

Standards for Weekend School Management

Shahida Alikhan

Guidelines for good management

In order to face the challenges of the Weekend Schools and to acquire recognition and respect from the school community it is very important to develop standards in the area of management. In order to have a good management there is a need to set goals of what one wants to achieve. All the stake holders (board, administration, faculty and parents) should come together to outline the goals for the weekend schools. The common goals of the weekend school should be providing basic knowledge of the five pillars of Islam, Quranic studies and teaching Arabic language as a means for reading and understanding the Quran. To develop American Muslim identity, to develop God consciousness and use prophetic examples as a model to be emulated throughout life and fostering responsibilities to God, Society and the environment. Once the goals are set, and then establish the structure.

Taking into consideration age and capability, the students should be placed in different levels. This is very difficult as there are students of different ages at different levels. Once this is done establish the schedule for the day. Begin the school day with an assembly with Quranic recitation and the school pledge. This is the time when everyone comes together. Announcements and important reminders are made for the upcoming events; Divide the day into three periods and recess. Schedule teachers to teach two periods and keep one period for them to prepare for the classes. This will help them to get organized and be ready.

The next important standard would be the setting up of policies and procedures for the teachers. Compile a handbook so that teachers are aware of what is expected of them and how to address themselves. Begin by making a list of professional ethics. Then list all the employment policies, everything that is required to create a personal file. List the job duties, hours of work, time keeping requirements, performance evaluation, termination and exit interviews.

Put together the wage and salary policies, salary increase, creative pay and payroll deductions. The next important item is employee safety and health. What they should do in case of emergencies, accidents and inquiry and when they should return to work after illness. Also include in the handbook the standards of conduct and what corrective actions will be taken. The attendance standards, dress code, personal appearance and hygiene policies should also be included.

Another important standard is communication. This could be achieved through staff meetings. Important information should be posted on the bulletin boards so that all staff is aware of any changes and upcoming events. There should be a specific complaint handling procedure included. All this will help the faculty to be on the same page and aware of what is happening in the school.

The last standard is to develop volunteerism and parent involvement. Establish a parent/teacher organization like at any regular school. Have all parents become members. Ask parents to volunteer as teachers aids, supervising snack, and running a snack store at the school or masjid. Provide parent education classes. This will raise the self esteem of both the child and the parent, motivate them to come to school regularly and the school could get help in managing their responsibilities.

When all these standards of weekend school management are put in place the school will gain respect from the community and a lot of challenges will be eliminated.