

MUSLIM ACADEMY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA (MACF)

Purpose

At the Muslim Academy of Central Florida (MACF) we are excited about the progress made in 2002-03 in terms of focusing on our school goals and continuing to enhance educational excellence.



The purpose of this Annual Report is to enthusiastically share our school year with you. As ever, our wonderful students are the centerpiece of our school, and we want you to be fully aware of their progress, as well as our continued commitment in helping them grow to their fullest potential. As we conclude our current school year and move toward the year 2003-04, we are blessed with countless memories of the efforts made by so many dedicated individuals on behalf of our students at MACF. We have had a very positive, productive school year!

May I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to you, the parents and guardians of our students, for the time, interest and personal dedication you have demonstrated related to your children's educational and emotional growth. Education is fundamentally a partnership among the

family, community and school; however, it is your encouragement at home that is so crucial in instilling in children the desire for success in school and in life.

I hope that this report proves helpful to you and that you will not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns about your child's education. By working together as a cooperative team, we have the best chance to ensure a high-quality educational experience for your child.

W. Ernest Gibbs, Ph.D.

MACF Interim Principal

Mission Statement

The mission of the Muslim Academy of Central Florida is to educate and prepare each generation with knowledge, wisdom, character, and life skills, using the best and most effective methods and tools through the Islamic vision as it exists in the Quran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).



School Philosophy

We believe that in an Islamic-based educational environment, our students will not only receive an excellent education, but also develop strong morals and character based upon a deeper understanding of themselves in relationship to their faith and society.

School Goals

The goals of MACF are the following:

- To establish an environment that facilitates excellence in education;
- To promote the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for the successful development of the total person;
- To prepare students to adapt to the complexities and challenges of an increasingly interdependent and constantly changing world;
- To foster awareness of the rights, duties and responsibilities of citizenship; and
- To promote respect for other cultures and nationalities.

School Description

The Muslim Academy of Central Florida, the first full-time Islamic school in Central Florida, opened in 1991. In 2000, MACF moved into its present location the 30,000 sq. ft. Muslim Education Center and Community Auditorium. With the additional space and resources, MACF is able to provide educational services from pre-school through grade 12.



Total School Enrollment

October 2001	112 students
October 2002	195 students

Student Ethnic Composition (based on father’s country of origin)

North/ South America	11.8%
Asia	33.3%
North Africa/ Middle-East	51.3%
Central/ Southern Africa	3.6%

Staff Educational Achievement

Bachelor's Degree	11
Masters degree	8
Ph.D.	1

Accreditation

MACF is fully accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) and the Florida Kindergarten Council (FKC). FCIS evaluates and accredits independent schools throughout Florida. As one of the nation’s largest organizations of independent schools, it represents over 77,000 students in 158 member schools.



School Facilities and Safety

MACF provides a safe, clean environment for its students. The school is housed in the newly built Muslim Education Center and Community Auditorium. Its facilities include 16 classrooms, a library/media center, a computer lab, a science lab, a gymnasium/cafeteria, and kitchen. The outdoor recreation areas include basketball and volleyball courts, soccer fields, and a playground.

The security and safety of our students is the utmost priority at MACF. A full-time safety officer staffs MACF during school hours. The property

entrance is gated and there are 16 surveillance cameras that provide complete coverage of the school building and perimeter -- 24 hours a day, 7 day a week.

Student Achievement



In May of 2002, MACF made a transition to using the standardized *Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition*, to assess student achievement. The SAT-9 is a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended subtests in content areas such as Reading, Mathematics, Language, and Writing. It is also the norm-referenced assessment tool used by the State of Florida for the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT), thereby providing the MACF learning community with comparative information relative to

state and local public school outcomes. *It is important to recognize that although the Stanford assessment is a significant measure of student progress, it is only one of the various methods used by MACF to determine achievement. Therefore, while helpful and informative for diagnostic purposes, it cannot be considered out of context with other methods such as daily progress assessments, portfolios, and regular testing in the content areas in the classroom.*

Results of the SAT-9 assessment of student achievement at MACF in 2002 were as follows (results for 2003 are due in late May of this year):

MACF STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST, 9TH ED. PROFILE (MAY 2002)

Grade	# Tested	Reading			Mathematics			Language
		MACF	Florida	OCPS	MACF	Florida	OCPS	MACF
Grade 1	22	71	n/a	n/a	41	n/a	n/a	56
Grade 2	11	65	n/a	n/a	65	n/a	n/a	57
Grade 3	21	58	57	52	50	62	57	61
Grade 4	12	62	57	52	77	62	58	68
Grade 5	8	60	52	47	63	61	56	76
Grade 6	8	68	52	46	74	63	57	72
Grade 7	5	88	56	51	84	65	57	88
Grade 8	5	46	60	57	59	64	62	64

* Scores expressed as mean percentile averages

Reading

Total reading and/or comprehension scores for MACF students in 2002 exceeded the national mean (average) percentile of 50% in all grade levels except for grade 8. (Further analysis of grade 8 results revealed that one student in grade 8 was learning disabled and one was previously staffed in her public school as limited-English-proficient, thus affecting the overall average for the small student population in that class.)

In comparison to Florida and local results (Orange County Public Schools, the district in which MACF is located), MACF reading scores were higher than both the state and OCPS mean scores at every grade level (except grade 8) for which comparisons were available (Florida school districts begin their norm-referenced assessments at grade 3). In a number of grade levels, MACF student scores in reading comprehension, the area in which the Florida assesses reading with SAT-9, were significantly and substantially higher than the state and local results.

Mathematics

Total mathematics and/or mathematical problem solving scores for MACF students exceeded or matched the national mean percentile in all grade levels except for grade 1 (problem solving).

In comparison to Florida and local results (Orange County Public Schools), except for grade 3, MACF math scores were higher than both the state and OCPS mean scores at every grade level for which comparisons were available (as mentioned, Florida public schools do not begin their norm-referenced assessments until grade 3). At nearly every grade level, MACF student scores in mathematical problem solving, the area in which the Florida assesses math with SAT-9, were significantly and substantially higher than the state and local results.

Language

Total language (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, usage, and sentence structure) scores for MACF students exceeded the national mean percentile in all grade levels assessed. No state and local comparisons in language results were available since language is not included in the Florida norm-referenced assessment.

Quality of Instruction and Leadership

During the 2002-2003 school year, MACF continued implementation of the Florida Sunshine State Standards. Using the SAT-9 data, each teacher analyzed student performance in reading, math, language, and science in order to individualize their instruction.

At all levels, MACF implemented significant improvements in correlating lesson planning and classroom instruction with the Florida Sunshine State Standards in math, science, language arts, and social studies. Teachers were required to integrate these challenging standards into their plans for instruction on a weekly and daily basis, and demonstrate how they used information from SAT-9 and other assessment data to diagnose and improve student performance in the core subject areas. This produced a higher level of focus on outcomes and an emphasis on intervening with individual students when extra assistance was needed.

Subsequently, an after-school academic assistance program was instituted to help students improve their achievement in those areas where they were identified as requiring additional support. Based upon a referral from the classroom teacher, students were offered the option of attending after-school tutoring in the areas of reading and math. High-performing students assisted teachers in the after-school program, where appropriate, which provided an extra dimension of peer interaction. Staff, students, and parents were pleased and encouraged by the positive results of this program.

In addition, the assessment coordinator performed a comprehensive review of achievement data from the most current SAT-9 results and reported that analysis to the Board. This led to an elevated awareness of Board members of the level of performance of students in various content areas. Subsequently, a plan was developed that included a comparative review of the last year's SAT-9 data and groundwork was laid for a school-wide plan to improve student writing.

Curriculum Improvement

This was a banner year for curriculum improvement at MACF. Important upgrades were made in instructional materials in the major content areas to align school curriculum with the Sunshine State Standards and state-of-the-art instructional and curricular methodologies.



The elementary staff at MACF continues to devote time to staff development, workshops, training sessions, and conferences. Teaching writing was the focus of some of MACF efforts to improve student achievement in 2002-03. For example, all teachers attended a writing workshop that focused on teaching strategies to help students to become better writers.

At the secondary level, each core subject area received new materials and tools from major vendors. Preparing students for the future was the focus of the secondary department in 2002-

03, with the implementation of several new subjects to enhance the learning experience of our middle- and high-school students, including on-site Chemistry, Biology, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Computer Applications, Journalism, Model United Nations, Forensics, and Research Methods. On-line learning via the Florida Virtual School continued apace and was significant in producing the first MACF high-school graduation cohort, the Class of 2003.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

MACF continually reviews and updates its textbooks and instructional materials in order to ensure that they are up-to-date, available in sufficient numbers, and that they are appropriate to support our instructional program. In this regard, the school purchased new series in language arts/reading, mathematics, and history (SRA Open Court, Harcourt Math Advantage, Glencoe Integrated Mathematics, and World Explorer, among others.)

Technology Integration

Students at MACF are engaged in meaningful technology applications as an integral part of their daily learning environment. Students use desktop computers, laptop computers, digital cameras, VCRs, overhead projectors, and laser disc players. The school purchased 20 new Dell computers and additional computer software to improve the computer lab facilities. In addition, staff members received training from Intel and Microsoft to bring hands-on technology projects into the classrooms.

Professional Development

MACF staff members attended a variety of staff development conferences throughout the school year, focusing on technology, literacy, math, writing, and multiage education. To further support the professional development of MACF staff, ESEA Title II and Title V training and media center grants were pursued and received, combined with Board financial assistance, this made it possible to upgrade media center services and fund the attendance of teachers to attend workshops and conferences such as the Florida Educational Technology Conference, the Florida Independent Schools Conference, Hands-On Math Applications, and the Heidi Hayes Jacobs workshop on effectively aligning assessment, curriculum, and instruction. Real-world experiences in laboratory methods were realized through a cooperative arrangement with the University of Central Florida, and staff and students benefited from their participation in symposia sponsored by the Orlando Sentinel and UCF. In addition, staff members continued to improve their craft and further their certification processes by taking courses at local institutions of higher learning.

The elementary and secondary assistant principals attended a workshop with Heidi Hayes Jacobs, one of the leading experts on Curriculum Mapping. This workshop focused on ways to critically analyze school curriculum and make adjustments to improve school academic standards. The interim-principal attended a series of Florida Leaders Workshops, which detailed the development and implementation of a technology plan for MACF.

Parent involvement

One of the most important factors in a child's educational success is the involvement of parents or guardians. It is important for parents, teachers, and students to meet regularly to discuss a student's progress. To encourage and measure parental participation, records are maintained on the number and percentage of students whose parents or guardians participate in conferences. For the purpose of this report, a parent-teacher conference is one where an open invitation is given to all parents/guardians of the students of the school, inviting them to visit the school to exchange information related to the progress of their student. During the 2002 – 2003 school, over 95% of our parents and guardians attended parent-teacher conferences, the Back-to-School Night in the fall, or the Open House in the spring.

Parents and guardians also are invited to visit and, where appropriate participate in classrooms as well as after-school activities. MACF parents form our Ansars Volunteers group, which provides numerous volunteer hours in the classroom, school cafeteria, school office, security, etc.

Points of Pride

- **After-School Academic Assistance Program**: This school-wide program was instituted to provide one-on-one help for students in reading, math, science, language arts, and social studies.
- **Islam in Action**: In 2003-2004, MACF established the Islam in Action award. On a weekly basis, students in the elementary grades voted for those individuals who proved to be an outstanding Muslim in actions and deeds.
- **Book Fair**: During the week of March 17-21, MACF held its annual Book Fair, where students and parents were able to buy a variety of books and multi-media resources. The Book Fair raised over \$2,500 that will be used to purchase books for the MACF Media Center.
- **International Fair**: On March 27, MACF held its annual International Fair that featured booths and displays for over 30 countries. Students wore ethnic clothes from various countries, performed, and participated in a “Global Jeopardy” game.
- **Science/Math Fair**: During the week of April 14-18, the middle and high school students participated in the annual Math and Science fairs.
- **Math-A-Thon**: For the second straight year, our elementary students participated in the Math-A-Thon to raise funds for St. Jude Hospital.
- **Invention Convention**: Our students displayed many of their creative and ingenious inventions.

Extra-curricular Activities:

- **Cub Scouts**: MACF sponsors a Cub Scout pack in which boys in grades 1 through 5 are able to participate and learn skills.
- **Soccer League**: Boys and girls at MACF participate in the soccer league that is housed at the MACF soccer fields. The league runs began in January and ends in May.
- **Clubs**: MACF offers many clubs where our students can gain practical and real-world experiences; for example, the Model U.N. Club; Forensics Club, Journalism Club, Yearbook Club, and Environmental Club.

Field Trips:

- This year our students were able to partake of a number of education field trips. Visits were made to Wonderworks, the History Museum, the Downtown Library, Green Meadows Farm, the University of Central Florida, and United Parcel Service to view a UPS jet that is flown by one of our parents.



We Want to Know What You Think

Should you have questions about, or if you would like an additional copy of MACF's Annual Report, please call our office at (407) 382-9900. We would like to have your comments and

suggestions. Comments may be sent to MACF in writing, by telephone, or by e-mail to gibbs@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu.