



Al Fatih Academy

OPENING YOUNG MINDS TO GREAT WONDERS

Dear AFA Families-

As-salāmu ‘alaykum.

We are saddened and frustrated by current events that have shaken our country. The horrific deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor have only amplified an undercurrent of injustice and inequality that disproportionately affects African American brothers and sisters.

We know that there are some AFA families who are personally affected by these events, as well as others who are struggling to understand their role in working for justice in this country.

It is time to let go of the “all lives matter” talking point or that we are all colorblind as Muslims. We know the reality of our community’s shortcomings and know that racism does exist - even in the most subtle and imperceptible ways in how we treat others whose skin is a different color.

This is a collective responsibility and each of us is obligated to do our part. This is the time to have important conversations with our children about our own biases and stereotypes, about how we may treat others based on these. We must talk clearly about how, as Allah’s creation, we stand up for justice when we see it trampled.

Some of you may feel that these are difficult conversations, or that your children are too young. But both [research and practice](#) point to the fact that children as young as 3 years old perceive and create impressions of one another based on our physical traits including skin color. Talking about this actually empowers our children to be more proactive about establishing justice in small ways now that will translate into bigger actions as they grow.

We have worked hard at AFA to be as inclusive as possible in our programs and approach. ‘Al-Ḥamdulillāh we have had opportunities to train teachers on bias and racism as part of our mandatory orientation program. We have addressed issues of injustice and inequality through our core values as well as integrated curriculum objectives for years now. We have created [resources](#) and [videos](#) to bolster this work.

But we recognize the need to always improve and build upon what is in place as we grow and learn. We will continue to explore how to be better in teaching, planning, and interacting on issues of racism and injustice.

As we have in the past, we are monitoring students for their reactions and feelings about current events. We will be engaging Middle School students more directly on these issues.

Please plan to join us for a session **tomorrow, Wednesday, June 3 at 6:00pm** titled **“Black Lives Matter @AFA: Our Role and Our Responsibility”**. We will be joined by activist Tariq Toure who has led such discussions as well as community actions in our area.

Thank you.

May Allah (s) protect us all from harm and from doing harm.

Wa as-salām ‘alaykum

AFA Admin Leadership

Afeefa Syeed

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Resources:

[Consolidated Resources on Talking to Children About Race](#)

[Developmental Research About How Young People View Race](#)

[Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative](#)

[Sapelo Square](#)

[AFA Created Video](#)

[AFA Created Handout](#)