Bismehi-Ta’aalaa

SACS CASI Guided Self-Study Report

Al-Hadi School of Accelerative Learning

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March 2007
“The Mission of Al-Hadi School is to develop students’ intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic potential in an Islamic environment.”
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Section I: Guided Self-Study Process

Al-Hadi School was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2001, as a non-public/special purpose school. The school is due for a SACS/CASI Quality Assurance Review in April 2007.

In order to prepare for this review, the following members of the School Improvement Committee (SIC), Br. Sami Hijazi (Headmaster), Sr. Haleema Goense (Academic Advisor/Teacher), and Dr. Raza Ahmed (Parent) attended a SACS/CASI seminar presented by Mr. Michael Mier in November 2005 to understand the process of the Quality Assurance Review.

For further guidance, Br. Sami Hijazi (Headmaster), Sr. Haleema Goense (Academic Advisor/Teacher), Br. Masood Irani (Parent), Dr. Raza Ahmed (Parent), Br. Baqar Rizvi (Education Director), Sr. Masooma Razzak (Academic Advisor), and Sr. Zainab Khan (Finance/Operations Coordinator) attended an on-site consultation with Mr. Michael Mier, SACS/CASI Specialist in Fall 2006.

An initial committee that comprised of Br. Sami Hijazi, Sr. Haleema Goense, Sr. Masooma Razzak, and Sr. Zainab Khan was formed to begin formulation of the Guided Self-Study Report with the guidance provided by Mr. Mike Mier and the SACS/CASI Next Generation Handbook. These members provided input on standards for the self-study presentation based on their areas of expertise and wrote majority of the initial report.

Feedback was then solicited from other members of the School Improvement Committee (SIC), Islamic Education Board (IEB) members, community members, faculty, and parents by means of meetings, emails, and phone conferences.

Finally, after extensive feedback from all stakeholders, the final guided self-study report was compiled.

The School Improvement Committee (SIC) consists of:
- Br. Sami Hijazi (Headmaster)
- Sr. Haleema Goense (Academic Advisor/Teacher)
- Dr. Raza Ahmed (Parent)
- Br. Masood Irani (Parent)
- Br. Abbas Ahmadi (IEB member)
Community and School Demographics:
Al-Hadi School of Accelerative Learning (AHS) is a full-time, accredited (special purpose / non-public) private Islamic school. AHS is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), one of six regional accrediting associations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Al-Hadi School is centrally located in Southwest Houston and caters to a diverse population that travels from many different areas of the city. Our student body is comprised of mostly first generation Americans with immigrant parents from different parts of the world including India, Pakistan, the Middle East, Far East, and Africa. The majority of our students are bilingual in several different languages. Most of our parents have undergraduate and/or graduate degrees.

History:
AHS was established in January 1996 by community members, parents, and teachers who came together for a shared vision to provide an educational program for students based upon a strong foundation of academic and spiritual growth and excellence. AHS began as a full-time preschool and daycare program in January 1996. The Elementary section was added in August 1996, the Middle School in August 1998 and the High School was added in August 2000. The school qualified for accreditation by SACS in 2001 and the first AHS senior class graduated in May 2004.

Student Enrollment and Staff:
AHS staff consists of 52 full-time, part-time, and volunteer employees, of which 16 employees are core subject teachers with Bachelors and/or Masters Degrees along with State Certifications.

AHS current student enrollment is 312 students with the following make-up:
- Preschool = 85
- Elementary School (Kg – 5th) = 131
- Middle School (6th – 8th) = 56
- High School (9th – 12th) = 40

Programs & Services:
AHS offers instructional classes (8:00 am to 3:30 pm) and after-school care (3:30 – 6:00 pm) for students in Preschool through 12th grade during the academic year. It also offers full-time year round daycare service for preschool and elementary age students. Student gender separation begins at 7th grade level. The school offers a daily hot lunch program [App. 11] during the academic year. The school does not provide daily transportation at this time. Summer school programs are offered in collaboration with other departments of IEC.

Curriculum:
The Al-Hadi School academic curriculum is based upon the guidance provided by Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the guidelines/standards set by the National Council of Teachers of English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The school also offers instruction in Arabic (as a second language), and Islamic and Quranic Studies as part of the curriculum. Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered and are based on rigorous curriculum that encourage higher level thinking skills and help establish study skills necessary for college level study. The AP incentive is calculated on the raw score per semester at 5% upon the average. The following are Al-Hadi School’s AP statistics for the last three years:
- Number of AP tests taken by students over the last 3 years: 11
- Number of scores that have qualified for college credit: 3
- Subjects in which AP tests have been administered: *English Literature & Composition, US Government and Psychology.*
Grading & Ranking Procedures:
Student Grade Point Averages (GPA) are calculated based on a weighted average of high school courses taken at AHS. Students are not ranked, but the school profile is provided to colleges. The GPA is provided on a scale of 4.0 to accommodate college admission requirements.

Colleges attended by or have accepted AHS students:
100% of AHS graduates enroll in colleges/universities. The following is a list of colleges where AHS students currently attend or have been accepted:
- University of Texas in Austin
- University of Texas in San Antonio
- University of Houston
- Houston Community College
- University of Kentucky
- Brown University

Standardized Testing:
Students in Kg – 10th grade are administered the Terra Nova Test (CAT) and CTP4 (Education Records Bureau) standardized tests as part of the end of year assessment program. Students in 8th – 10th grades take the PSAT and PLAN tests in preparation for college entrance testing. Juniors and seniors take the SAT. Seventh graders participate in the Duke University TIP program (ACT test). Students have earned medals in various subjects during the last two years of participation in this program.

Extra Curricular Activities:
Students have participated in the following competitions over the last five years:
- National Engineers Week Future City Competition (SIM City)
- Houston Chronicle Spelling Bee
- Private Schools Interscholastic Association (PSIA) academic meets
- Quranic Recitation Contests
- Intramural basketball games
- UNHCR Poster Contest
- Science Fiction Writing Competition
- Houston Bar Association Mock Trials
- Team America Rocketry Challenge
**SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

**Mission:**
The Mission of Al-Hadi School is to develop students’ intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic potential in an Islamic environment.

**Shared Vision:**
To help each student become an asset to society.

**Summary of Beliefs:**
- The human being as a whole is made of divine spirit, mind, and body, with personal aspirations and unique qualities that need to be developed in a nurturing environment.
- Faith and knowledge are the keys to providing such an environment.
- Learning is an ongoing process from the time one is born until one leaves this world.
- All individuals of the school community are partners in educating children to become productive members of their society.
- Knowledge is maximized through interactive learning.
- Various assessment tools should be utilized to monitor student growth in areas highlighted in the mission statement.

**Goals for Student Learning:**
These goals are an expression of the mission, and they guide students, parents, teachers, and community members’ efforts as they work together to enhance the learning abilities of students.

Al-Hadi students aim to become...
- **Independent life-long learners** in the subject areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Fine Art, Physical Education, other languages, and religious studies utilizing resources and support by the school and independently with the guidance of teachers and parents.
- **Interactive learners** who are able to conduct research and prepare projects independently using scientific methods.
- **Independent thinkers** who are able to analyze information and reach conclusions using different perspectives to support them.
- **Creative and effective communicators** who are:
  - Able to read and comprehend different materials.
  - Able to relate what they read using new concepts and ideas.
  - Able to use arguments effectively by defending their points of view in a logical and systematic manner.
  - Able to develop their communication skills using appropriate technology.
- **Assets to the Community** who:
  - Serve the community individually and as members of a group.
  - Develop and increase their awareness of current events at the political, social, and spiritual levels.
  - Research different career opportunities that will benefit them and the society.
Standards for a non-public / special purpose school

- Standard 1: Corporate Governance
- Standard 2: Financial Adequacy
- Standard 3: Educational Services
- Standard 4: Advertising and Marketing
- Standard 5: Educational Staff
- Standard 6: Admission and Placement Procedures
- Standard 7: Management and Supervision
- Standard 8: Student Attendance and Conduct
- Standard 9: Counseling, Records, and Follow-up
- Standard 10: Communications and Relationships
- Standard 11: Physical Facilities and Equipment
- Standard 12: School Improvement and Development
Standard 1: Corporate Governance

Al-Hadi School was established in 1996 by Anjuman-E-Haideri, a non-profit 501C religious organization, to serve the growing educational needs of the Houston Muslim community. Anjuman-e-Haideri DBA Islamic Education Center (IEC) formally registered the DBA for Al-Hadi School of Accelerative Learning with the State of Texas in Fall 1996. (App. 19)

Al-Hadi School is governed by the Islamic Education Board (IEB) (App. 7). The IEB is a sub-committee of IEC Education Director and is comprised of the following seven members: resident alim (religious cleric); the IEC Education Director, Secretary, Finance Director, two general directors and a PTO representative. All IEB directors other than the resident alim, IEC Education Director, and the PTO representative are appointed by IEC and can serve upto two consecutive two-year terms. The IEB is chaired by the resident alim (religious cleric). IEB is responsible for overseeing the strategic planning, overall governance structure, policies and procedures, curriculum standards, budget approval, and monitoring the educational, financial and operating activities of the school (App. 8).

The IEB has the following sub-committees:

- Human Resource Committee (HR) – responsible for all employee hiring, promotion, and termination activities of the school. It is also responsible for approving salary scales and discretionary bonuses.
- Finance Committee – responsible for over-seeing AHS finance related activities including approval of the annual budget, review of budget to actual comparisons, review and approval of major discretionary expenditures, approval of financial assistance for qualified students, and any other finance issue which requires IEB approval.
- AHS Expansion Committee – responsible for addressing the short-term and long-term facility needs. The committee meets periodically to identify the school’s facility needs and formulate short-term and long-term plans to address the identified needs.

The school consults with outside counsel on any legal matters on an as needed basis. The school currently does not have any legal proceedings that are either pending or underway.

The school is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to operate a full-time daycare and after-school facility in accordance with established Childcare Regulations and Standards.
Al-Hadi School has adequate financial resources to support the school operations (App. 12). The school generates 100% of its annual operating expenses through school fees. However, the school provides significant financial aid (18% of annual revenues) to low income families of students in order to ensure that all community members, regardless of their financial status, have an opportunity to benefit from AHS. As a result, the school has to generate significant donations every year to meet its overall budget deficit. The IEB and the AHS Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) conduct various fundraising drives throughout the year to generate funds to meet the annual fundraising goals.

AHS is also fully supported by the general community and specifically by the IEC Board of Directors. IEC provides regular financial support to assist with various projects and expenditures of AHS. IEC also provides AHS with facility usage, cost of utilities, and capital improvements for a nominal monthly charge. AHS also receives a significant amount of financial support from parent and non-parent community members. As a result of the various sources listed above, the school has consistently been able to meet its annual deficit and short-term and long-term expansion goals.

AHS has a Financial Coordinator and staff who manage finance activities. The school prepares an annual budget and provides regular budget-to-actual updates and other financial reports to the IEB. AHS uses the School Minder Billing module to manage and maintain its billing information. The tool enables the school to generate student statements, as needed and receivable reports. AHS is planning to implement the School Minder accounting module in 2007-08 in order to replace its current Quickbooks general ledger. The school maintains its accounting records in Quickbooks in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. An external accounting firm compiles annual financial statements as needed. The school finance staff closely monitors budget to actual variances as well as aging of receivables to ensure timely collection of fees. The School’s Financial Coordinator also supports the financial activities of the Al-Hadi School PTO as a cash/bank function for the PTO. The IEC Treasurer and the IEB Finance Director, who is required to be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), provide the appropriate oversight of the school’s finance function. Members of the IEB Finance sub-committee, work closely with the AHS finance personnel to identify long and short-term financial needs.
AHS curriculum standards are designed to provide all students an opportunity and the resources to develop the literacy skills they need to be successful in the pursuit of their Islamic and worldly goals and to function as productive members of society.

AHS strives to implement the standards set up by the National Council of Teachers of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, and the International Reading Association. A scope and sequence as outlined in the curriculum guidelines guide each area of learning.

The Kg through 3rd grade curriculum is built upon the foundation of literacy first and thus core disciplines are integrated through thematic units and centers with individual instruction. Scientific research provides insight into the essential components for effective literacy instruction across the disciplines and instructional techniques.

Block scheduling is utilized in Middle and High School. Instruction is subject-related and integrated with the goal of promoting literacy across disciplines. The high school curriculum meets the graduation requirements of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) (App. 16). Academic counseling is provided to assist students in applying to college/universities and to assure that graduation and admission requirements are met in a timely manner. AP exams are administered on site to allow students the opportunity to achieve college credit while in high school.

Average student-teacher ratio is 1:14 with teacher assistants in 1st & 2nd grade (App. 2 & 3). Class instruction incorporates center-based learning with hands-on activities and audio/visual resources. Students at all grade levels are grouped according to needs and ability. An ESL program is in place for students requiring individualized instruction in learning the English language. Students in need of reinforcement and remedial help are also provided with one-on-one and small group instruction within their classroom and in groups outside the classroom. Additionally, teachers’ weekly lesson plans incorporate the use of computer and science labs at all grade levels.

Student motivation is addressed positively through the use of research-based techniques such as self-evaluation, recognition of effort in addition to results, and the application of realistic expectations. Learning goals are promoted in the classroom through the use of critical thinking and increased student created responses (rather than structured responses). Semi-annual school-wide award ceremonies and periodic recognition by the faculty serve to recognize student effort in addition to results. As a form of student motivation, high school students from within the school population are utilized to assist teachers regularly in elementary classrooms (App. 26).

Teachers’ evaluation of student learning is supplemented by evaluations from independent sources such as annual standardized testing. These assessments enable the school to identify the strengths and areas requiring growth within the education program.

Standardized Testing:
Students in Kg – 10th grade are administered the Terra Nova Test (CAT) and CTP4 (Education Records Bureau) standardized tests as part of the end of year assessment program. Students in 8th – 10th grades take the PSAT and PLAN tests in preparation for college entrance testing. Juniors and seniors take the SAT (App. 18). Seventh graders participate in the Duke University TIP program (ACT test) (App. 5). Students have earned medals in various subjects during the last two years of participation in this program.
AHS is a community-based school. Majority of students and parents are either members of IEC or attend religious services at IEC. As a result, the majority of new students come to AHS through referrals from current and former families. AHS conducts most advertising and marketing through various programs at IEC. IEB members and/or the Headmaster regularly present state-of-the-school updates at important community and school events.

To attract enrollment from the community, students make presentations (academic and religious) to the community audience. AHS accomplishments, assessment results, etc. are also published in the community newsletters.

The school also markets its program through its website, www.alhadi.com, as well as the IEC website, www.iec-houston.org (App. 13). These methods have been effective in attracting parents who are moving from overseas also. Additionally, AHS has advertised in various directories and on the radio (local station in English and Urdu languages), although reliance on these media has been reduced over the years. The ads describe various aspects of the school, including its mission & philosophy, curriculum, special programs (hot lunches, ESL), facilities (labs, etc.), membership in educational organizations (PSIA, ERB), accreditation, etc. A promotional video of the school is also in the works. The target market for this video will be prospective parents and various Islamic religious and community organizations in both the Houston area as well as the continental US area.

Inquiries received by phone, in person, and tours conducted by office staff provide information similar to that in school ads. Information relating to admission fees and tuition is provided verbally and in writing at time of admission. This information is also available on the school’s website. Financial policies are explained in English and in other languages as needed, (Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Spanish) at the time of enrollment. All charges are detailed, including refund policies and other charges such as lunch, fieldtrip, uniform, supplies costs, etc.

Employment opportunities are advertised on the website and through an electronic job posting associated with the teacher certification program at San Jacinto Community College. These ads highlight the fact that AHS is a private, accredited school and can help teachers fulfill their internship needs depending on their area of specialization.

All promotional materials are reviewed by the administration, and in some cases by the members of the IEB.
All Elementary teachers and Middle and High school core subject teachers are certified or in the process of certification and meet regional certification standards (App. 2). In order to maintain the quality of educational staff, teachers and staff are evaluated at the end of each year. Evaluations are based on portfolios of professional development, accomplishments, observations by the Headmaster, evaluations by the administration and students (middle and high school only), and self-evaluations. The results of these evaluations are privately shared with each employee and appropriate counseling is provided. The Human Resource Committee (HRC) exercises similar diligence at the time of hiring new teachers and staff as well.

Teaching Staff Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Teachers</th>
<th>Bachelors Degree</th>
<th>Masters Degree</th>
<th>State Certification Obtained</th>
<th>State Certification In-Process</th>
<th>Other Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training and continuing education needs of employees are satisfied through in-house workshops (App. 27), other organizations such as Region IV Educational Services, various Universities (locally and out-of-state), and private training organizations. Information regarding teacher certification, financial aid and scholarships for staff development are provided to employees. Staff development is also a line item on the annual school budget, and the school subsidizes training cost for employees based on budget allocations.

Teachers and staff use various tools to stay abreast of new research and trends in their fields. Many teachers are members of professional teacher organizations and subscribe to educational publications. Teachers also have access to educational funding, training opportunities and grants through these memberships.

Employee records include all documentation required as per the employee handbook (App. 10): including background checks, applications, resumes, employee contracts, tax forms, employment eligibility verifications, etc. As with all forms of confidential records, the integrity of employee records is maintained by storing them in a locked cabinet in a secure location (headmaster’s office), where only authorized personnel have access to them.
AHS’s admission policies and procedures are established by the school administration, reviewed and approved by the IEB, and published in the Student-Parent Handbook. The goal of admission and placement procedures is primarily to evaluate the correspondence between the needs of enrolling students and the educational program offered by the school. As per the Student-Parent Handbook, AHS does not discriminate on the basis of sex, handicap, race, color, religion, nationality, or ethnic backgrounds of the applicant. No student is denied admission due to financial hardship. Financial aid is provided to qualified families based on the decision of the independent Financial Aid Committee.

Decisions regarding registration of students is based on documentation provided by parents and previous schools (if applicable) and the services provided by the school (ESL, Remedial, enrichment, Pre-AP, AP programs, etc.). Placement testing is conducted for students in 1st – 8th grade to provide additional feedback for teachers in program planning. Written statements from parents or previous schools are required to document physical limitations, learning disabilities, and medical, psychological or emotional difficulties, if any. Additionally, health information conforming to requirements of the health and licensing departments is also collected. Counseling regarding placement and other potential concerns is provided at the time of admission. Middle and High school students and their parents are required to meet with the Headmaster and/or Academic Advisor at the time of admission to discuss academic, disciplinary, and graduation requirements (App. 15).

Enrollment requirements are provided to parents at the time of registration. School tours and curriculum information is provided to help parents make an informed decision. A copy of the Student-Parent Handbook is provided at the time of registration. This handbook highlights the mission and goals of the school, as well as the student code of conduct, academic expectations, dismissal, and appeals procedures (App. 9).
The Headmaster of AHS reports to the IEB. The chain of command within AHS is outlined in its organization chart [App. 4].

The Employee Handbook expands on the lines of authority and provides job expectations and responsibilities for teachers and staff. Job descriptions, work schedules and other employment information is discussed with employees at the beginning of each academic year and regularly throughout the year. This information is communicated throughout the organization using the student calendar, instructional calendar (for teachers), and administrative calendar (for the administration) in addition to memos and weekly staff meetings [App. 20]. Weekly staff meetings provide a forum to discuss teacher and school needs, solicit employee feedback, and develop strategies to attain identified goals [App. 21]. All teacher and staff communications are filed in the teacher communication binder or employee files.

School events are coordinated by the administration as per their job descriptions in conjunction with the PTO according to established guidelines developed in previous years. Important documents detailing objectives, criteria, required resources, and procedures relating to each event are archived for future reference to ensure consistency and continuity from year to year. These events include, but are not limited to spelling bees, science fairs, award ceremonies, Drug Awareness Week, Fire Safety Week, senior graduation, anniversary celebration, orientations, etc. [App. 1].

The Headmaster working in conjunction with IEB and the School Improvement Committee (SIC) is responsible for identifying long and short-term goals and strategies for AHS.

Short-Term Goals:
- Comprehensive PE curriculum and facility
- Phase into a center learning and themes
- Incorporate Reading into Science & Mathematics for Middle & High School students
- Develop a two track system, AP and Regular, to meet needs of high school students
- Increase office and classroom space
- Increase administration support staff
- Improve salary and benefits for employees
- Acquire better assessment tools for Quranic/Islamic Studies and Arabic Language
- Create standards for Quranic/Islamic Studies and Arabic Language
- Enhance library resources
- Upgrade technology throughout campus

Long-Term Goals:
- International Baccalaureate Program
- Larger school facility
- Separation of Elementary and Middle/High Schools into different buildings
- Upgrade Science and Computer labs for research based study
Discipline and safety set the stage for student learning at AHS. Students are monitored at all times and various forms of documentation such as attendance and disciplinary forms are generated to provide feedback to students, teachers, parents, and administrators.

Attendance is recorded by teachers for elementary classes on a daily basis and for middle and high school students on an hourly basis. Parents are contacted daily to verify and document student absence or tardiness (App. 28). These records are also used by the administration to determine fulfillment of attendance requirements by school standards. Student attendance averages about 95% on a monthly basis.

Student safety is a team effort. The school requires and maintains immunization and health records for each student. The office also maintains records of legal decisions relating to students, which affect academic reporting and custody arrangements. Closed circuit cameras monitor corridors and assembly areas. The office and teachers enforce visitor and parent/guardian identification requirements. Students are trained by teachers to observe simple safety rules relating to the classroom, pets, playground, restrooms, etc. (App. 29). Internet safety is supported by a filtering software system, access restrictions, and Internet safety awareness workshops for parents and students.

Employees contribute to student safety by reporting facility repair needs, conducting daily playground equipment checks, closing school gates, keeping external doors inaccessible from the outside, practicing emergency procedures (fire drill, severe weather drill), and reviewing the Crisis Management plan as per the Employee Handbook. First Aid and CPR training is required for Preschool, PE, Administration, and food service staff to ensure they are able to provide emergency assistance, if needed.

A team of full-time and part-time janitorial and maintenance staff is responsible for facility cleanliness, maintenance, and security. Compliance with building occupancy, fire, gas, health, food service codes and permits is monitored on an ongoing basis by the administration.

Teachers, students, parents, and administrators are responsible for maintaining school standards of student conduct and discipline. These standards include expectations from students in terms of behavior, academic performance, uniform, etc. Categories of violations of the Student Code of Conduct and corresponding consequences, including expulsion, appeals, and grievance procedures are available and explained in the Student-Parent Handbook (App. 9). These are discussed with parents and students at individual meetings with the Headmaster as part of the admission process as well as at the beginning of each academic year, at the mandatory Student Orientations.

Teachers and staff members are accountable for enforcing discipline procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook. Infractions of the Student Code of Conduct are recorded by teachers, processed by the administration, and communicated to students and parents verbally and in writing on an ongoing basis. The Honor Level software-based discipline system tracks student discipline records on a 14-day window and provides them an opportunity to clear their records at the end of this time frame.

Teachers provide positive feedback through the use of awards and special privileges for students who exhibit good citizenship and adherence to the Student Code of Conduct. Middle and High school student responsibility and leadership skills are encouraged by allowing them the privilege to work alongside administrators and staff on special projects and by means of the Student Council. Teachers and administrators alike provide positive verbal recognition and encouragement to students. Counseling is recommended and provided to help students develop academic, social, and organization skills.
Standard 9: Counseling, Records, and Follow-up

The Headmaster and Academic Advisor assist students in applying to colleges, universities, and technical schools to assure that all requirements are met in a timely fashion. This includes guidance in completing college applications, program selection, acceptance criteria, and information regarding financial aid and scholarships. AP exams are administered on site to allow students the opportunity to achieve college credits while in high school. Graduates of AHS are surveyed periodically to gather feedback on their progress [App. 25].

The Headmaster and guidance counselors provide individual and group counseling services in the area of study habits, time management, conflict resolutions, and social/behavioral skills on an ongoing basis through seminars and lectures. Members of the community and professionals from outside the community are also invited to conduct seminars. The resident religious cleric provides guidance through daily speeches on religious issues and methods of coping with the demands and challenges in various aspects of life.

To ensure that learning is taking place, there is a cumulative assessment at the end of every nine-week grading period (for 4th – 12th grade) that measures progress in the learning of objectives and concepts taught in class [App. 17].

All assessment information, student applications, and other confidential documents are stored either in the administrative office or in a secure storage room on the premises. Access to electronic records is restricted to authorized office personnel only through the use of passwords and secured servers. Student and school records are stored or discarded at the end of each year based on the record retention policy.
Communication serves to promote trust, build school morale, and support informed decision-making by all partners in the educational program at AHS. Communication is vital to the success of any team effort. Teachers, parents, students, and the administration are all team members in this process. The school practices an open-door communication policy. All stakeholders are encouraged to discuss concerns and suggestions with the administration in an effort to resolve conflicts and develop strategies for improvement and growth.

Parents are informed of school policies and activities in many ways. The Parent-Student Handbook provides important information about the school in terms of its mission, beliefs, academic program goals, discipline philosophy, uniform, daily procedures, attendance, financial policies, etc. Prospective parents are provided with the information in person, over the phone, and via mail or email. As necessary, verbal information is conveyed in parents’ primary language, if possible (Spanish, Urdu, Arabic or Persian). Weekly memos and website updates are also a good source of information for families regarding various school activities including routine activities, upcoming events, and related feedback. Teachers post student homework and objectives on the schoolnotes.com website for easy reference for students and parents. Additionally, parents are informed of curriculum objectives through core subject syllabi distributed quarterly.

Parents are also provided feedback on student’s academic progress and behavior on a monthly and quarterly basis through progress reports and report cards, and semi-annually at the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Teachers also use telephone conferences, written notes, and email to communicate with parents on a regular basis. All communication between the office and parents is filed in student files or in the Parent Communication Binder, based on confidentiality and other criteria.

The report card format is guided by current research in the field of education with regards to the developmental needs of elementary, middle, and high school students. Assessment information is based on grading criteria and rubrics that are communicated to teachers, students, and parents. Cumulative (every 9-weeks), mid-term (every semester) and standardized testing (annual) is also administered and reported for all grades.

Teachers are provided with pertinent student information in order to promote assessment and program planning. This information includes contact information, past academic and behavior records, health information as well as student portfolios from the previous year, if available. Additionally, the instructional calendar, weekly staff meetings, memos, and emails are tools used to maintain communication between the administration and the faculty. Annual self and mutual evaluations and follow-up meetings serve to provide open feedback on the strengths and areas of growth for each member of the staff.

School spirit and mutual cooperation and appreciation between all employees is promoted through various formal and informal programs. This includes training in conflict resolution and positive communication strategies as well as opportunities for staff members, parents, and students to come together at various school events and extra-curricular activities to celebrate student and school achievements. Teacher Appreciation week is celebrated annually in May, and culminates in the Faculty Appreciation Ceremony, at which the contributions and accomplishments of each employee is recognized. Employee feedback is also given a high value. Employees’ input is solicited in many ways, including an end of year survey regarding various areas of school operations.

AHS regularly communicates with appropriate agencies, professionals, and other schools to ensure relevant matters are addressed in a timely manner. These include various departments of the city and state (Fire, Health, Education), public schools, etc. that provide diagnostic services, awareness programs for students, parents, and staff (Dare, Drug Awareness, etc.). Private businesses and vendors are also approached to help organize extra-curricular activities for students (Karate, etc.), and donations for school events (Kroger, Sams Club, etc.). Additionally, the school participates in intramural competitions (Basketball games, Private School Interscholastic Association (PSIA) Academic Meets, Houston Chronicle Spelling Bee, SIM City Competition, Team America Rocketry Challenge, etc.) that help support student learning goals through interaction with other students/schools.

Another channel of communication and support at AHS is the Al-Hadi School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). As stakeholders, the PTO plays a significant role in supporting AHS through:
- Volunteer activities at school (i.e., homeroom parent, tutoring)
- Fundraising to help fund the annual deficit (i.e., Anniversary Celebration, Fundraising Dinner, etc.)
- Coordinating special activities for students (i.e., carnival, Sports Day, etc.)
- Parent communication (i.e., monthly parent meetings, newsletters, etc.)
- Program feedback and school improvement
Standard 11: Physical Facilities and Equipment

The facility and equipment in use at AHS have been the focus of a majority of improvements over the last 5 years. Efforts are made to involve all stakeholders in the planning of facility, space and resource usage through surveys, inventories, projections, and discussions. Evaluating space usage and allocating space to suit the needs of students, faculty, and administration is considered a critical part of the planning process at the beginning of each year.

As per the requirements of local fire and health authorities, the building and playground are ADA compliant in necessary aspects such as elevators, ramps, bathrooms, doorways etc.). Compliance documentation includes updated permits and licenses as well as records relating to accident/incident on the premises (App. 19). Additionally, classroom centers, storage areas (for student and instructional materials) and student seating are planned keeping safety and degree of usage in mind. These considerations also apply to corridor and office space.

Classroom learning and administrative functions are supported by the use of technology in all areas of the school, including but not limited to personal computers in classrooms, offices and the computer lab, LCD projectors, overhead projectors, TV, VCR, DVD players, copiers, printers, etc. Training in the use of technology is provided routinely through workshops and communication with the technology support team, which services the local area network, software and hardware needs.

Student learning is enhanced through the use of technology in many ways. Technology components of curricula are provided for classroom usage, in addition to filtered Internet access and media support from the local educational services provider (Region IV) (App. 24). Teachers, administrators and the technology monitor equipment and media usage to ensure quality and integrity of stored and shared information.

The Physical Education program at AHS currently utilizes the mini soccer field, basketball court, indoor gym, two playgrounds, and parking lot areas.

Inventory of all equipment, resources, and supplies is maintained and updated annually (App. 24).

In order to assess facility needs, the School Expansion Committee is in the process of conducting a feasibility study to determine short-term and long-term facility requirements.
The School Improvement Committee (SIC), which is comprised of an IEB member, AHS Parents, Teacher, and Headmaster, in cooperation with the administration conducts annual self-evaluations. The self-evaluation includes identifying areas that need improvement, analysis of a school-wide evaluation survey, preparation of routine and annual Action Plans, and action plan audits by the SIC. Areas for improvement are identified and strategies are formulated through an action plan for the following year. (App. 6, 30). The action plan identifies goals, needed resources, timeline, and responsible person(s) to implement the action plan.

AHS maintains projections of various data (i.e., finance, student enrollment, etc.) to assist with future planning. Feedback from stakeholder evaluations and future projections are also considered in the formulation of the Action Plan.

Some current areas of improvement that AHS is working on are:

- Phase into center-based learning and themes,
- Integration of disciplines,
- Incorporating reading into science and math for middle school and high school,
- Developing a two track system that meets the need of high school students (AP and regular track),
- Increase office space and classroom space


Section III: Process of Continuous Improvement

Mission:
The Mission of Al-Hadi School is to develop students’ intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic potential in an Islamic environment.

Shared Vision:
To help each student become an asset to society.

School Improvement Goals:

Short-Term Goals:
- Comprehensive PE curriculum and facility
- Phase into center-based learning and themes
- Incorporate Reading into Science & Mathematics for Middle & High School students
- Develop a two track system, AP and Regular, to meet needs of high school students
- Increase office and classroom space
- Increase administration support staff
- Improve salary and benefits for employees
- Acquire better assessment tools for Quranic/Islamic Studies and Arabic Language
- Create standards for Quranic/Islamic Studies and Arabic Language
- Enhance library resources
- Upgrade technology throughout campus

Long-Term Goals:
- International Baccalaureate Program
- Larger school facility
- Separation of Elementary and Middle/High Schools into different buildings
- Upgrade Science and Computer labs for research based study

The School Improvement Committee (SIC), which is comprised of an IEB member, AHS Parents, Teacher, and Headmaster, in cooperation with the administration conducts annual self-evaluations. The self-evaluation includes identifying areas that need improvement, analysis of a school-wide evaluation survey, preparation of routine and annual Action Plans, and action plan audits by the SIC. Areas for improvement are identified and strategies are formulated through an action plan for the following year. (App. 6, 30). The action plan identifies goals, needed resources, timeline, and responsible person(s) to implement the action plan.
Section IV: SACS CASI Quality Assurance Visit

SACS CASI Quality Assurance Review Team Visit Schedule

April 3rd & 4th, 2007

SACS CASI Quality Assurance Review Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. Michael Mier</th>
<th>Sr. Donna M. Pollard, O.P.</th>
<th>Dr. Hamed Ghazali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SACS CASI Specialist</td>
<td>Head of School, St. Pious X High School</td>
<td>Head of School, Iman Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair – QAR Team</td>
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Day 1 – Tuesday, April 3rd, 2007

12:00 PM  ♦ Welcome (Headmaster of AHS/Chair of School Improvement Committee)
          ♦ Introductions of:
            ♦ School Administration (AHS Headmaster)
            ♦ School Improvement Committee (AHS Headmaster)
            ♦ Quality Assurance Review Team (Chair of QAR Team)
          ♦ Overview of Visit (Chair of QAR Team)
          ♦ Refreshments

1:00 PM  ♦ Interview of School Improvement Committee & Administration Members who developed the Guided Self-Study Report.
          ♦ Review of SACS Standards Compliance

2:30 PM  Tour of School

3:50 PM  QAR Team Meet to Review Data and Exit School

Day 2 – Wednesday, April 4th, 2007

8:00 AM  Meet with Headmaster, Administration, and Islamic Education Board (IEB)

9:00 AM  Interview Teachers

10:00 AM Interview Students

11:00 AM Interview Parents

12:00 PM Lunch

1:00 PM  Visit Classrooms

2:00 PM  Complete Oral Report

3:00 PM  End Visit
APPENDIX

Appendix # 1– 6 - Included in Report
1. Student Calendar
2. Employee Roster
3. Student Enrollment Trend
4. AHS Organizational Chart
5. Standardized Tests Results
6. School Improvement Plan

Appendix # 7- 30 – Available for review in Reference Binder on Campus.
7. IEC Constitution
8. IEB Bylaws
9. Student-Parent Handbook
10. Employee Handbook
11. Lunch Program
12. Finance
13. Advertising and Marketing
14. Human Resources
15. Student Admission
16. Curriculum and Instruction
17. Student Assessment – Internal
18. Student Assessment – External
19. Legal Documents
20. Calendar and Schedules
21. Staff Communication
22. Parent Communication
23. Extra-Curricular Activities
24. Teaching Resources
25. Counseling
26. Motivation and Discipline
27. Staff Development
28. Student Attendance
29. Safety
30. School Improvement
## APPENDIX #1—Student Calendar

**2006-2007 Academic Year Calendar**  
_School Starts on August 16th, 2006 and Ends on May 24th, 2007_

### AUGUST

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### TOTAL DAYS = 175

- **School & Daycare CLOSED**
- **Special Event/Ceremony**
- **Orientation/Parent-Teacher Conferences**
- **Exams/Testing**
- **Staff Professional Development Day**
- **Early Dismissal**
- **Ramadan Schedule** - School will end at 2:00pm during the Holy Month of Ramadan
# AHS Employee Roster 2007

## Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headmaster</td>
<td>Sami Hijazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Haleema Goense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Coordinator</td>
<td>Masooma Razzak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance / Operations Coordinator</td>
<td>Zainab Khan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discipline / Testing Coordinator</td>
<td>Mahdi Domitrovich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-School Coordinator</td>
<td>Danya Alkutelfani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Maryam Raza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselors</td>
<td>Zaynab Abassi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fereshtey Gilanshah</td>
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## Teaching Staff - Preschool

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baharak Tabandeh</td>
<td>Toddlers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fahimeh Zariean</td>
<td>Pre-K 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatemeh Vostaie</td>
<td>Pre-K 1 Teacher Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naz Hasan</td>
<td>Pre-K 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naheed Aleemuddin</td>
<td>Pre-K 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamideh Mahshieldnia</td>
<td>Pre-K 2 Teacher Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shabnam Sanaei</td>
<td>Pre-K 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ayesha Abood</td>
<td>Pre-K 3 Teacher Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nusrat Ali</td>
<td>After School Care</td>
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## Teaching Staff - Elementary School

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fatimah Ali</td>
<td>KGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazish Dawoodally</td>
<td>KGB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sajida Abbasi</td>
<td>1st Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masooma Syed</td>
<td>1st Grade Teacher’s Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zaina Said</td>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawsan Tawil</td>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranjan Dhanji</td>
<td>4th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shams Shirvani</td>
<td>5th Grade</td>
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</table>
Employee Roster Continued

**Teaching Staff - Middle and High School**

- Fariba Nazemi: Science and Mathematics
- Haleema Goense: English Language and Social Studies
- Hashim Alauddeen: Social, Islamic and Quranic Studies
- Lisa Kader: English Language
- Muhammad Malik: Mathematics and Physics
- Nilofer Momin: Biology and Chemistry
- Zaynab Abassi: Social and Islamic Studies
- Asmaa Syed: Social Studies

**Elective Teachers**

- Zainab Rashid: Physical Education - Girls
- Ansar AlAmin: Physical Education - Boys
- Hayat Daghay: Quranic Studies & Arabic Language
- Zeina Gebara: Quranic Studies & Arabic Language
- Randa Bozo: Quranic Studies & Arabic Language
- Ibtessam Irani: Quranic Studies & Arabic Language
- Seema Farid: ESL
- Yasmin Domitrovich: ESL Assistant
- Amir Golabbakhsh: Computer Science

**Support Staff**

- Reza Keshari: Administrative Assistant
- Kim Naderzadeh: Copy Aide
- Abdallah Zbir: Receptionist / Arabic Language
- Rana Adi: PE Assistant
- Sidhra Abood: 2nd Gr. & Office Assistant
- Katya Bennath: After-school Care
- Azmat Tejani: Technology Coordinator
- Asim Salim: Technology Coordinator
- Reza Raji: Maintenance
- Sharifa Anwarzad: Maintenance
Al-Hadi School
Student Body and Staff Count Since Inception

[Graph showing the trend of student and staff enrollment from 1996-1997 to 2006-2007.]
Al-Hadi School Organization Chart
APPENDIX #5—Standardized Tests Results

ERB Grade 3
% of Average and Above Average Students on the Percentile Compared to National Norm which is 77%

ERB Grade 4
% of Average and Above Average Students on the Percentile Compared to National Norm which is 77%

ERB Grade 5
% of Average and Above Average Students on the Percentile Compared to National Norm which is 77%
APPENDIX #5—Standardized Tests Results

ERB Grade 9
% of Average and Above Average Students on the Percentile Compared to National Norm which is 77%

ERB Grade 10
% of Average and Above Average Students on the Percentile Compared to National Norm which is 77%
APPENDIX #5—Standardized Tests Results

Comparison of Mean SAT Scores 2003-06

Two juniors have taken SAT with an average score of 930.
Students on modified curriculum have taken SAT with an average score of 823.

ACT Talent Identification Program (TIP)
Duke University
7th Grade Students

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<th>Year Assessed</th>
<th>Number of Students Assessed</th>
<th>Number of Medals</th>
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<td>2005-2006</td>
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<td>2006-2007</td>
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Medals = ACT scores greater than or equal to 20.
ACT is usually taken in 10th grade.
### APPENDIX #6—School Improvement Plan

**Objective:** Learning to learn skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
<th>Persons Responsible</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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</table>
| ➢ Teachers and instructional support staff will receive training in strategies for improving students' learning to learn skills. The program will comprise the following components:  
  a) Workshops to build understanding of research-based instructional strategies to promote students' effective use of learning to learn skills  
  b) Coaching and guided practice to support the implementation of the recommended strategies | January 2005-Continually | Teachers training through workshops  
Headmaster  
Master reading teacher  
Teachers | Classroom observations to evaluate teachers and provide ongoing mentoring |
| ➢ An emphasis will be placed on the importance of students making a commitment to creating quality work and striving for excellence as they complete projects/assignments across the curriculum. | January 2005-Continually | Lessons plans, modeling, and opportunities for teachers to demonstrate to students  
Headmaster  
Teachers | Quarterly assessment that includes open-ended and essay questions which allow students to freely express what they have learned |
| ➢ Students will be taught a variety of learning strategies, time management and personal skills (e.g., adaptability, flexibility, planning) to enhance their learning. Students will be held responsible for self-assessing their work and maintaining a learning log. | January 2005-Continually | Lessons plans, modeling, and opportunities for teachers to demonstrate to students  
Team America Rocketry Challenge, Sum-City Competition, Houston Bar Association Mock trial, Science Fair, Private School Inter-scholastic Association Competition, use of laboratory for scientific inquiry  
Headmaster  
Teachers | Performance on different projects as assessed by teachers:  
Team America Rocketry Challenge, Sum-City Competition, Houston Bar Association Mock trial, Science Fair, Private School Inter-scholastic Association Competition, use of laboratory for scientific inquiry |
| ➢ Classroom assessments of students learning will include direct measures of students' effective use of learning to learn skills. Students will be provided with feedback on their progress and will be asked to identify ways they can improve their learning. An emphasis will be placed on assessing students' effective use of technology as a tool to enhance and extend their learning across the curriculum. | January 2005-Continually | Teacher training:  
- Workshops on developing performance assessments of the desired results for student learning.  
- Learning com  
Headmaster  
Core subjects teachers coordinate with a computer literacy and science teacher by incorporating core subjects with technology learning | Teachers will include use of technology in grading rubric.  
Internal quarterly and bi-annual tests that supplement multiple choice questions with constructive response questions.  
External testing batteries (ERB, CAT, AP, SAT, ACT) |
### Objective:
To offer students a multi-disciplinary curriculum that integrates reading development across content areas.

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<tr>
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<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ The integration of reading strategies into lesson plans related to their subject content</td>
<td>January 2005 - Continuous</td>
<td>Teacher lesson plans&lt;br&gt;Content-based fiction and non-fiction readers (scholastic and national geographic)</td>
<td>Headmaster&lt;br&gt;Master reading teacher&lt;br&gt;Teacher</td>
<td>Quarterly evaluation to include reading section of the assessment of the content area&lt;br&gt;Standardized testing including ERB, CAT, SAT, ACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Scaffold literacy and content development through standard based objectives to assist students to make adequate yearly progress and achieve academic success</td>
<td>January 2005 - Continuous</td>
<td>Workshops and modeling by a master reading teacher, differentiated lesson plans with integration of different learning styles transforming the classroom into a learning workshop with the teacher as a facilitator</td>
<td>Headmaster&lt;br&gt;Master Reading teacher&lt;br&gt;Teachers&lt;br&gt;Classroom-based classrooms</td>
<td>Classroom observations to evaluate the teachers with an ongoing mentoring process, continuous evaluation of the student progress through personal interaction with the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Assist diverse language learners to develop language proficiency and literacy skills across the curriculum and within content areas</td>
<td>January 2005 - Continuous</td>
<td>Workshops and modeling by a master reading teacher, differentiated lesson plans with integration of different learning styles transforming the classroom into a learning workshop with the teacher as a facilitator</td>
<td>Headmaster&lt;br&gt;Master Reading teacher&lt;br&gt;Teachers&lt;br&gt;Classroom-based classrooms</td>
<td>Classroom observations to evaluate the teachers with an ongoing mentoring process, continuous evaluation of the student progress through personal interaction with the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Align selection of reading materials between English Language Arts and other content areas both horizontally and vertically the</td>
<td>January 2005 - Continuous</td>
<td>NCTE, IRA, NCTS, NCTSS Standards&lt;br&gt;English and other content area teachers</td>
<td>Headmaster&lt;br&gt;English and other content area teachers</td>
<td>Integrated assessment, quarterly and biannual tests, ERB and CAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ A formal and school wide reading development plan based on the research of Vygotsky and Resenblatt is developed and implemented. Strategies are developed to integrate into all content areas</td>
<td>January 2005 - Continuous</td>
<td>University of Houston Clear Lake&lt;br&gt;Teachers</td>
<td>Headmaster&lt;br&gt;Teachers</td>
<td>Socratic inquiry&lt;br&gt;Formal assessments&lt;br&gt;Performance based assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX #6—School Improvement Plan

#### Objective: Communication skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
<th>Persons Responsible</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ➢ Teachers and instructional support staff will be trained to improve students' communication skills. The program will consist of the following components: | January 2005-Continous | Teachers training:  
- Workshops  
- Greater Houston Area writing project resources | Headmaster  
Teachers | Classroom observations to evaluate teachers with an ongoing mentoring process. |
| a) Workshops to build understanding of research-based instructional strategies to promote students' effective use of communication skills. |                       |                                                          |                    |                                                                             |
| b) Coaching and guided practice to support the implementation of recommended strategies |                       |                                                          |                    |                                                                             |
| ➢ An emphasis will be placed on the importance of students writing skills across the curriculum. | January 2005-Continous | Teachers training:  
- Greater Houston Area writing projects | Headmaster/Teachers | Classroom observations to evaluate teachers with an ongoing mentoring process. |
| ➢ The design and selection of instructional strategies and learning activities to promote the effective use of communication skills will be expanded to address the unique learning styles of all students. | January 2005-Continous | Lesson Plans, classroom and public presentations, PSIA competition guidelines for events including creative writing, impromptu speaking, modern oratory, on-site drawing, ready writing, and story telling | Headmaster  
Teachers | Ability to communicate will be included in the teachers grading rubric. Science Fair, Mock trial, and Rocketry constitutes 25% of their quarter subject grade |
| ➢ An emphasis will be placed on assessing students' effective use of technology as a tool to enhance and extend their learning and communication across the curriculum. | January 2005-Continous | Technology Teacher Learning.com enables students to learn different software applications for communication. Science Fair  
Team America Rocketry Challenge | Headmaster  
Teachers | Learning.com  
Use of multimedia application on the grading rubric  
Team America Rocketry Challenge |