

In The Name of Allah, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful.

Assalamu alaikum. WELCOME TO THE PARENTS:

Welcome to **Meraj** Academy. We offer the opportunity of a full time, systematic kindergarten and elementary school education for our children. The school is committed to providing them with a quality education in a warm and caring Islamic environment. Serious study begins early at **Meraj** Academy, and so does the love of learning as students take pleasure and pride in their accomplishments.

All our teachers are experienced and qualified. They are dedicated, caring, concerned, and professional. They have been carefully selected.

It is the goal of **Meraj** to make each child's experience at school rich and memorable one, a time that is filled with the joy of learning and growing, of making new friends and sharing. It is important that each child views his/her school as a safe and secure place to be at all times. In order to achieve that, please take a moment and review the pages of this booklet with your child.

We wish you and your children a rewarding school year. We hope your child finds the joy and peace of the Islamic way of life in our school. We thank you for all of your support, both past and present.

HISTORY:

After several years of planning, **Meraj** Academy was opened on September 13, 1993. The school began with an enrollment of 26 students and a staff that consisted of 3 classroom teachers and 1 Arabic / Religion teacher.

Since then **Meraj** Academy has continued to grow from Kindergarten to 8th grade. We have great pride in our school, especially because it is the first Islamic Elementary School in the San Fernando Valley. Inshallah, we will continue to expand and grow with the help of our community.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Meraj Academy has been approved by the State of California as a qualified elementary school. It meets all fire, health and safety codes. It is a non-profit, non-discriminatory, privately funded school.

Meraj Academy is not affiliated with any religious organization or any other organization.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS:

Meraj Academy is dedicated to providing our children with a learning environment of the highest caliber in an Islamic atmosphere. Our educational program is aimed at the development of the whole child and our goal is to produce a MUSLIM AMERICAN CITIZEN, who is happy with his/her identity.

Our educational program develops the child, physically, emotionally, and intellectually, but also spiritually. The further objective of the school is to provide students with a bilingual foundation for effective understanding of Islamic sources in the Arabic language.

An educational program is only effective when there is reinforcement in other areas of a child's life. We hope you will practice in your life the Islamic way, so your child can effectively fulfill his/her role as a good Muslim.

The school needs your full support for its educational program to be effective and successful. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your child's teacher first and then feel free to make an appointment with the Principal if your question or concern remains unresolved.

CURRICULUM:

The educational program of **Meraj** Academy follows the curriculum set by the State of California and uses State adopted textbooks. The basic program is expanded and enriched at every grade level, providing the student with exceptional learning opportunities.

ISLAM AND ARABIC:

These are major academic subjects in the curriculum. They are presented in a systematic and sequential manner, beginning in kindergarten up through all grade levels.

KINDERGARTEN:

For a kindergartener, the school is his first experience with the outside world. Kindergarten extends the program of meeting the needs of the 5-year-old child. Daily instruction and practice in Islam and Arabic is presented in meaningful and well-developed program.

GRADES K-49

Both basic and enriched academic curriculum is provided that fosters a love for learning and enables the child to expand his/her horizons as far as individually possible. The curriculum meets *and* surpasses that which is required by the State of California. Daily instruction in Islamic teachings and practices, sura recitation and reading and writing

Classical Arabic are core subjects in each grade. Homework in all subjects *is an* integral part of the curriculum.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

The school and family working together in a mutually responsible way is of the greatest importance to the child's education. Parents' consistent support for the school, its staff and educational program will create a positive attitude for learning in their child. Respect *for the teacher's* professional training and years of teaching experience are an important key. Concerns or problems should be brought to the attention of your child's teachers promptly. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, a second conference will be held with the Principal and concerned parties. If the matter is still not resolved at the second level, a third conference will be scheduled with the teacher, parent and the Principal to conclude the concern. In order to ensure that the chairperson can respond to all of a parent's concerns, parents are asked to request the third level in writing.

Parents are responsible for providing a quiet well-lighted place for the child to do his/her homework, for seeing that it is finished neatly and accurately, and for scheduling the homework time so that family activities do not compete.

During the first week of school, students will bring home a copy of classroom and school rules containing a section for parents. They are required to sign, and return to **Meraj** Academy, with the statement that they will support and abide by the rules. Please review these rules with your children and impress upon them the need for good citizenship at school.

Rudeness to any school employee is not acceptable at all. Threats and abuse directed at a teacher or school employee shall be constituted as a cause for removal of *the* person from the school premises as provided *for in* California State Education Code 44812.

TUITION AND FEES:

The yearly tuition helps to cover the school's operational costs. Fees cover registration, testing for new students, textbooks and supplies for each student_

TUITION AND FEES:

* Please refer to our tuition and fees schedules, which publishes new every year.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Meraj Academy has facilities for teaching average and above average children who do not have any special learning, speech, and physical or behavior problems.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS {Cont.}

New students will be required to take an entry test administered by **Meraj** Academy, and score no more than 6 months below grade level for grades 1-4. Pre-Kindergarteners must show sufficient readiness to enter kindergarten.

ALL NEW STUDENTS WILL BE ON PROBATION FOR THE FIRST ACADEMIC MONTH. THOSE SHOWING SPECIAL LEARNING, SPEECH, BEHAVIOR OR STUDY HABIT PROBLEMS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE AT **MERAJ** ACADEMY.

Class placement is according to the child's chronological age and academic needs of the school year.

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation is the responsibility of parents. Car-pooling arranged by the parents is one way to meet transportation needs. The school office maintains a file to help parents find a car pool.

SCHOOL HOURS:

Daily Schedule:

The daily schedule for **Meraj** Academy is 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Regular instruction hours are from 7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for all grades. Morning Assembly will be held 7:50 *a.m.* sharp. *Zuhr prayer* will be after lunch.

Extended Day Care hours are 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

HEALTH:

Health records mandated by the State of CA lifornia are maintained for each student. Parents need to notify the school office when immunizations are given by the family physician. We need your cooperation to ensure that the school is a healthy environment.

- * **A child who is ill should not be sent to school.**

- * **Children with running noses, sneezing, coughing, and/or fever must stay at home until symptoms disappear to prevent other children from becoming ill also.**

- * **If a child becomes ill at school, the parent is called to take the child home.**

HEALTH (Cont.)

*** When a parent has been contacted to pick up an ill or injured child, the child must be picked up promptly. The school cannot be held liable for ill or injured children who are not picked up in a timely manner and day care will be charged in such cases.**

MEDICATION:

Only prescription medicine will be administered to the child. An adult must bring the medication in a prescription container with a proper label. A medication form should be filled out and signed by the parent and should be handed over to the concerned teacher, with the medicine. No medication should ever be sent to school with children at any grade level.

Every accident will be given immediate attention. Parents, guardians or other responsible adults will be notified promptly in cases requiring emergency medical attention. An incident report will also be filled out concerning an incident that required first aid. A copy of this report will be sent home and the original will be placed in the child's file.

Young children need 10-12 hours of sleep each night. Parents have the responsibility to see that their children go to bed early on school nights and wake up early enough in the morning to eat a nourishing breakfast in a calm and well organized atmosphere, without being rushed.

DRESS CODES:

All Meraj Academy students are required to wear uniform. Parents need to see that it is clean, and in good condition. Hair should be neatly above the collar and ear lobes for boys. Girls with short hair should have their hair styled or trimmed to stay out of the eyes and long hair should be braided or tied up in a ponytail.

Shoes that cover the foot and are sturdy enough for outdoor play are part of the uniform. Students are required to wear good black or white athletic shoes or black leather shoes. Sandals, dressy shoes or boots are not suitable for school and will not be allowed.
STUDENTS NOT PROPERLY DRESSED WILL BE SENT HOME TO CHANGE.

DRESS CODES (Cont.)

During the following occasions students must be dressed in their best school uniform:

- 1 Field Trips**
- 2 School Picture Day**
- 3 Night of Achievement**

PARENT NOTE:

In order to reinforce the Islamic rules of dress we are teaching our children, we urge all parents to support our efforts by continuing to promote these rules at home. Parents play a very important role in their child's learning. We therefore urge all parents to dress appropriately whenever they come to school. This would be extremely helpful for the children in understanding the Islamic dress code.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES:

Parents of students in all grade levels need to include additional food in their children's lunches for the mid-morning snack.

Parents are required to send a lunch for their child everyday. All lunch boxes and thermoses should be labeled with the child's name.

Meraj Academy encourages good eating habits. It is the parents' responsibility to provide a well-balanced and nutritious meal with a beverage (preferably milk) for their child.

Processed meat and Lunchables are not allowed. Beverages containing sugar, soft drinks, candy, chocolate, any snack containing chocolate or chocolate flavor or gum are not allowed. In case a student does bring these items to school, they will be taken away from the child.

If a child forgets to bring a lunch to school, provision will be made in school and parents will be charged \$5.00 for the meal. Parents who bring in their child's lunch, when school is in session, need to drop it off in the school office. They will not be permitted to hand it over to the child in his/her classroom.

Children wanting extended day care in the evening are required to bring a nutritious snack and beverage.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular attendance and promptness is required for all students. Poor attendance and/or tardiness disrupt a student's learning as well as that of classmates. It will affect their grades and rewards at the end of the school year.

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ABSENCES AND TARDINESS:

All absences should be reported to the school office, by telephone, on the first day of absence, between 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Absence excuse forms must be submitted the first day upon return to school in each case of absence, whether due to illness, non-illness or late arrival. A child who is absent with a communicable disease will need to be readmitted by a private physician or the Health Department. The following conditions require written clearance by a physician: surgery, casts, stitches, orthopedic appliances and hospitalization.

Illness, bereavement, doctor or dental appointments and certain other circumstances are excused absences. Visiting relatives, vacation or shopping trips and most other non-health related reasons are unexcused absences. This will affect their overall grade at the end of the school year.

Non-emergency appointments for doctors and dentists should be scheduled in the afternoon rather than the morning, and preferably after school has been dismissed. The morning time block is the most critical period of the school day.

Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 7:50 a.m. and should report to the school office before going to their class. Morning Prayers/Devotional Assembly is held promptly at 7:50 a.m. and all students are encouraged to be present. Students receive their instruction for the morning period during the first few minutes. Tardiness often results in students not knowing what to do, which causes the teacher to have to reteach or redo lessons.

After 4 instances of tardiness the student will be in detention after school. After the 8th unexcused tardy, the child will be suspended for one day. A child who has a year free of tardy will earn a special recognition.

WITHDRAWALS:

During the school year parents who wish to take their child out of school for one week to one month, must inform the teacher and school office at least one week in advance, in writing. The teacher will prepare a list of assignments to be completed and brought back on the first day the child returns to school. Parents are expected to see that the child does all the work assigned. There will be no lapse in tuition for this period.

Children who are out for longer than one month will not be permitted to return to **Meraj** Academy for that school year. Exemptions will be made only under special circumstances. If parents wish to enroll their child the following year, the child will be treated as a new student.

DISCIPLINE AND SUSPENSION:

We firmly believe that school should be a place where staff and students can work in a positive and protective environment. We also believe that part of your child's development lies in the area of discipline - firm, caring discipline that is positive in nature.

At **Meraj** Academy students are expected to follow class and school rules willingly, to do assignments and maintain good study habits to the best of their ability, and to engage in behaviors, which reflect a positive image of both Islam and **Meraj** Academy.

In order to insure this goal, we have developed a school wide plan including a set of standard rules, consequences for breaking the rules and methods for rewarding positive student behavior.

When a discipline problem becomes apparent, a conference will be set up with the child's parents, teacher and Principal to resolve the problem.

A student is subject to suspension for 1 to 3 days for a number of reasons, including class disruption, cheating, lying, rudeness, disobedience, refusal to do assignments, minor fighting, throwing objects that could cause injury, temper tantrums or any other inappropriate behavior. The parent will be called to take the child home and informed of the reason for suspension. It is strongly expected that the parents will take appropriate measures in support of the school.

A student will be expelled immediately for violent or dangerous behavior or action towards any adult or student of **Meraj** Academy. Expulsion will also result from extreme rudeness or disobedience, extreme disruption in class or on the playground, destruction or theft of school or personal property, continuous disregard for school or class rules, profanity or vulgarity, or any other gross behavior.

A STUDENT WILL ALSO **BE EXPELLED FOR GROSS** NEGLIGENCE OF SCHOOL WORK AND HOMEWORK. Therefore we urge parents to work with their children at home.

A student may be suspended or expelled from school for any acts described above and related to school activities and attendance which occurred at any time, including but not limited to: (1) while on school grounds (2) while going to and from school (3) during lunch time, on or off campus (4) during, or while going to and from a school sponsored activity.

REFERENCE: CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTION 48900.

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.

CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE (Cont.):

3. Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property.
4. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
5. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of any controlled substance as defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code (drugs), alcoholic beverages or intoxicant of any kind.
6. Unlawfully offered or arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, as defined in Section 11007 of the Health and Safety Code (drugs), alcoholic beverages, or intoxicants of any kind, and them sold, delivered, or otherwise
7. Furnished to any person another liquid substance or material in lieu of the controlled substance alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
8. Possessed or used tobacco, except as provided in EC Section 48903.6 (smoking on school campus).
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, or other school officials, or other school personnel.
11. Committed robbery or extortion.
12. Unlawfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia as defined in Section 1134 of the Health and Safety Code.

REWARDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR:

Every effort is made to reward positive behavior on the part of students. At the classroom level, teachers use many systems and techniques to reinforce positive behavior of their students. Outside the classroom, all staff members give verbal praise for good behavior.

HOMEWORK:

Homework will be meaningful part of the school curriculum and will be assigned to all students. Its purpose is to reinforce basic skills, to expand topics covered in the classroom and to develop responsibility and good study habits. It will also help students apply what they have learned in class.

Homework is assigned daily, Monday through Thursday. Homework must be completed on time, reviewed and signed by parents and returned to the teacher. Time expectations are set according to the grade level and ability of an average performing student.

HOMEWORK SCHEDULE:

Kindergarten	15 - 20 Minutes
Grade 1	30 - 35 Minutes
Grade 2	30 - 40 Minutes

HOMEWORK (Cont.)

Grade 3	30 - 40 Minutes
Grade 4	40 - 45 Minutes
Grade 5	40 - 45 Minutes
Grade 6	50 - 55 Minutes
Grade 7	50 - 55 Minutes
Grade 8	60 - 65 Minutes

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To provide homework assignments for all students in compliance with the grade level time allocations.
2. To review and acknowledge the receipt of homework assignments.
3. To indicate when parents should or should not help with homework assignments.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To understand what is expected on the homework assignments.
2. To obtain the necessary books and materials to do the assignments.
3. To complete and return the homework assignments on time.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To be aware of their child's homework assignments.
2. To promote a suitable place for their child to work preferably someplace that is quiet and well lighted.
3. To help their child establish good study habits at home i.e., regular time to study, necessary materials, etc.
4. Help them develop the habit to give priority to their homework and studies over their social life.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS:

The grading system consists of the letters.

O: Outstanding; G: Good; S: Satisfactory; N: Needs Improvement.

Grading is done according to grade level, quality of work, completion of assignments and the teacher's judgment and evaluation. **The teacher is the final judge for all grades.**

Report cards go home in December, March and June.

RETENTION:

A student not meeting the promotion requirements listed above will be retained and will not be permitted to enroll for the next school year with the following exceptions:

RETENTION (Cont.)

1. Excessive absence due to major illness or injury.
2. If the retained child's age falls within the chronological range as the other students in the class.
3. If the retained child is deemed by the teacher to be failing due to immaturity in development.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year, in mid-October and in February. Additionally, teachers are available for conferences, before and after school, only with prior appointment.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS:

Testing is an integral part of any effective program. In the Spring of each year (April/May) all students at **Meraj** Academy will take a standardized achievement test. Performance on these tests is one of the criteria for determining promotion to the next grade level.

There will be a change in the regular classroom schedule to encourage each student's best efforts. Parents can help their child do his/her best by doing the following:

- Discussing with your child the importance of doing his/her best.
- Having your child arrive at school on time.
- Setting a bedtime that allows for adequate rest.
- Preparing a nutritious breakfast.
- Assuring your child that you know that he/she will do well.
- * Individual scheduling is not possible.

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS:

Promotion requirements are as follows:

1. Attendance in school at least 90% of the time they have been enrolled for that school year.
2. Minimum final grades of S or C in Reading, Math, English, Spelling and Arabic and Islamic Studies.
3. A score of not less than 6 months below grade level in Reading, Math, English and Spelling on the Standardized Achievement Test.

Students receiving an N or D in Arabic and Islamic Studies or score more than 6 months below grade level on the achievement test must be tutored during the summer vacation at the parents' expense. Upon successful passing of a second test given at Meral Academy before the opening of school, the student will be promoted to the next **grade** level.

EARLY RELEASE PERMIT:

No child will be permitted to leave school during class hours unless he or she is picked up at the office by a parent or by an adult so authorized in writing by the parent. We cannot let children leave school with adults not previously authorized or with brothers and sisters and other family members who are not adults.

An Early Release Permit must be obtained from the school office. Parents are not to go to the classroom without a permit from the office.

In case the child was expected to return back to school on the same day and does not return, the parent must call the school with an explanation.

CLASS VISITATION / VOLUNTEER HELPERS:

Parents who are interested to do voluntary work in the school are welcome. They must submit in writing to the Principal, the kind of work they are qualified to do. Volunteer helpers must commit themselves to arrive promptly and regularly on each assigned day. They are required to meet with the staff member prior to their first assignment, for instruction in their duties. They need to arrive 10-15 minutes before their duty begins. Volunteers will sign-in in the office before entering the school classroom. No one is allowed on the school grounds without notifying the school office. We are sure that you appreciate the need for providing a safe, secure school for all.

Volunteers are not permitted to bring any other adults or children with them. Volunteer helpers need to notify the school office, at least one day in advance when possible, if due to an illness or other compelling reason, they cannot come, so the staff member can get a substitute.

PERSONAL MESSAGES:

Parents are urged to refrain from calling the school office to deliver personal messages to children. Also we will not allow children to call home for forgotten items. It is a child's responsibility to come prepared to school. We make these requests in order to keep classroom interruptions to a minimum and utilize our office time to serve you better.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

All personal belongings, such as coats, sweaters, lunch bags and boxes, backpacks and extra clothing must be clearly marked with your child's name and grade.

In addition, other personal belongings such as toys, balls, baseball gloves or mitts, radios, roller blades/skates etc. are not allowed in school without the express permission of the classroom teacher. The school is not responsible for the loss of such items. In addition,

PERSONAL BELONGINGS (Cont.)

they tend to disrupt the classroom program. Children should not bring packs of candy and gum to school, even for use after school.

PARTIES:

Birthday parties or other parent-initiated parties are not allowed at **Meraj** Academy.

FIELD TRIPS AND CHAPERONS:

Parents will be requested by their child's teacher at various times to act as a chaperon on field trips. The parent chaperon will be responsible for 5-10 children.

It is the chaperon's responsibility to maintain discipline in their group and to keep the group with him/her.

Parents will be notified at least one week before the field trip of the date, times, destination, lunch information cost, etc. The parent must sign and return the Field Trip Consent Form in order for the child to go on the trip. The cost of the trip must also be paid at that time. If the money has not been paid by the time school begins on the day of the trip, the child will remain at school.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

Occasionally an emergency arises when it is imperative that we get in touch with a parent or a person designated by the parent. We will always try to contact the parent first unless your emergency card specifically indicates otherwise. Your cooperation is necessary if our records are to be up-to date and of use. Any changes in phone numbers of parents or emergency contact should be reported immediately.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Drills are the most important safety precaution taken in school and include the following:

1. Fire Drill
 - a. Know the route of exit from every room you go to during the day.
 - b. During the fire drill, quickly and quietly leave the room. Go to the designated area for that grade and wait, in single file, for your teacher to take roll. Do not talk.
 - c. The teacher is to be the last person from the room. He/she should close the door and take the roll book with him/her.
 - d. You may return only when the all-clear signal has been given.
2. Earthquake Drill signaled by the emergency itself or *the* command to "***DROP.***"
 - a. Drop to knees with back to window, under table or desk.
 - b. On the floor, clasp both hands firmly behind the head, covering the neck.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (Cont.)

- c. Bury face in arms, protecting the head.
- d. Follow next instructions without question. Be ready to evacuate buildings and assemble in a designated area.

TEXTBOOKS :

Books play a special part in our lives and textbooks are a vital part of instruction. Every student is expected to use his or her books in a caring and respectful manner. A book cover must protect all textbooks that are issued to students. This must be done in the first two weeks of school. All consumable books are given to the student at the end of the year. Textbooks must be returned to the school. Charges will be made for lost or damaged books. Report cards and other records will be withheld if the student fails to return a textbook or pay the fine for lost or damaged textbooks.

Students must learn to take responsibility for their possessions and actions.

CAMPUS CLEANLINESS:

Everyone at school is expected to do his/her part to keep the school grounds and classrooms clean and neat. Students can expect to see staff adults picking up the little they see, and the staff will expect the same from them. Each of us must do our part to help clean up and keep the school clean.

RESTROOMS:

Restrooms must be used only as long as is really necessary. After use, the sinks should be left clean and all paper towels are to be put in the wastebasket.

RECESS:

Recess is the time for students to go to the restroom and then get drinks. They must then go straight to the play area. Students will not be permitted to play in or around the building at anytime.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The Board of Directors is the policy making body for **Meraj** Academy. Ranges of its duties are:

Adopts annual budget and approves all expenditures; employs personnel; approves curriculum, textbooks and courses of study; and makes decisions on contracts.