



# *Al-Falah Academy*

*Excellence in Islamic and Academic Education*

Assalaamu aleikum, Respected Supporters of Al-Falah Academy,

I typically do not comment on current events to our AFA community, like elections, crime, or other news. We all have our ways to get updated on all that. However, the current events happening now regarding the most recent killings of innocent black Americans by police require some attention from any organization, but especially from a Muslim organization dedicated to transforming our students into the best of Believers and the most loyal followers of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

I hear about our African-American mothers' concerns about allowing their children, especially teen boys, from walking outside without supervision, for fear that they will be accused or treated with suspicion as criminals. I learned that the parents of our black students who are getting a driver's license have a very serious talk with them about what to do if the police stop them for any reason. I see the brokenhearted look on our black staff members' faces, knowing that the color of their skin is still an issue in 2020, after centuries of struggle and so many movements and speeches and martyrs to try to right the wrongs of racism.

As Muslims, we teach our students that a core principle of our faith is anti-racism. Our beloved RasulAllah (saws) made anti-racism the heart of his final sermon:

*All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a white – except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood.*

At Al-Falah, students see the beautiful diversity around them in their own classmates, all hailing ethnically from a different part of the world. This is a powerful “invisible curriculum” that our students experience, the knowledge that Muslims come from every race and nation, and unite under the banner of the principles of justice of Islam.

Our students learn that *the Ummah is like one body; if one part is hurt, the whole body suffers*. We want our Al-Falah Academy community to know that our entire staff is suffering because of the pain our society is experiencing. We are here for each other—colleagues, students, families—who are wrongly discriminated against

in this broken society of ours. Muslims are not immune or inexperienced in discrimination and horrific injustice, both here at home in the US and overseas, even in our Muslim-majority countries.

However, the depth of ignorance in our society must have an effect on all of us, despite the wisdom we gain from our Deen. We must actively listen, learn, and grow to become more just persons, because despite our best intentions, we are affected by the stereotypes in our society. It's only human. So we take a step at a time, living the following hadith:

Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudri (ra) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said, *"Whoever amongst you sees an evil, he must change it with his hand; if he is unable to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is yet unable to do so, then with his heart; and that is the weakest form of Faith"*. [Muslim]

We at Al-Falah Academy are committed to improving ourselves, reflecting on our interactions, learning and teaching more comprehensively and coherently about the core principles of Islam. Every year, we review and revise our curriculum and programming, our behavioral guidelines, our policies and procedures, our staff training and our instructional practices, all in order to merge an Islamic worldview and values into our students and ourselves. This work is never completed, and current events tell us that we must roll up our sleeves and work even harder next year to hold ourselves to a higher standard of teaching Justice and modeling it for our students.

I am proud of our Atlanta Muslim community members who have stepped up to form a Solidarity Committee, joining the fight with black Americans and their allies for justice for all, and expressing love for, solidarity with, and commitment to all our African-American brothers and sisters, especially Black families who have lost loved ones to police violence. Hundreds of American cities and towns are responding with peaceful marches to change the police practices and societal attitudes that cause these deaths, and scores of organizations, including the Georgia Muslim community, are proposing demands to bring justice in these circumstances.

We can all join our voices and actions to these proposals, to unite as one Ummah promoting the Good and prohibiting the Evil. Friday, June 5th is the Day of Outrage, with opportunities to hear online khutbahs from multiple masaajid on Justice and Equality.

Stay tuned for more actions we can all participate in to be the change-makers that Allah SWT wants us to be in the world. Meanwhile, please reflect, stay safe, read all summer long (see below lists of anti-racism children's stories and activities), and insha'Allah we will be in touch soon.

Respectfully,  
Jelena Naim  
Principal

**RESOURCES:**

**32 Tips from Soundvision on your personal jihad against racism and nationalism:**

<https://www.soundvision.com/article/32-tips-to-launch-your-personal-jihad-against-racism-and-nationalism>

**Books for children on anti-racism:**

<https://www.embracerace.org/resources/26-childrens-books-to-support-conversations-on-race-racism-resistance>

and

<https://www.brit.co/childrens-books-about-race/>

**Working with your child to promote anti-racism:**

<https://www.kidsburgh.org/common-sense-media-10-ways-to-use-media-to-raise-anti-racist-kids/>