
TRANSFORMING THE WEEKEND SCHOOL EXPERIENCE: *MEETING THE NEEDS OF TODAY'S STUDENTS*

Connect to Lead and Love of Learning:

Educationalist Ignacio Estrada believes “If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn.” This philosophy is especially incumbent for our weekend school students. Weekend school educators today face the immense challenge of teaching to children growing in modern western societies. Along with meeting the challenges of time, space, and planning weekend school teachers today will now have to deal with the changed Muslim student. This task of instilling Islamic education may become ever more daunting given two extraordinary factors that differentiate today's children from previous generations. Through a number of on-site observations a trend is surfacing in which students and weekend school educators are quickly drifting apart from each other. Up until now part-time school teachers and students faced only a mild cultural gap as very often the teacher is raised in an Eastern or Middle Eastern society and the student, until recently, was first generation (children of immigrant parents) was raised in western society. Very soon teachers will be dealing with a monumental change in student attitudes and behaviors as society is now shifting into second and third generation students (children of western society born parents). It is vital for Islamic school educators to earnestly discuss and well plan for this change to avoid the diminishment of traditional values and practices from taking root.

The second major factor that is significantly leading to the change in student today is the boom in technology over the past two decades. We have embarked on an era where very often the student has more “know-how” than the teacher. The rapid changes in technology have revolutionized the way students learn, communicate, and absorb information. Teachers need to embrace this change in education and use it to their advantage. Research indicates that incorporating technology in a classroom can actually enhance a child's learning experience. Studies conducted over the decade show that technology supports learning, motivates students, and creates a positive impact on both language and literacy development (ACT, 2004; CEO Forum, 2001; Boster et al., 2004; Mann et al., 1999; Tracey & Young, 2006; WestEd, 2002).

Today's weekend school educator needs to be savvy and equipped with the right tools to help them address current challenges like management and planning and better prepare for forthcoming issues like educating the changed Muslim student.

Educators working in the field will use a hands-on approach to coach participants in the three sessions listed below. Participants will take away practical tools and templates on how students learn at different stages of development, samples of varying assessments, and basic instruction on how to incorporate technology in a weekend school classroom.

2014 WEEKEND SCHOOL SESSION TOPICS:					
Date	Friday, January 16, 2015	Time	5:30-6:45 p.m.	Type	Seminar / Workshop / Discussion
Session	Topic	Highlights			
A	The Mind of a Weekend School Student Speaker: Habeeb Quadri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding public school pressures and using this information to build positive Islamic identities • Learn simple tips on how to build stronger bonds (given the challenge of limited time) between teacher to student and student to student. • Making the weekend school experience meaningful in the context of public school and application of technology. 			
B	Curbing Weekend School Anxiety Speaker: Dr. Tasneema Ghazi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce stressful classroom management issues to maximize class time • Knowing when, how, and what type of assessment to use can help decrease anxiety (for both teachers and students) and increase student engagement and content retention. 			

Session Speakers:

Dr. Tasneema Ghazi, Ph.D: Pioneer in the forefront of Islamic education, aided in the establishment of numerous Islamic schools, developed over 125 publications, conducts global educational seminars

Br. Habeeb Quadri, M.Ed: Widely recognized in the education sector for providing extensive seminars, workshops, training sessions, and consulting to schools across the United States and abroad, Principal of MCC Day School, co-author of several publications related to today’s youth, National Advisor for MYNA