



Where Future
Leaders are
Inspired &
Nurtured

Parent Handbook

2014-2015

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Pillars Academy! In September of 2000, Pillars opened its doors to the Orange County Islamic Foundation (OCIF) community. Today, Pillars Academy student body and staff have grown and the school is serving a growing community of Muslims in Mission Viejo and its surrounding area.

Our Toddler, Preschool, and Elementary School Programs are dedicated to serving the children of our Muslim community by providing the highest quality environment for children to grow and learn. Much attention has been given to the design of both the physical environment and the curriculum.

Pillars have been custom built with quality, vision, and love of service in mind. Our goal is to create a beautiful and engaging educational environment where children can be aware of them and grow into conscious, creative, and responsible Muslim individuals, participants in society, and contributors to the community of the future.

Everything at the school aims to help children:

- Discover their unique and special aim in life
- Experience the joy of learning for its own sake
- Embody integrity, harmony, and beauty in every aspect in their lives

Our Pre-school curriculum has been designed to be well-rounded and all-inclusive. Meaningful experiences are offered for your child through exploration and exposure to new concepts and materials, as well as Islamic values, the Arabic Language and small suras from the Quran. Our preschool program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC).

The Elementary School curriculum is based on the standards set by the California Department of Education's National Common Core Standards and includes Islamic Studies, Arabic and Quran. The K-6 program is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

This handbook has been compiled to provide you with our policies and to answer some commonly asked questions. Please read through the entire booklet and make sure you clearly understand our policies. You are responsible for all of the information contained within, and enrollment in the program is a statement of acceptance of our policies.

At Pillars, we want to work closely with you to make sure that your child feels secure, loved and confident while they explore the wonders of their world.

Mission

Pillars Academy is a private Islamic school established by the Orange County Islamic Foundation in 2000. The academy provides a holistic approach to education by addressing the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional needs of a child. The curriculum stresses excellence in core academic subjects and in Islamic Studies taught by caring and qualified teachers. Our students belong to a community of faith, including parents and teachers, who strengthen their identity as Muslims. The students are encouraged to be leaders and to strive to improve themselves, their families, their communities, and their environment.

Vision

Pillars Academy graduates are well rounded individuals who excel in core academics and possess skills to read, write, and speak both English and Arabic as it is the language of the Quran. They emerge as God-conscious leaders who seek the pleasure of their Creator through service to humanity.

Goals

- Provide students with a rigorous program of high academic standards in an atmosphere of positive reinforcement that emphasizes inquiry and higher order thinking processes for learning.
- Recruit and retain teachers who have extensive backgrounds in early childhood and/or elementary level education with transparent compassion for children and responsiveness to cultural diversity.
- Enhance students' understanding of the Qur'an and the principles of Islam through instruction in the Arabic language and Islamic Studies highlighting examples of ethical decision-making in their daily lives.
- Instill in students universal values of honesty, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline encouraging them to demonstrate these values through their actions to become contributing citizens of a global community.
 - o Inspire students to become God-conscious leaders guided by justice, driven by ethics, empowered by knowledge, and supported by logic.
 - o Teach students that commitment to social responsibility and justice must be balanced with the desire for personal rights and ambitions.
 - o Teach students to hold high expectations for them in striving for academic and personal achievement to their optimum potential.
- Sustain an active learning environment in which experimentation, exploration, intellectual curiosity and self - discovery are encouraged and supported.

License/ Accreditation

Our Pre-school and Kindergarten programs are licensed by Community Care Licensing and are subject to all the rules, regulations and policies of that agency. The afore-mentioned programs are also accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These regulations and accreditation information are available upon request from the administration. Our Elementary school curriculum is aligned to standards set by the California Department of Education and are accredited by the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC).

Non-Discrimination Policy

Pillars preschool program currently accepts children from ages 2 and half years through 5 years of age. Applications are accepted on a first come first serve basis and will not be discriminated on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, handicaps or political beliefs.

Special Needs Students Policy

Children with special needs will be accepted under the following conditions:

1. There are no adverse effects on other children, either through direct behavior of the child or through requiring an excess amount of time from the instructor.
2. The child is benefiting from the environment in a social and academic level.
3. The school is able to meet the physical and socio-emotional needs of the child.

ADMISSIONS AND SCHEDULES

Application Procedures

Making the decision to enroll your child in a program is a very important one. We believe that a child's school experience will determine the direction of his/her future education. Therefore, we recommend that the child visit the school along with the parents prior to enrollment. During this visit the family will be given a tour of the classrooms, be introduced to the teachers and have the opportunity to ask any questions.

Once the decision to enroll has been made you will need to complete the enrollment packet, returning it to the school. This will enable us to be prepared and make your child feel welcomed.

Available Schedules & Hours of Operation / Preschool

Preschool children have an option of enrolling in a 2, 3, or 5 day program from 7:55 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The toddler and preschool programs also have half day options from 8:00 – 11:30 a.m. At parents' discretion, up to 10 days of vacation or sick days can be taken, but tuition is still due. It is NOT possible to make up absence days or holidays.

Kindergarten Entry

The State of California requires that children must be 5 years of age or older by September 1st of the current year to qualify for entry into kindergarten. However, if your child's birthday is before December 2nd and he/she shows exceptional ability and readiness to attend kindergarten, we will then perform an evaluation and may make an exception. Kindergarten also needs to have an extra set of clothes.

Schedules & Hours for KG – 6th Grade

Elementary school children must attend five days a week from 7:45-3:10pm. We offer an after-school child-care program as well. The hours for the after-school program are from 3:00 until 6:00 pm.

Attendance and Punctuality

Elementary starts promptly at 7:45 and dismisses at 3:10. It is especially important for the K-6th grade students to start their instruction time at 7:45 am. In order to give your child a comfortable start to the day we request that you arrive no earlier than 7:35 am and no later than 7:45 am. Tardiness not only puts your child at a disadvantage for missing the morning routine, but also disrupts the flow of the day for the rest of the class. If your child arrives later than 7:45, he/she must report to the front office to sign in and receive a "tardy slip" in order to enter the classroom. For KG students, parent must accompany the student to get the "tardy slip" and then quietly sign them into the classroom minimizing distraction or attention to the student arriving late. For grades 1st through 6th, the student can go to class without his/her parent after getting the "tardy slip" from the front office.

K-6th Grade Tardy Policy

The consequences imposed for tardiness are as follows:

- The first three tardiest will be warnings.
- A \$5 per student fine will be assessed for each tardy thereafter.
- Consecutive and persistent tardiest will be brought to the attention of the school Director who will schedule a formal meeting with the parent

Student Release Policy

Pillars Academy will release children only to those persons whom parents have authorized in writing. We will ask unfamiliar adults for photo identification before we allow the child to leave the facility with them. Please be sure to list all authorized people on the "Identification Emergency" form. Authorization must be done in writing, so please try to avoid last minute phone authorizations. You can e-mail or fax the authorization if you don't have prior notice.

In case of absence, all parents should call between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to inform the school or e-mail the teacher and the office. In case the office staff is on another call, parents should leave a message. When a student is absent for three days or more, a note should be brought in with the student indicating the reason for the absence. Five or more days will require a note from a physician.

Early Dismissal:

Parents must inform the office at least one day in advance of any medical or other appointments for their child. Parents must also sign the child out and should inform the front office of their arrival for early pick-up. To minimize the gaps in curriculum caused by too many absences, we ask that elective medical appointments be made outside of school hours whenever possible.

Custody:

In the case of a separation or divorce and one parent is restrained by the courts from picking up the child, we must have a copy of this order on file.

Late Pick-Up

Preschool children picked up after 3:05 p.m. will be assessed a late fee that accrues if they are not pre-enrolled in the after-school childcare or an after school.

Elementary children KG through 6th will be charged a late fee, if the child is picked up after 3:15 p.m. This will be enforced and no exceptions can be made. All balances must be paid within 5 days of receipt. Please refer to current Fee Schedule.

Holidays & School Closings

Pillars will post the annual calendar of holidays, partial and full day closings in the reception area as well as send a copy home at the start of each school year. An attempt will be made to post a reminder of school closings 5 days in advance. Our tuition has been figured with these closings in mind and therefore will not generate tuition discounts for these days. The following are school closings and holidays:

Labor Day	Eid ul-Fitr/Lailtal Qadr (2)	Veteran’s Day
Thanksgiving Day	Day after Thanksgiving	Winter Break (2 weeks)
Eid-ul-Adha (2)	New Year’s Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
President’s Day	Spring Break (1 week)	Memorial Day

COMMUNICATIONS

General Communications

Pillars Academy issues a yearly calendar that outlines the specific dates the school will observe for yearly events. This calendar can be changed at any time. Parents will be notified of any such changes a week in advance.

Pillars Academy also issues a more specific monthly calendar. This important resource has valuable reminders, announcements, information on special events. Please read it and mark your personal calendars with the dates you need to remember.

In each assembly, the Director verbally reminds parents, teachers and students about upcoming events and activities the school is involved in. There will be a monthly newsletter sent to parents to announce monthly events and happenings at school.

Our official school website is www.pillarsacademy.org. It is updated monthly to keep the parent body up to date on future plans, events and general information on the school.

A parent board is visible at the front entrance along with a comments box in the assembly area. Please insert your suggestions into the comments box. It will be reviewed and considered for new school improvements. The administration will then post your comments after review and address them in the next scheduled Parents' Forum Meeting.

Parent Forum Meetings are held once every three months. Pillars parents can be an active part and share their feedback for the betterment of the school. These meetings will address concerns and recommendations inserted into the main assembly comments box. The board of education, education committee, school administrators and some teachers will be present at some of these meetings.

Parent bulletin boards are conveniently located at the school's front entrance and inside each classroom. Please check the boards daily for routines, activities, schedules, and other important information pertaining to our programs and general school/community information.

Your child's class will also have a parent board that has information related to your child.

Contacting a Teacher

You may e-mail or write messages for teachers and staff members on notes and leave them in the teacher's mailboxes in the front office. Teachers are unable to take phone calls because it interferes with their classroom duties. We will gladly take telephone messages or convey important information to them as soon as possible. It is vital that parents not discuss any issues with their child's teacher during class time. Any discussion with a teacher must be done outside of class times and should be scheduled in advance if possible.

Communication with Director

Appointments can be scheduled with the front office anytime to meet with the director Monday through Thursday between 8:30 – 3:30pm. If the time you requested to meet with the director is already booked, the assistant administrator will call you back to reschedule.

Parent Concerns

We care about your concerns and have found that, when such concerns arise, a scheduled conference time works best for sharing between parent and teacher. Please schedule an appointment directly with your child's teacher via phone. You may request the School Director to be present at any scheduled meeting. Or, if the need arises, you may schedule a conference with the School Director/Principal.

Parent/Guardian Complaints

Parents or guardians who have complaints about a school employee should be encouraged, when appropriate, to resolve their complaints directly with the employee about whom they are complaining. However, if the complaint is of a serious nature, or if the parent/guardian is at all uncomfortable discussing the complaint directly with the school employee, the parent/guardian should be encouraged to voice their concern with the school Director/Principal. Whenever a complaint by a parent or guardian about an employee comes to the attention of the Director/Principal, the employee involved shall be advised by the Director of the nature of the complaint and, where confidentiality is not required, the name of the complainant, and shall be given the opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts.

If after thoroughly discussing a concern with the Director, a parent is still not satisfied with the final decision, the parent may submit a letter to the Education Board. The Education Board may then take necessary actions to resolve this matter and get back to the concerned parent/guardian in a timely manner.

CURRICULUM, ACTIVITIES, AND EVENTS

Core Curriculum Subjects

The school curriculum follows the State of California framework. Our elementary curriculum provides young learners with a solid educational foundation in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Physical fitness education and the arts are also important aspects of the program and are integrated within the core subjects. A more detailed curriculum is available for your review upon request

Religious & Arabic Language Studies

The goal of our Islamic Studies program is for each and every child to develop a positive image of his/herself as a Muslim. We teach Islamic mannerisms, habits and beliefs. The children learn various and differing *suras* from *Juz' Amma* and *Juz' Naba*. They are taught stories of different prophets and get a good grasp of their faith. Arabic is taught by a specialist teacher that works with all the elementary school children on a daily basis.

Extended Care / After-School Child-Care

Extended care for after-school care is available from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm. Activities include a snack, homework, indoor and outdoor activities. Schedules and fees can be found on the "After-School" care form.

Birthdays Policy

As Pillars is an Islamic school, our birthday policy differs from that of other schools. Celebrating birthdays falls into the “gray area” of Islam. We will only allow healthy treats such as healthy muffins, fruits, bagels, and cheese etc. for snack or lunch time to recognize your child’s birthday; but we do not allow the singing of the traditional “Happy Birthday” song, blowing out candles on a cake or putting up a birthday banner. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding. Parents need to make arrangements with the child’s teacher at least a week in advance.

Prayers

Students in grade one and above assemble daily for the noon prayers. They also participate in the *Jumah* Prayers regularly. Ideally, it is best if the child stays with his teacher during the prayers. However, if you do wish to take your child during prayer-time, you must inform the front office as well as his teacher.

Field Trips

Field trips are an integral part of our curriculum. They expand a child’s experience through a variety of “out of school opportunities.” Parents will receive advance notice of forthcoming field trips and the means of transportation. When using public transportation for a field trip, the school requests seat belts for the safety of the children.

The teacher-child ratio during fieldtrips is 1:6 (one adult to six children). Pillars Academy encourages parents to volunteer during school planned field trips and/ or when students go to the park for physical educational activities.

Students will be scheduled for three or more field trips per year. There are separate fees for these trips and we often use parent drivers for transportation. When the entire school goes on the same fieldtrip we secure a bus, but that does incur extra fees. You must sign a permission slip and a medical release form before we can allow your child to accompany us on the field trip. We always bring an emergency backpack and consent forms with us on fieldtrips. You will be asked to sign a blank permission slip (to be kept on file) for walks to the park across the street. One day per week, Pillars preschool and elementary students will go to the park across the street to have a physical education class and/or lunch to simply have a different venue to learn and experience new things. Teachers will also carry an emergency kit and a list of children going to the park. The teacher will inform the front office as to the start and return time of the outing.

Enrichment Programs

Pillars offers a variety of enrichment activities to supplement the core academic program. Co-curricular activities are planned in line with the unit theme during the school day while extra-curricular activities are **established per parent and student interests** and scheduled after school.

Field Trips - Book Fair -Science Fair - Career Fair - Book Drive - Math Club
Science Club - Journalism Club - Technology Club - Homework Club
Qur’an Competition - Food and Toy Drive -Spelling Bee
Islamic History Awareness - Student Leadership Council
Community Service Learning Events

Student's Work

Our classroom activities are not always product oriented, but rather focus on skills development. Your child is learning by “doing” throughout the day. Therefore, there may not always be a piece of paper at the end of the task. Each child has a personal folder and a portfolio in his classroom. These folders are used to collect periodic artwork, special projects and papers created throughout the week. Please take this work home daily. Notices, calendars, and news from the teacher and/or school will also be placed in the class folders. Please check this each day for important information. Our elementary students keep much of their work in cumulative folders inside their class and will get most of the work back during individual conferences.

Open House And Special Events

We schedule one Open House and one “Back-to-School” night during the school year. We also have book fairs, family fun night, and other exciting events throughout the year. Theme specific celebrations are scheduled to promote our students’ presentation skills and build their capacity to communicate their skills development and Muslim identity. The dates for these events can be found on the yearly calendar and reminders are given out.

There may be some limitations for participation in special projects. Parents may be asked to pay additional fees to cover the cost of special field trips or special projects.

Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

All newly enrolled children are assessed upon entry into the program. Teachers assess children on regular basis. Pillars Academy utilizes different assessment tools to better meet each individual child’s needs. We issue progress reports halfway through the trimester and report cards at parent conference time. These occur three times a year. You are encouraged to request meetings whenever you want one. Our teachers may request additional conferences whenever they believe it to be appropriate for the child’s needs.

Children with Special Needs

The school will seek professional help (if needed) with parental consent to best meet each child’s needs. An individualized educational plan (IEP) will guide the parent, child and teacher to better identify the areas that need improvement and will put a plan of action in place to solve and strengthen these areas. Different resources are utilized to benefit all parties involved.

DISCIPLINE

Child Guidance and Classroom Management

In order to provide each child a safe and caring environment, we must set clear expectations and limits that are consistently adhered to. Appropriate and positive behaviors will be rewarded and praised. Inappropriate or negative behaviors will be discussed and the child will be redirected to an appropriate activity. Sometimes it is necessary to remove the child from the area to keep him/her from harm. If this were to happen, the child would be given the time to calm themselves before discussing the incident with the teacher. Once the child feels ready to

rejoin the group, they may do so. Children will always be spoken with on their level and given the chance to be a part of the solution. When children come up with the rules, they are more apt to follow through with them. Children will be shown respect, support, and encouragement at every moment. **AT NO TIME WILL A CHILD BE STRUCK, ROUGHLY HANDLED, VERBALLY ABUSED, DENIED OF FOOD/ AND OR FORCE FED, OR DEMEANED AS A DISCIPLINARY MEASURE** If a child acts in an aggressive manner toward a staff member, that child will immediately be sent home. Continued aggression after three director's office visits may result in a request that the parent withdraws from the program.

Discipline is considered a direct consequence of a personal choice on the part of an individual. Students are taught that they have the ultimate responsibility for controlling behavior and they should always consider carefully the consequences before they act. Students know clearly that they will be held accountable for their actions at all the times and the standards are clear. The ability to act responsibly, independent of adult direction, is considered the greatest achievement.

Courtesy, self-control, and personal development are desired goals of good discipline. In addition, good discipline will provide a classroom situation conducive to learning for all. Discipline is considered an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment.

A safe and orderly environment is crucial to an optimum learning situation for all the children. We believe in a positive discipline approach where school, playground, and classroom expectations are discussed and reviewed with the students.

The elementary school discipline policies and procedures is an individual document and acknowledgement of that document will be required.

As a Disciplinary Measure

Often children's behavior at school is affected by changes happening in their life. It is very important that parents inform us about any changes at home including the following: new family members, moving to a new house, parents separating, new stepparents, etc. Any of these can have significant psychological effects on a child. Sometimes when children are hurt or frustrated with something, they express their feelings in their interactions with peers. Different resources are available to families upon request as a remedy to these situations.

Children with challenging behaviors

The school staff works closely with families and other professionals to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success. Clear expectations, individual attention and acknowledgment of positive behaviors work wonders. If the behavior threatens the safety of the child and others, then other measures will be taken and parents will be given notice to find care elsewhere.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Respect is an expectation for all involved in the school programs: staff, students and parents.

The Parents' Responsibilities

- Reviewing school rules with students to insure that everyone is familiar with the standards that are expected by the school.
- Cooperating with school staff and enforcing the school's disciplinary measures.
- Reinforcing appropriate behavior by students in the home.
- Developing an interest in the student's academic and other school-related activities. For example: attending PTC meetings, volunteering at the school, attending field trips, "Back to School Night" and Open House.

The Students' Responsibilities

- Behaving in the classroom and in the school in an appropriate manner that does not disturb or interfere with the rights of others.
- Respecting the authority of teachers and other school personnel to enforce school policies and rules.
- The appropriate care and use of school property.
- Establishing "Classroom Rules and Behavior Expectations" and guiding students.

The Teachers' Responsibilities

- Assisting in the development and enforcement of school rules.
- Communicating with parents and students with regards to students' performance.

The Administration's Responsibilities

- Enforcing the discipline policy within the existing school policies as well as state and federal laws.
- Supporting teachers by holding conferences with disruptive students and, when necessary, with their parents to obtain commitments to improve behavior.
- Advising students and parents of possible consequences for continued violation of school rules and policies.
- Ensuring that the process rights of students are observed.
- Supporting teachers to design and implement thematic aligned curriculum subjects with diligence to standards and maintaining rigor while engaging students in the learning process.

FACULTY / STAFF

Our staff has undergone a thorough application, screening, and training process. In accordance with state regulations this process would include but not be limited to criminal background check, physical and TB clearance and verification of past employment references.

Each teacher brings to our program unique talents and gifts that complement the philosophies of Pillars Academy. All employees are offered continued education workshops and seminar opportunities throughout the year.

Staff Meetings and Staff Development

To assure a quality program, staff members need to have an adequate opportunity to plan, coordinate, and evaluate program goals and activities. To facilitate our operation, we conduct staff meetings and staff development for all teachers throughout the school year. Staff development is the key to a quality school. Our on-going training programs include but not limited to:

- Workshops & In-service seminars throughout the year
- Continued Education through institutes of higher learning
Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

These training programs are designed to meet the instructional needs of the teachers to better support student learning.

, age, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic. Any person who becomes aware of possible unlawful harassment should promptly advise the director who will handle the matter quickly and confidentially.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Fees & Tuition Policy

A registration fee is required to hold the place of your student in their next year's classroom. It is a non refundable fee assessed each new school year to fund the cost of setting up and managing your student's files in the school. Please check the current school fee schedule.

Tuition is payable in full on the first of every month for the month in advance. A 5-day grace period is in place to accommodate for weekends and holidays. If tuition is not paid in full by 12:00 p.m. on the 6th of the month, a late fee (\$10 a day) will be charged. This fee is further explained on our fee schedule. While we prefer checks, parents are welcome to pay for tuition on their credit card. Please be aware that a 2.5% processing charge will be charged to your card.

Tuition is based on a yearly fee broken down in 10 months. Therefore, tuition is to be paid every month regardless of the days per month your child is in attendance. Please note that some months such as December are shorter due to holidays, however monthly installments still

remain the same. We have already factored in the holidays or vacations into the annual tuition.

Tuition credits are not given for individual days your child is absent for vacations, holidays, school breaks, teacher in-services, or withdrawals from the program for the months of June or December or any time of the year.

Should there be any extenuating circumstances that prevent you from the timely payment of your child's tuition, please discuss this confidentially with the administrator before it becomes a problem.

Financial Difficulties and Financial Aid

Understandably, there comes a time in our lives when we have financial difficulties due to the loss of income or other circumstances. These situations must be assessed on an individual basis. Financial aid is available to those families in need. The school uses an independent firm for financial aid applicants. The company name may be obtained from the school administration along with instructions for applying for aid.

Pro-rating

If you enter the program after the second week of the month, you will be pro-rated and your tuition for the month will be calculated on a daily basis. You can only be pro-rated once. Leaving the program during the middle of the year will be pro-rated if you did not get a daily rate at the start of the program.

Charitable Gifts

Charitable contributions by parents, grandparents, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends play an essential role in the daily operation of our school. Independent schools are distinct from other schools in that they are supported by tuition, charitable contributions, and endowment income, rather than by taxpayer funds. We welcome your generous contributions and offer a monthly giving option to the Academy. Please see the accounts administrator to learn more about how you can privately support the school.

Fundraising Opportunities

Pillars Academy is a member of the following groups:

E-Scrip

Target

AT&T Wireless

Albertsons/ Sav-On

Washington Mutual

These above-mentioned organizations will donate a percentage of their profits from their sales made by parents who designate Pillars Academy as the recipient. Details can be found in the

“Fundraising Opportunities” Packet. Please do your best to participate in these opportunities as there are a large number of financial benefits the school can earn.

We also hold about two to three fundraising events per year to replenish our financial aid funds. The funds raised from these events help less fortunate families of Pillars Academy to educate their child at Pillars for a discounted rate and to continue the operation of the school when monthly tuition does not cover monthly operation expenses.

We may have other on campus fundraisers throughout the year such as through bake sales, wrapping paper sales and other forms of programs. We appreciate your support in these events.

Merit Awards / Tuition Scholarships

At the end of the academic school year, students in second grade and above are nominated by their teacher to be considered for an academic merit award for their advanced levels in one or more of the following areas: Critical Thinking Skills, Analytical Reasoning Skills, Persuasive Writing Skills, and Quran Tajweed Skills. The nominations and supporting data with work samples are reviewed carefully against standardized rubrics by a committee that includes teachers, non-instructional administrator, and school director. Recipients of the academic merit awards are recognized in the June awards ceremony and also receive a 10% tuition scholarship to be applied monthly in the upcoming school year.

* Student tuition discounts may not be doubled or used in conjunction with one another. The highest discount percentage earned will be applied.

Sibling Discount

Pillars Academy recognizes that most families have more than one child and we would like to extend a \$50.00 monthly sibling discount for each additional child enrolled in the school.

In addition, any family that has more than 3 children will be allowed to enroll their 4th child free of monthly tuition.

*** Student tuition discounts may not be doubled or used in conjunction with one another. The highest discount percentage earned will be applied.**

Supplies Fees

Hardbound books for grades Kindergarten and up are loaned to the student each year. Supplies fees are due the first week of school and are not included in tuition. This fee is non-refundable. A child who purposely damages loaned books will accrue additional fees to cover the loss if that book is deemed un-usable. Please see current Fee schedule.

Activities/Pizza Fees:

There will be various activities throughout the year including guest speakers, “Mad Science”, puppet shows, “Bubble mania”, music demonstrations, as well as others. For these activities to

take place we will collect a small fee per child for every open Friday in a month. The fee will cover the cost of the pizza that we supply on Fridays as well as the activity for the month. If you do not wish to order pizza for your child, you still need to pay an activity fee. Please check our current Fee Schedule for more details.

GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES

Classrooms / Playground / Rest Periods

We pay special attention to staffing our schools with highly qualified caring teachers whose main priority is the safety and total well-being of our students.

Classrooms: For the preschool and pre-kindergarten classes is staffed with one qualified teacher and a maximum of 10 children a day. NAEYC has a 10:1 ratio requirement and Pillars Academy adheres to that requirement. Should there be a day when there are more than 10 children in a Preschool/Pre-K class; there will be an assistant in the room. The ratio for the elementary school classes is 20:1.

Playground: We follow the same abovementioned ratio in the classroom and on the playground to ensure student safety.

Rest Periods: Toddlers and Preschool students will be provided a period for rest. Each child will be assigned a rest mat and a mat cover which must be taken home every Friday for laundering and returned on Monday. Nap time is a routine made easier for children when they follow a regular schedule. As children mature, they begin to give up their nap but may rest quietly during this time. We follow a teacher/child ratio of one teacher supervising 20 napping children if all children are napping.

Confidentiality / Students' Files

All information in your child's file is confidential and available to staff for school purposes only. State licensing agents and accreditation personnel have the authority to inspect and audit child or facility records and to interview children or staff without prior consent. You are responsible for informing the school in writing of persons whom you authorize to review your child's file, to take your child from school, and of any changes in your address or telephone number. Children's files are available to parents or guardians at any time. Additionally, if we receive a written request, authorized by the parent or guardian, from another school, we will send a copy of the child's report card, immunization, and pertinent information to that school.

All personal information is kept confidential at all times. We request parents to make their own arrangements of sharing phone numbers with one another. In addition, personal matters that are discussed with the administrator that do not relate to financial difficulties will be kept private as well. (Financial issues may have to be related to accountant).

Dress Code

Pillars Academy has a uniform dress code for all children. All the Uniforms may be found and purchased in the Land's End website.

- Boys are required to wear dark blue slacks along with a light blue oxford shirt or polo style shirt with the school logo.
- Girls may wear plaid uniform jumpers with the school logo with a light blue blouse. They must wear either navy blue opaque tights, leggings, or pants under the jumper.
- Navy blue cardigans with logos are required for all children in cool weather.
- All elementary school age girls will be required to have a navy blue prayer scarf which can be purchased from the school and is brought to the school in a labeled plastic bag.
- All children should wear navy socks and solid black or navy blue dress shoes
- For PE Days, students in KG-6th grades will be asked to wear the white Pillars Academy long or short sleeve T-Shirt with the school logo along with the required navy blue sweat pants and optional navy blue athletic jacket in the Land's End Website. They may wear white athletic shoes on PE days.
- We require all students have at least one PE school logo shirt which will be required for all field trips and sports day activities.

After following the school's dress code, please keep the following in mind:

Children need to be dressed in comfortable clothing. Make sure the clothing is easy for the child to take on and off. Belts, snaps and suspenders can be difficult for young children. Pants with elastic are the easiest to manage. **Children must wear CLOSED SHOES at school. DO NOT SEND CHILDREN IN SANDALS OR DRESS SHOES.** They are unsafe. A light weight tennis shoe is the most appropriate shoe that can be worn at school. For young children, we recommend: Shoes with Velcro fasteners and two changes of clothes. Any soiled clothing need to be taken home for laundering.

Dress children appropriately for the weather.

NO jewelry (bracelets, chains, earrings, etc.) is allowed at school, except for emergency medical information or child identification bracelets. Please be sure these fit snugly around the wrist.

The dress code will be enforced. A first offense will result in a verbal warning to the student. The second offence will result in a letter home to the parent. On the third offense, we will place a call home and request that you pick up your son or daughter and return them to the school in proper uniform. **Since your son or daughter is attending an Islamic school we kindly request parents to use their best judgment. At the time of drop off, pick up, while volunteering or while participating in an on campus event, please choose garments that will avoid unnecessary attention.**

Labeling: In order to ensure that each student can keep track of his/her belongings, please label lunch boxes, backpacks, jackets, shirts, pants, scarves and other personal items.

Lost and Found: Items forgotten by children that are not labeled are kept in a lost and found bin for one month. Articles of clothing or items left for longer than one month are donated to charity.

Lunch

All parents are required to bring lunch for their child. Please make sure it is a nutritious lunch and that a beverage is included. No candy or sweets please. Also, be aware of the quantities that are appropriate for your child. We will try to send home uneaten portions so you will know what your child is eating in school. In the event that lunch is forgotten we will provide a nutritious lunch for \$4.00 that will be added to your child's account.

At Pillars Academy, the food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Program guidelines. Staff discards foods with expired dates. Food is a source of nourishment, with this in mind when serving and or requesting nutritious foods for snacks, we also ask of our parents to supply healthy nutritious lunches to maintain healthier minds and bodies for our children. To do so, we suggest including whole grain products, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits and proteins.

Due to time limitations, we ask that you do not bring food to be heated in the microwave. You may send any leftovers in thermal containers to stay warm. **We do not permit frozen foods to heat/cook in the microwave.** Staff will make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served.

Important points to know:

- As an Islamic school, we will not serve or allow pork or pork-by-products.
- The school has “no junk food policy”, which discourages students from bringing foods high in sugar. Exceptions are on **few** occasions where class parties are planned by parents and teachers for special events and holidays. We keep these to a minimum. Yet we ask that parents bring healthy treats for snacks to acknowledge a child's birthday.
- For each child with special health care needs or food allergies or special nutrition needs, we ask that the child's health care provider gives the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family.
- The program protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. The program asks families of a child with food allergies to give consent for posting information about the child's food allergy and, if consent is given, then the school posts that information in the food preparation area and in the areas of the facility the child uses so it is a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the program day.

Written snack menus for preschool children are posted where families can see them, and copies may be obtained if necessary. Menus are kept on file for review. The school provides snacks to

supplement food brought from home. Please talk to your child's teacher if you have questions or need help.

Fridays will be pizza day for the preschoolers. KG– 6 grade has a choice of subway or rice and chicken every other Friday. Details for signup are available. Please let the front office know before 9 a.m. on Friday. A hot lunch program may be available during the school year. More information can be found at the front office.

Snacks: Preschool classrooms serve a nutritious mid-morning snack which may consist of juice or milk, crackers, apple or orange wedges, waffles, bagels and cheese, celery, cheese, etc. We will assign one parent a day to provide these snacks on a once or twice a month basis. Various food preparation experiences such as orange juicing, egg peeling and banana slicing are activities which children may work on during class time and share during snack time. Your child's teacher may ask for help in providing these special treats from time to time. **We only provide snacks for the preschool and pre-kindergarten classes.**

Kindergarten and elementary school children are required to provide their own healthy snacks. Candy and junk food items are not allowed and this will be strictly enforced.

Morning Assembly

Assemblies are held every morning from 7:45-7:55 am. The values of the thematic units are re-enforced, children recite the *Fatiha* and a morning *du'aa* and pledge. Students are encouraged to take a leadership role and assigned to report on a topic of social and environmental interest. The Director then makes the announcements for the day, week and mentions upcoming events. Following the Assembly, please see the assistant administrator to sign up for volunteer work or to schedule a meeting with the director regarding special requests, concerns, suggestions and updates.

Personal Items/Sharing

For Grades K-6: Toys, comics, make-up, electronic games, CD players, jewelry, perfume, and other inappropriate items are not permitted at the school. If brought to school, the teacher will take those items from the child and they will be returned at the end of the day.

For Preschool, we ask that you please refrain from bringing toys from home into the school. This almost always results in tears when a beloved toy gets lost or broken. We will have specified days for sharing. Please do not bring items of a dangerous or violent nature i.e. toy guns or sharp objects. Inappropriate items brought to school will be taken away and returned at the end of the day. The school is not responsible for personal items that may get lost or stolen. If an item is lost, please check the lost and found bin located in the assembly area to recover an item left behind. There will be times for sharing that vary from class to class that occur on a regular basis. On these days, children may bring an item to share that represents a recent special event or something from their background or just a special item.

Policy on Homework & Television

Homework: Parents are responsible for providing a quiet, well-lit comfortable place for the child to complete his/her homework assignments. Parents should ensure that children are giving proper attention to neatness and accuracy. Parents should never do the child's homework. Homework is an independent activity in which the child reinforces skills learned at school. Parents may assist their children in a limited way. At times, teachers will request that specific papers have a parent signature, so do look for those.

Students at the lower elementary level will have special folders in which homework assignments are kept. Depending on the teacher's request, the folders should be returned daily or weekly. Important school events are often included in these folders, so it is pertinent that you stay updated with the flyers and monthly calendars your child brings home.

Television: Much research has been done regarding the impact television viewing has on children. Setting limits on watching TV and playing computer and video games will help a child to develop responsible work habits for homework and will give your child a better attention level for school work and school activities. We use educational videos during school time for Pillars Academy children. The after school program may select a cartoon video that has been approved by the school director. If you have any concern regarding the content of videos viewed on campus please schedule an appointment to meet with the school director.

Recognitions / Awards Assemblies

Recognizing that all students have talents and diverse learning styles, our focus will be to motivate and boost all students' self esteem. On a daily basis teachers and Director will seek opportunities to "Catch" students exhibiting the traits for leadership we are developing through our core values (See pages 38 & 38). Every Friday, a student's "Caught Ya" ticket will be drawn to highlight his positive action(s) during the morning assembly. At the end of the school year, we will hold an awards assembly to recognize both high achievers and those students who have shown significant academic progress.

School Evaluation

Pillars Academy asks that parents fill out a school evaluation form annually. This helps us make sure we are providing the services and maintaining the quality you expect. The information is kept on file for our school accreditation procedures and improvement goals.

Textbooks

Students will use textbooks in class under teacher-directed instruction. They may also use these books for homework assignments that reinforce the learning that takes place in the classroom. Textbooks should never be written on in any way and children are responsible for damage they have personally caused to the books. All textbooks are the property of Pillars Academy and lost or damaged books (including writing in ink or pencil that is not erased) will be replaced at the

cost of the parent of the responsible child. Workbooks are the property of the children and they will take the completed editions home with them. Students are not to use workbooks beyond the planned course of instruction as prepared by the teacher.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ILLNESS

Allergies

Parents upon enrollment are required to notify the center in writing regarding the child's allergies. They also need to notify the center with any new allergies/allergens and this information should be added to the child's file.

Child Abuse

According to Section 11166 of the Penal Code, all teachers, licensed day care workers, administrators of community care facilities licensed to care for children, foster parents, and group home personnel are mandated reporters. We are required under the law to report any known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect to a child Protective Agency immediately or as soon as practically possible.

Parents are asked to refrain from all negative talk or punishment at the school. Physical or corporal punishment of children may not take place on school grounds. At no time may parents discipline any child other than their own. Remember that parents are the role models for the children.

Abuse and neglect, whether physical or emotional, can happen in all types of families and in varying degrees. In all cases, the damage can last a lifetime and affect a child's self-esteem and development. When abuse occurs, both parents and children are often victims and need support, empathy and help. Parents may ask the administrator for a confidential referral for outside intervention.

Emergency Procedures

Pillars Academy is prepared to handle emergency situations that may arise. If we are to have a major emergency, God forbid, please note the following information.

1. If there is an emergency (earthquake, fire, etc.), we will call all the parents.
2. If communication is not possible and phone lines are down, you are encouraged to come and pick up your child if the roads are safe.
3. If we are forced to stay in the building, we will use the supplies in the "earthquake kits."
4. If the phone lines are required to remain open, we ask that you do not use them to call us.
5. If an evacuation is necessary the students will be taken to Alicia Park (across the street). We would remain there until parents could arrive to pick up their children. If we are asked to go elsewhere, we will leave a note at Pillars to notify you where we are.

6. If there is a medical emergency, we would call 911 and await professional Assistance.

The Mission Viejo Fire Department, police and local hospitals have been notified about the existence of our school. We contact them whenever an emergency arises and we follow their instructions. The school takes all safety measures if emergencies such as fire, earthquake, theft or any types of threats occur. Emergency drills are practiced frequently to prepare children and staff for such incidents.

We have cameras monitoring our facility 24 hrs a day. A list of people to be contacted in case of an emergency is always available to our staff in case director is not present.

Separate evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Teacher will direct the children out of the building while counting children as they exit. (All teachers are required to carry the daily attendance sheets and emergency forms with them and take a head count before, during, and after evacuation.) Any special needs child who requires assistance will be helped by the teacher following the group out of the building. Office staff and or volunteers assist young children during evacuation.

Attendance is taken daily, and all classroom teachers must carry their updated attendance sheets with them whenever they leave the classroom. First aid kits (back packs) are also kept in the outside shed which can be used when they are outdoors. The director is responsible for making sure that evacuation drills are held at different times of the program day and are practiced with all groups of children and staff at least every other month. The director also maintains documentation of time, date, and effectiveness of each drill in a log kept in the office.

Please refer to Emergency Disaster Plan Form LIC 610 posted on parent board at the entrance for more information. Pillars Academy does have an "Emergency Disaster Plan" on file and this is available for your review at your request.

Fire Extinguishers/Fire alarms

Fire extinguishers / fire alarms are regularly checked and maintained. See "Emergency Disaster Plan Form" LIC 610 posted on parent board for location of fire extinguishers and fire alarms.

Head Lice Policy

If your child has been sent home with head lice, the child may not return until there are no signs of lice or nits present. If your child returns and head lice or nits are found, your child will not be admitted.

Health Care Consultants:

The Registered Nurses of Saddleback Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) School Readiness and Resource Project (SRRC) will function as Health Consultants for Pillars Academy. Their role is not limited to providing annual health screening to all children enrolled, conducting staff trainings, reviewing school health policies and procedures, providing consultation and referrals, and visiting the school at least twice during the school year or as needed

Hygiene

Children are expected to bathe or shower daily. Proper washing of the hair is important. Fingernails should be clipped and cleaned. Girls should hair should be neat. Boys should brush their hair and cut it regularly. For boys and girls 8 years and above without skin sensitivities, we recommend a daily application of deodorant.

If Your Child Is Sick

We are required by state law to adhere to the following procedures. If your child develops one of the highly contagious diseases or conditions listed below, or a similar disease or condition requiring care of a physician, you must notify the school immediately. A statement from your physician stating that your child may safely return to school is required before your child may be brought back to school. For the health and well being of your child as well as others around him/her, we ask that you keep your child home if he/she:

- Has a fever or has had one in the past 24 hours.
- Is in the first 24 hours of antibiotics.
- Has heavy nasal discharge.
- Has a persistent cough. Has lost their voice
- Had Diarrhea or Vomiting (within last 24 hours)
- Have any of these symptoms: sniffles, red eyes, discharge in the eyes, a sore throat, lethargy, unexplained rash, headache or upset stomach.

The following conditions / diseases are among those which require you to keep your child home until cleared by a physician: Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Head lice, Hepatitis, Impetigo, Measles, Meningitis, Mumps, Strep throat, Tuberculosis.

If your child comes down with an illness and you must keep him/her home, we ask that you inform the school with a phone call. **If any/all of the above symptoms of illness appear during your child's day at school, he/she will be isolated and made comfortable while a call is placed to you to pick up within an hour.** If you have to pick your child up from school due to illness, you will be required to keep the child out for 24 hours. We reserve the right to require a doctor's release for your child to return to school.

The State of California requires that children be in good health to attend school. There will be an informal check of each child as they arrive at school. If we see any obvious signs of illness,

your child may not participate in the program for the day and we may ask that you take him/her back home. We are required to inform the Department of Health of any outbreaks.

Immunizations and Medical Records

California law requires all schools maintain up-to-date medical records, including immunizations on all of the attending students. The immunization records are summarized and sent to the Department of Health on an annual basis. The office will not admit students with missing immunizations. A child whose family chooses not to immunize due to personal or religious reasons must sign the waiver on the state immunization form. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of any updates to your child's immunization. Reminders of missing immunizations will be sent to the parents if we note any immunizations are missing.

Incident/ Injury Reporting

Pillars Academy will report all accidents (minor and major) occurring on the school grounds to the parent in writing and/or in person or by phone. All staff members are trained in first aid and will administer first aid as deemed appropriate. If your child has had a serious injury or accident away from school, such as a hit on the head or a large bruise, you must report it to a staff member and fill out an *Off Campus Injury Report*.

Law mandates that we report any signs of suspected child abuse to Social Services.

Insect repellents

Our program does not administer insect repellents.

Medication

We will not administer any over the counter medication. Prescription medication will be dispensed at lunchtime, unless the prescription specifies otherwise. Medication must be logged in at the front desk using the proper forms. Medication must be in the original bottle with a legible label containing the child's name and dosage instructions. All medication will be stored in our locked medication box in the reception area. If you bring medication and forget to fill out the proper forms, the medication will not be given.

Please be sure to alert us to any possible side effects of the medication. When the medication is administered the date, time, dosage amount and responsible party will be recorded.

Outdoor Environment

Program staff protects children and adults from exposure to high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during smog or other air pollution alerts.

Plan for Infection Control

As a plan for Infection Control, all staff members and children shall wash their hands with liquid soap and running water using friction. Hands shall be dried with individual or disposable towels. Staff and children shall wash their hands at least at the following times:

1. Before eating or handling food.
2. After toileting
3. After coming into contact with fluids or discharge
4. After handling any visiting animals and their equipment.
5. After cleaning

All classroom surfaces, furniture, and any other classroom equipment shall be washed with soap and water and disinfectant using a recommended schedule.

A toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion is either to be washed by hand using water and detergent (soap), then rinsed, sanitized, and air dried before it can be used by another child. All staff shall clean their tables as recommended above after each use.

At least weekly or as needed, staff needs to sanitize:

- a. Cots / mats or any other approved sleeping equipment.
- b. Send home blankets, sheets or other coverings to be washed at home.

The disinfectant solution used is either a self made solution consisting of a ¼ cup of household bleach to each gallon of water (1 Tbsp per quart) which shall be prepared daily, labeled, and placed in a bottle, or a commercially prepared disinfectant which indicates that it kills bacteria, viruses, and parasites and which can be used in accordance with label instructions. All such disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place and out of the reach of children. Children should never handle any of the cleaning materials.

Plan for Meeting the Needs of Mildly Ill Children:

Staff maintains areas used by staff or children who have allergies or any other special environmental health needs according to the recommendations of health professionals.

Any child who is mildly ill will be removed from the classroom to the office and provided supervision by director or office manager until the parent's arrival within an hour. The child will be provided with a place to rest, food or drink if required, and appropriate indoor activities/toys, which will be disinfected before being returned to class.

Safety Precautions

In order to provide a safe environment for all of the children we ask that every family adhere to the following policies:

1. Children shall be walked into the building and physically handed over to a staff member.
2. Parents will use their full name when signing their **Preschool, Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten** children in/out for the day.
3. When picking your child up for the day, please be sure a staff member acknowledges that your child is leaving the building.
2. Children will not be permitted to leave the building with any person not authorized in writing by the parent. Photo ID will be checked for designated people picking up a child.
3. Children need to be monitored at all times. If we discover after you signed your child out, that your child is left alone, we will place the child in the after school care program and will apply the charging fees. Please see the current fee schedule.
4. We urge our parents at pick up time to leave the facility as quickly as possible to avoid congestion.

Injury Clause

Pillars Academy will administer first-aid and CPR if it becomes necessary. You will be notified either by phone or in-person when an injury occurs. However, OCIF / Pillars Academy or their staff are not liable for any injury or accident that may incur while your child is in our care.

Sunscreen Lotions

Parents who want their child to wear sunscreen and /or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 are asked to put on the first application before coming to school each day. Parents must supply their own bottle of sunscreen with their child's name on it. Parents must also complete and sign a Sunscreen permission slip before the staff can reapply sunscreen to the child before going outdoors.

Traffic Guidelines

1. Please only park in the stalls near the mosque and Pillars side of the parking lot. The spaces in front of the Montessori school are reserved for their parents since they have the same drop off time and similar pick-up times.
2. The two spaces immediately in front of the office are strictly for pick-up and drop-off. Please do not park there for more than five minutes and never park in a handicapped space if you do not have the proper pass to do so. Your car may be towed.
3. Do not leave any young children unattended in cars while "running in" to pick up your other child.
4. Do not permit your child to cross the parking lot without an adult.

5. Do not leave children unattended in the parking lot area.
6. Watch carefully for pedestrian traffic in all areas of the parking lot.

Unlawful Harassment

Pillars Academy is committed to providing an educational environment free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. We will not tolerate actions, comments, words or jokes based on an individual's sex, race ethnicity

Visiting Animals/ Classroom Pets:

Please do not bring any animals/pets onto the premises without prior approval from the director. The school staff needs to assure that children do not have an allergic reaction to any special animal.

Water Play

Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. No child drinks the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water is drained. Alternatively, fresh potable water flows freely through the water play table and out through a drain in the table. Water table will be sanitized and cleaned after each use.

PARENTS AND P.T.C.

Parent Involvement

Pillars Academy has an open door policy. We wish to educate your child through the developmental years with an understanding of his/her total personality. This includes their spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. In addition, here at Pillars Academy, *InshaAllah*, we hope to provide students with a bilingual foundation to effectively understand Islamic sources in the Arabic language. **Cooperation between home and school is essential!** The school needs your fullest support for its educational program and goals to be effective and successful. An educational program is only effective when there is reinforcement in all areas of a child's life.

Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher frequently. The teacher will send home written communication on a regular basis to inform you of your child's activities and progress. The teachers will also keep achievement profiles on each child; these will be available during conference time. Conferences will be scheduled at some points within the school year; however, you are always welcome to request a conference at any time.

Volunteer Hours

Pillars Academy can only operate with the help of our volunteers. **All parents are asked to participate in our community wide program by giving three hours per month to their child/ren's school.** These 3 hours are per family unit whether you have one student or four students enrolled in the school. If your work schedule is demanding and you are unable to put in this time on school campus, the assistant administrator can create take home volunteer work or invite you to take part in our evening or weekend events. **In order to ensure that the volunteer hours are distributed fairly amongst all parents, a \$10 fee per hour not serviced will be applied to the next month of tuition.**

How to Volunteer:

All volunteers must check in at the office before going onto the school premises. Visit or call the administrator each morning to inquire about projects scheduled for the week. A sign in log will be kept on the volunteer desk where you can sign and record your hours under the category of your service once the work is complete. These logs will be reviewed and fees assessed at the end of each month.

In order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all students the following procedures are in place for parent volunteers:

- Administration, Faculty, and Staff are to grade papers, work with a student or group of students on academic activities, fulfill the duties of a teacher's assistant or aide within the classroom, file papers that contain student scores or other confidential information, assist in conflict resolution on the playground, or intervene with students regarding behavior or academic issues of any kind.
- Parents with young children are asked to make babysitting arrangements on volunteer days for young ones. We will not be able to accommodate young children (who are not enrolled in the school) when parents are volunteering.
- Parents should schedule volunteer time with the teachers, in advance, to assure that the teacher has tasks prepared.
- All parents coming to fulfill Parent Volunteer Hours should sign in and wear a Volunteer Badge.

- Parents may fulfill teacher-assigned work or projects from home. Parents may work on specific task (cutting, organizing, gluing) within the School Multipurpose Room or other designated area being sure to avoid interaction with students.
- Parents may be invited as special guests to read or volunteer in class on a specific activity, sparingly and upon the teacher's discretion, as long as the task or activity does not expose the volunteer to sensitive student information.
- Parents are always welcome to volunteer their time in the classroom. There will be times throughout the year where we will request volunteers. If these times are not convenient to your schedule just ask the teacher or administrator what other times and/or projects are available. Our door is always open to you, whether you have a few minutes or a few hours. Please feel free to join in with the activity that is going on. We do however, ask you to not interrupt the class in session and to avoid socializing inside or outside of their classroom. This creates disruption to the learning process. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

We are grateful for the hours you can service beyond the minimum request. However, those hours cannot be applied to another family.

Parent Teacher Council (P.T.C)

The Parent-Teacher Council is a volunteer arm of Pillars Academy. It supports the school's goal to create an environment that will be nurturing and uplifting to all. The organization consists of parents, teachers and community members and enrollment occurs year-round. Membership is highly encouraged as it creates opportunities for support of school needs and activities. A separate membership handbook for the PTC is available for those who join the group.

SCHOOL RULES

General Rules

- Everyone is expected to follow directions the first time they are given.
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- Use appropriate language at all the times. Teasing or name-calling is never allowed. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated.
- Students are expected to show respect for school property. Littering and/or defacing school property is not allowed.
- Students are not to bring gum, candy, sunflower seeds, etc. to school.
- All students are to follow uniform guidelines daily. Extreme hairstyles, excessive jewelry, nail polish, fake nails and make-up are not allowed.

Playground Rules

- Students are expected to follow directions of the yard supervisor.
- Students should use equipment according to safety rules. Students
- are not to throw rocks, sand or other harmful objects.
- Students must show respect toward people. Fighting, teasing or name-calling is not allowed.

Lunch Time Rules

- Students should follow directions of staff.
- Students should speak in soft voices.
- Students should not throw food.
- Students should walk, not run in the lunch area.
- Students should clean up their space after eating.

Prayer Hall Rules

- Enter and the leave the hall respectfully and quietly
- Sit down and remain quiet. Listen Attentively
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Do not disturb others as they are praying
- Concentrate on your prayer

Hallway Rules

- Follow directions of staff. Students
- are to walk to/from class.
- Students are not allowed into the kitchen area at any time, unless instructed otherwise by their teacher.

Bus /Van Rules

- Follow directions of the driver.
- Stay in your seat and have seat belts on at all times. Keep all parts
- of your body and all objects in the vehicle. Pushing, shoving, or
- fighting is not allowed at any time. Eating, drinking or spitting is
- not permitted.
- Use low voices when talking inside the vehicle.

Classroom Rules

Students are to follow classroom rules established by their teachers with student input for what is needed for all students to succeed.

STUDENT OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES

The rules and discipline procedure at Pillars Academy have been established for the protection of all students. Students are expected to respect the rules as well as the people responsible for carrying them out. Our goal is for each student to learn to be responsible for his/her own actions.

School-wide rules at Pillars Academy are divided into three categories: minor offenses, major offenses, and severe offenses. Students are disciplined in a progressive manner according to the seriousness of the offense and the number of times he/she has been referred to the office. Teachers will normally handle minor offenses and some major offenses. Major offenses may, and severe offenses will, be referred to the Director's office. Referrals will specify the action, which took place and prior efforts to correct students. Parents will be notified when students have been referred to the school office for repeated minor offenses and major or severe offenses.

Minor Offenses

Violation of general school and/or class rules.
Horseplay on school grounds or being in an Unassigned area without a pass.
Tardiness

Consequences

Warning, student conference,
Notice sent home, and/or
Possible parent conference

Major Offenses

Repeated minor offenses
Profanity or vulgarity

Consequences

Referral to office,
Parent conferences.

Severe Offenses

Repeated major offenses
Defiance
Habitual profanity or vulgarity

Consequences

Referral to office, restitution for damage
Parent conference

Severe defacing or destruction of school property (Including school textbooks) bringing a controlled substance or weapon on campus. Hitting others on three occasions.

The following are also considered serious violations and will result in immediate disciplinary actions.

- Failure to respect authority of adults
- Besides fighting, any action that is gravely detrimental to the physical and spiritual welfare of other pupils
- Theft
- Lying
- Continued willful disobedience

A suspension from school for one or more days (or expulsion) may be administered immediately at the discretion of the director. During a suspension, the student should be supervised and counseled by the parents about responsibility to improve behavior.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

Termination of Enrollment by Parent

As per the Enrollment Contract agreement enrollment is for the full academic year. No reduction or remission of tuition is allowed for absence, withdrawal, or vacation. We require a 14 day written notice of your intent to terminate your child's enrollment at the school. Registration fees, supply fees and T-shirt fees are non-refundable.

Termination of Enrollment by Pillars

Certain circumstances may arise that make it necessary to terminate your child's enrollment at Pillars Academy. We will make every effort to correct any such situation before this type of decision is made. The decision for termination is based on the well being of the child, other children in attendance and the overall operation of the school. Termination may include but not be limited to any of the following:

- Non-payment of tuition.
- Physical or verbal abuse of staff, children or property by the parent or student.
- Continued violation of school policies by the parent or student
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior.
- The school's inability to meet the child's needs.

A written notice of one week will be given to the parent whenever possible.

TIPS OF INTEREST

Things to Bring From Home

Every child will need to have the following:

1. Children's lunches should be nutritious. Please do not send any sweets. Labeled lunch boxes will be placed in child's cubby

Please note: If you forget your child's lunch, a \$4.00 lunch fee will be charged to your account to cover the cost of lunch by school. Elementary children need to bring their own snacks and lunches.

2. Prayer clothes for First through Fifth grade girls. (Kindergarten girls in 3rd Trimester)
3. An **Earthquake Kit** with enough supplies to last 3 days. Items to include are:
 - Pop top cans of meat or unsalted nuts, i.e. tuna, chicken, etc.
 - Pop top cans of fruit, dried fruit or fruit sticks
 - Plastic spoons & forks / Plastic bottles of juice or water
 - Snacks such as graham crackers, granola bars, and unsalted crackers.
 - Flashlight and extra batteries / Small Blanket / Wet Wips
 - Family photo with the name, phone # and address of an out of state relative.

These items should be placed in a clearly labeled container for storage.

We have pre-packaged earthquake kits available for \$15.00.

Parents of toddlers are responsible for providing diapers, wipes, and diaper rash ointment, along with two sets of seasonal clothes. Children experiencing toilet learning also need extra socks. Pillars Academy is not equipped to provide these items for families. In the event that your child's bag is not stocked, you will be contacted. According to regulations, empty plastic bags, medications, cosmetics or anything marked keep out of the reach of children are not permitted to be stored in your child's backpack.

Tipts for The First Day of School

While the first day of school can be exciting, it may also be a little unsettling. Here are a few ideas that may help make the transition into a new school go smoothly.

- Visit the school with your child during an unhurried time. Have your child meet the teachers and other staff members, check out the playground and other classrooms. Point out where your child's cubby will be, note the location of bathrooms to your child.
- The more familiar your child is with the school and the consistency of the schedule, the more comfortable he/she will become.

While some children will join a new group setting without hesitation, others may cling to their parents in genuine concern or fear. We are never really sure how a child will react until that given moment. Sometimes the reaction to school may be delayed. In every instance, it is how the parent reacts to the child that will make all the difference.

Give yourself extra time on the first few mornings. Walk your child into the center, help him/her to find his/her cubby and place belongings from home inside. Be sure to introduce your child to the teacher. This gives your child comfort that you feel good about this person. At this point you want to think about leaving.

- Be honest with your child. "I'm going to work now; I'll be back at 3:00. Give me a big hug and kiss."
- It is not wise to say things like "I'll be back in a minute" or to just sneak out. Honesty is very important to children and they must be able to trust that you'll return.

The teacher will invite your child to join an activity and make him/her feel comfortable. At the end of the day, be sure to sign your child out of the center (preschool and pre-k and Kindergarten only) and let the teacher know you are taking him/her. Your child will be anxious to see you, so if you are delayed, please be sure to call the school. We will inform your child directly.

Values Of Islamic Teachings in our Thematic Units of Study

Unit One Theme

Who We Are

Responsibility & Commitment

Be responsible for your actions
Be responsible for your classroom
Be responsible for your belongings
Be committed to God and your faith
Be committed to personal excellence
Be committed to your family and your community

Unit Two Theme

Where We Are in Time & Place Honesty & Respect

Respect & Honesty

Be honest to practicing Islam with your actions
Be honest in striving for excellence in all you do
Be honest with your words and keep your promises
Respect ourselves and parents
Respect the rights and beliefs of others
Respect our life, property and Allah's bounty

Unit Three Theme

How We Express Ourselves

Kindness & Charity

Be kind to all living things
Be kind to your family and friends
Be kind to your neighbors and the elderly
Give to the world around you.
Give from what Allah gave you
Give of yourself in leading by example

Unit Four Theme
How the World Works

Fairness & Justice

Treat others as you would like to be treated
Treat everyone fairly and be aware of biases
Treat those different from you with respect
Be just and care for the environment
Stand for justice for children of the world
Reflect on the justice of Allah's gifts to us

Unit Five Theme
Sharing the Planet

Confidence & Independence

Be confident that you can make a difference every day
Be confident and humble to accept guidance for success
Compliment your friends to encourage and motivate them
Lead by example by independently completing tasks with pride
Independently share responsibilities at home and school
Seek independence to give back to your community and the world

Unit Six Theme
How We Organize Ourselves

Courage & Persistence

Have courage to stand up for others when they are in need
Have courage to live by your family values wherever you are
Have courage to strive for higher expectations at school and home
Persist to be the positive example of a Muslim in the community
Persist to make your college dreams a reality by going after your goals
Persist to achieve excellence in your academics and extra-curricular



Where Future
Leaders are
Inspired &
Nurtured

Parent Handbook Signature Page

2014/2015

I/We have read the parent handbook, fee schedule and school calendar. I agree to and accept all policies and procedures set forth herein. I understand that these policies are subject to change with a 30-day written advanced notice. Only one parent signature is required for agreement.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Administrator

Date

This form will be kept in student's file.