Civic Responsibility
▪ Taking the Lead	Leadership Skills	Leadership

Table 1: Powerful Ideas

learn the importance of sound moral decisions and are more inclined to adopt them as their own.

A comprehensive values education program must utilize both direct and indirect methods of teaching values. Methods of teaching values can be divided into three major categories, which are briefly described below.

Inculcation (Thinking) (فأشز وءأف... رءءل آأ...)

Inculcating values through lecturing, discussion, reading, moralizing and other such means is the most common approach for developing values in students. This approach aims at developing the students *understanding* of the importance and benefits of acting morally. Though, perhaps, not the most effective approach, this is an important basis and prerequisite for genuine moral development.

Modeling (Seeing) (آءز |ز-ءف... رءءل آأ...)

Modeling is the most important approach to fostering moral development in children and adolescents. Children imitate what they see others doing—good or bad. Role-modeling was the principal method used by our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) in teaching the message and spirit of Islam to the early Muslims (and for which they received their distinctive title *sahabah*, or companions (رض)). Not through talk, primarily, but through his living example was the Prophet able to show his companions how to act and live morally. Muslim children and students desperately need to see Islamic values and principles in practice—in their homes, their schools, their communities and in Muslim society at-large. Then they will believe in Islam.





Facilitation (Doing) (اَفْعَالٌ اَجْرًا رَعِيَّةً)

Facilitating is another broad strategy for fostering moral development. By this is meant This strategy provides opportunities for children and students to be personally engaged in the moral process—by facilitating students’ thinking, decision making and action vis-à-vis important moral issues. Students must learn how to make good choices and decisions in such important areas as: careers, marriage, leisure time, politics, health, use of money, spirituality, to name a few.

After lecturing and showing students how to live morally, they must be given the opportunity, with our guidance, to go out and try for themselves to put their learning to practice in the real world. This is an indispensable part of learning and developing. Inside and outside of the classroom, this means creating opportunities for students to determine their own opinions and conclusions, to make choices for themselves, to develop their own rules, and to experience a sense of moral autonomy and empowerment.

Development (اَفْعَالٌ اَجْرًا رَعِيَّةً)

The goal of values education is to train students to make morally-correct choices and decisions on their own. By utilizing the previous strategies and incorporating them into the learning process, students will develop an aptitude for good decision making. They will be well trained to make morally-correct choices. In addition to these strategies, there are other important skills that need to be developed for students to achieve this high level of moral maturity. These include such skills as critical thinking, assertiveness, cooperative learning, conflict resolution, etc.

In addition, it is worth noting here that the instructional approach proposed by a leading American textbook publisher (Harcourt, Brace) replicates the intuitive instructional model earlier proposed by the Quran and followed by the early generations of Muslim scholars (but ironically is generally not followed by Muslim educators today). The work of the Tarbiyah Project is based on this model, believing that it is the correct foundation for a renewed approach to Islamic education. The following chart illustrates this approach⁴:

Wonder: I wonder about the world around me and I ask questions. (Quran ?::?)

⁴ Adapted from Harcourt, Brace.

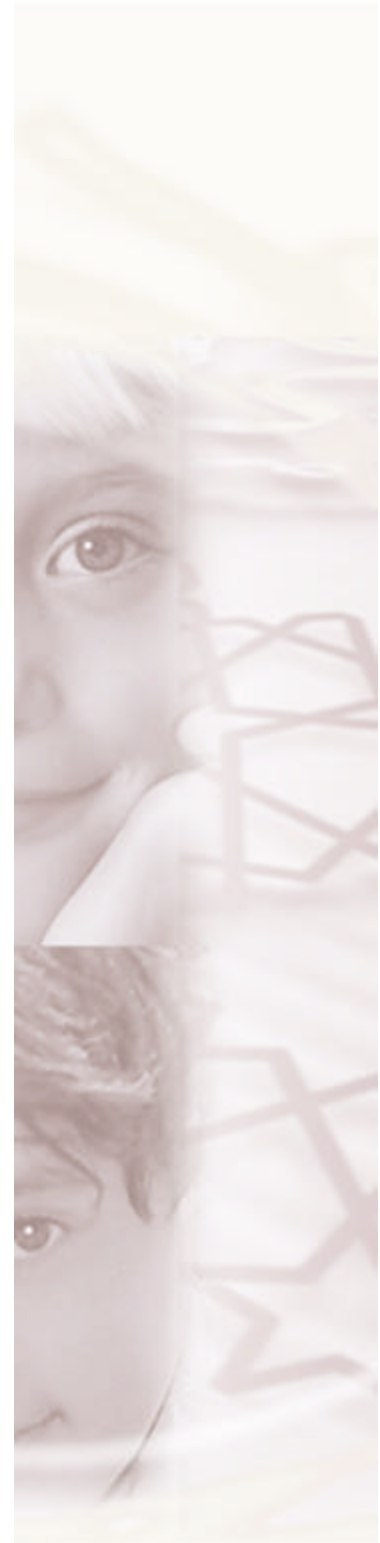
Plan: I plan a strategy seeking answers to our questions.
(Quran 2:129)

Investigate: I investigate by doing activities and by using resources to get information; I record my findings. (Quran 29:20)

Reflect: I reflect on my findings, summarize what I learned, and evaluate my efforts at finding answers. (Quran 38:29)

Share: I share what I learned with different audiences and in different ways. (Quran 41:33)

Act: I act on what I have learned by applying it to my world outside the classroom. (Quran 34:37)



The Tarbiyah Project

Curriculum Design Elements

PARADIGM OF DISCOVERY

- Wonder, Plan, Investigate, Reflect, Share, Act

VALUES EDUCATION

- Beliefs, Rights, Responsibilities, Virtues, Prohibitions, Manners, Feelings, Attitudes, Moral Literacy Skills.

POWERFUL IDEAS

- God, the World & Me. Knowing Yourself. Becoming a Moral Person. Understanding & Being Understood. Getting Along with Others. A Sense of Belonging. Drawing Strength from the Past. Islam for All Times & Places. Caring for Allah's Creation. Facing the Challenge. Making a Difference. Taking the Lead.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

- Meaningful, Integrative, Values-based, Challenging, Active.

AUTHENTIC INSTRUCTION

- Higher-order Thinking, Deep Knowledge, Substantive Conversation, Real-World Connections.

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

- Organization of Material, Consideration of Alternatives, Disciplinary Content, Disciplinary Process, Elaborated Communication, Connections to the World, Audience Beyond the Classroom.

PROGRAMS

- Pillars of Power, Children of Charity, Value of the Month, Junior Leadership.

The Tarbiyah Project

An Integrated Values-Based Curriculum



PROGRAMS

"Several programs have been developed and implemented in the participating schools during the past three years."



Tarbiyah Programs

Several programs have been developed from the Tarbiyah Project. These programs have been implemented in the participating schools⁵ of the Tarbiyah Consortium during the past three years. These programs continue to be developed and some material is now available for use by other schools. Below is a brief description of these programs.

PILLARS OF POWER

The pillars of Islam are meant to serve as a dynamo in the individual and collective lives of Muslims. The *Pillars of Power* program emphasizes the basic pillars of Islam and their importance as a source of strength in the daily life of a Muslim. In addition to developing the students' factual knowledge of the pillars and how they are performed, the program focuses on developing *concepts* and *values* in students, and emphasizing students' *understanding* the real purpose of these pillars in the life of a Muslim. Emphasis is also placed on the *application* of these pillars in the individual life of the student and the collective life of the school and the Muslim community at large.

VALUE OF THE MONTH

In the *Value of the Month* program teachers and schools organize their values education program by using a *value-of-the-month* approach. Each month, the school focuses on one core value. This program provided the school with a values-based theme for each month. Teachers are requested and expected to find "teachable moments", or opportunities, to incorporate the month's theme into the curriculum, including language arts, social studies, science and Islamic studies. Teachers and students are encouraged to find and create stories, poems, songs and artwork that tie into the month's theme.

CHILDREN OF CHARITY

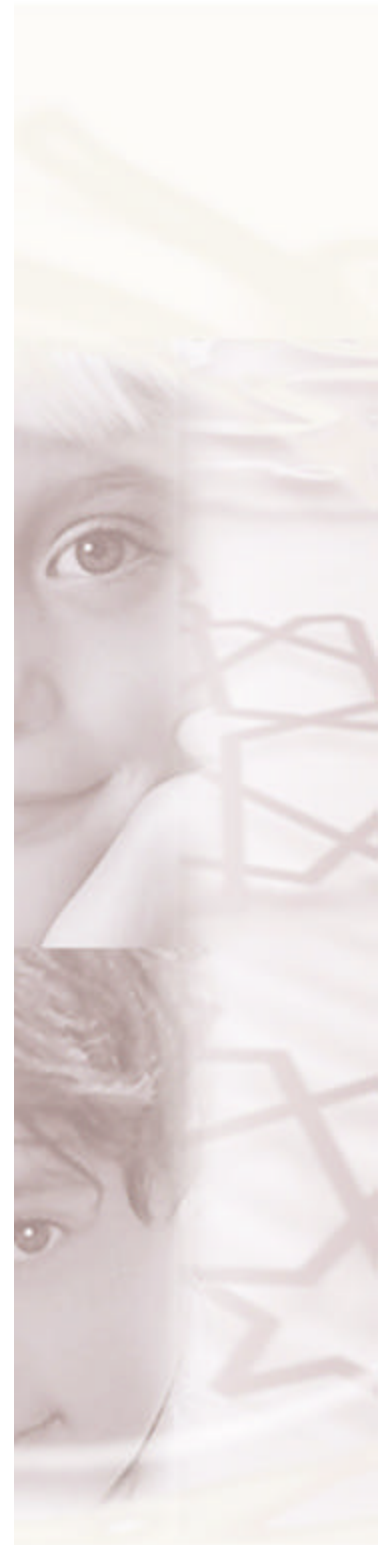
The *Children for Charity Program* is a service-learning program of systematic charity work and fund-raising by students. The purpose of this program is to get students to "*think*" about the needs of others and to "*do something*" to

⁵ These schools include the *Islamic School of Kansas City*, Kansas City, MO; *Universal School*, Bridgeview, IL; *Al-Noor School*, Brooklyn, NY; and *Crescent Academy International*, Canton, MI.

make their lives better. The focus of this program is not on collecting money, but rather on instilling in Muslim children a sense of social responsibility, a desire for helping others, and providing them with opportunities to develop the important values of giving and sharing, collective decision making (*shurah*), prioritizing, cooperation, and other core Islamic values.

JUNIOR LEADERSHIP

The goal of the Junior Leadership Program is to identify potential leaders among the student population and to prepare them to be leaders in their community. The program concentrates on developing the students' skills in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, survival research, and public discourse. The program consists of a full course of study in leadership training. Topics include historical and doctrinal justification of public discourse, History of Modern Muslim Work, History of Muslims in America, time management, teamwork, project planning and management, and public speaking.



Resources

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Dawud Tauhidi, a native of Philadelphia, embraced Islam in 1972. He studied at Lehigh University and later studied Arabic at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1980, he graduated from al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt with a degree in *Usul ad-Din*. For two years he taught at the Islamic Community Center School in Philadelphia.

In 1983, Mr. Tauhidi completed his master's degree in Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan and in 1985 completed his doctoral exams in the same field. During that time, he served as a teaching and research assistant and nearly completed a second master's degree in Teaching Arabic as a Second Language. His major research interests

have included *Towards a Model of an Islamic Philosophy of Education, Educational Institutions in Early Islam, the Affective Domain in Second Language Acquisition, Oral Proficiency Testing of University-Level Arabic, Semantic Structures and the Worldview of the Quran* and other topics.

For nearly two decades, Mr. Tauhidi has been involved in various aspects of Islamic education—as a student, teacher, researcher, administrator, and curriculum developer. Since 1985, he has been actively involved in the Islamic school movement in North America and was a founding member of the Council of Islamic Schools in North America (CISNA). In 1985, he co-founded the Michigan Islamic Academy in Ann Arbor, MI, where he served as Principal for three years. In 1988, he helped form the Michigan Education Council and co-founded Crescent Academy International, a college-preparatory, Islamic school in suburban Detroit, where he has served as Director since 1988.

Mr. Tauhidi has experience in the planning and establishment of schools, policy development, school administration, Arabic & Islamic Studies curriculum, Teaching Arabic as a Second Language, values education, public relations, media and graphic design, and fundraising for Islamic schools.

During the past five years, Mr. Tauhidi has been working to develop an Islamic values education curriculum for Muslim children, known as the *Tarbiyah Project*. This project seeks to provide a more effective paradigm for teaching Islamic values to today's Muslim youth based on the concept of *powerful ideas* and *authentic instruction*. For more information about the project, he can be contacted at Crescent Academy International, 40440 Palmer Road, Canton, MI 48188, Phone (734) 729-1000, Fax (734) 729-1004, Email: DTauhidi@msn.com, on the web @ www.Tarbiyah.org.