

# Austin Peace Academy

Nationally Accredited Full-time Islamic School

## HIGHLIGHTS

of

## TEACHERS & STAFF

- **Education and Training**
  - Educational background in diverse fields
  - All staff and teachers have minimum Bachelor's degree
  - Several hold advanced (Master's and Doctoral) degrees
  - Teachers have attended educational training and workshops, and have earned numerous certifications
  - Most of our teachers are 'certified' or in final stages of their certification
- **Experience and Talent**
  - Teachers have several years of teaching experience
  - Elementary school teachers worked with children for many years
  - Middle/High school teachers taught at high schools
  - Renowned staff for Arabic/Islamic Studies programs
- **Extra Curricular Activities**
  - Authored books and research papers
  - Active in National Clubs
  - Membership in Honor Societies
  - Received scholarships and research fellowships
- **Diverse Background**
  - Staff & teachers from diverse ethnic backgrounds and nationalities
  - Well versed in multi-cultural school environment
  - Several teachers are bilingual
  - Major world languages spoken by our staff & teachers - Arabic, English, French, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Urdu

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## TEACHERS, STAFF & ADMINISTRATION

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### **Pre-K1**

Maisaa Tizani

#### **Pre-K2**

Michelle Plumb

#### **Kindergarten**

Raina Gilyard

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

Maisaa Hawana

Nichole Presnell (Teaching Assistant)

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Rebecca Myers

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

Loretta Kamara

#### **4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grades – Math/Science**

Yousef Saleh

#### **4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grades – English/Social Studies**

Giani Crow

Jabeen Haq

### MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

#### **English**

Jessica Foreman

#### **Social Studies**

Chanele Muntean

#### **Math**

Syed Fareed

#### **Science**

Malalai Sayedi

#### **Chemistry**

Nahed Abou Galala

#### **Information Technology**

Nahed Abou Galala

#### **Science Laboratory**

Malalai Sayedi

#### **RoboLab**

Maisaa Hawana

### ARABIC & ISLAMIC STUDIES

#### **Arabic Language**

Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> - Guyna Elabiad

4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> - Dr. Nehal Khadr

- Huda Qerqez

- Najiah Hassuneh

#### **Islamic Studies**

Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> - Samiah Ahmadi

6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> - Rana Mousa

- Najiah Hassuneh

### SUPPORT STAFF

#### **Physical Education**

Fernando Torres (for Boys)

Georgian Lopez (for Girls)

#### **Library**

TBD

#### **Counseling**

Eman Kallash

#### **After-School Care**

Sahar Khamis

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **Principal**

Dr. Walid Hawana

#### **Director, Arabic & Islamic Studies**

Dr. Ibrahim Dremali

#### **Office Staff**

Assistant to the Principal - Diana Abdi

Administrative Assistant - Rania ElBaraday

Administrative Assistant - Nahed Abou Galala

### VOLUNTEERS

#### **PTO Coordinator**

Farhana Khawar

#### **School Improvement Team Coordinator**

Dr. Athar Tayyab

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dr. Walid Hawana** is in his third year as the Principal of APA. He possesses an M.A. in English Linguistics, an M.S. in Education, and a Doctorate in Education from Iowa State University. His specialized in Curriculum and Instruction at his doctoral work. He worked as an Associate Researcher at Iowa State University, and later as Professor of Education at Al-Fateh University in Tripoli, Libya and as a Professor at the Institute of Public Administration in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He has served as a Consultant to various educational and financial institutions and has been involved in governmental committees to evaluate educational procedures in Middle Schools. Prior to joining APA, he was an Adjunct Professor at Des Moines Area Community College, Iowa. He has numerous publications to his credit, and has translated several literary works into Arabic language. His books include 'A Compendium of Professional Improvement Commitments', 'An Introduction to Scientific Research', 'Current Educational Trends', 'Educational Administration', 'Introduction to Administrative Supervision', and 'Time Management'. His experience also includes teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers in addition to offering training in various areas such as Time Management, Total Quality Management, and Leadership Skills.

**Dr. Ibrahim Dremali** is in his second year as the Director of Arabic & Islamic Studies at APA. He came from Des Moines, Iowa where he was the Director of Islamic Center of Des Moines and Principal of New Horizons Academy in Iowa. He holds a bachelor's degree in Geology and a Masters and Ph.D. in Sharia, specializing in Fiqh, from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Later he obtained an M.S. in Geology from Florida Atlantic University and Ph.D. in Geology from Florida International University. He served as the Principal of Darul Uloom Institute in Pembroke Pines, FL for 5 years and as the Imam of the Islamic Center of Belle Glade, FL. He has over 20 years experience as a Geologist and has taught college level Geology and Oceanography for 7 years. He is a professor at American Open and Drake universities. He has a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree Black Belt in Karate.

**Mrs. Diana Abdi** has a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science with minor in Business Administration from Richmond University in England. She has 18 years of Administrative and sales experience. Her Community work includes the establishment of the first Islamic school in Austin and starting the High School program at APA. Since 2007, she has been working as a part-time volunteer assistant to the Principal. She has attended numerous educational workshops and received several certifications in Continued Education such as 'Learning for a Change', 'Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement', and 'The Role of Assessment'.

**Mrs. Maisaa Tizani** has a passion for children and gets them excited about learning by teaching using arts and games. She has completed several hours of training in Child Development Lab at Austin Community College, and has attended workshops such as CIRCLE language and literacy training, Pre-K Reader Language Development program, and Learning about Soil with Young Learners. In her second year at APA, she has earned certificates in Art and Sewing, and has CPR training.

**Ms. Michele Plumb** has worked with young children, including those with disabilities, for several years. She obtained a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas in Dallas, majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies. Prior to joining APA, she taught at various elementary schools for the past three years. She possesses Generalist Early Childhood to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and Generalist Special Education certifications and has passed the TExES Professionalism Examination.

**Ms. Raina Gilyard** has worked with toddlers at various schools as well as childcare and learning centers since 2004. Previously she was an Assistant Director of a childcare center. She attended Texas A & M University and Austin Community College where her areas of study were History and Early Education. She has over 80 hours of credit hours in Continued Education in Math, Classroom management, Reading Readiness, Arts & Science, Concepts of Weather, Light & Prism, Global Science, and Balance Literacy.

**Mrs. Maisaa Hawana** has a B. S. degree in Computer Engineering from Iowa State University and a diploma in Communications Engineering from Public Authority of Applied Education and Training, Kuwait. Prior to joining APA, she worked for the State of Texas as a TAKS exam scorer and as a teacher's aide at a childcare center. Her qualifications include Childhood Development training and several computer certifications. She is in her second year at APA.

**Ms. Nichole Presnell** earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education from the University of Portland and also has a University of Portland Spanish certificate. During the past 5 years, she worked at various elementary schools in Portland, Oregon, where she taught English language, designed cultural geography lessons in Spanish immersion program, and adapted lessons to meet students' needs. She is a recipient of several scholarships and is a member of the National Education Honor Society.

**Mrs. Rebecca Myers** has a B.S. degree (Magna Cum Laude) in Arts and Applied Sciences from Texas State University, San Marcos, TX and an Associate of Science degree from Austin Community College. She has worked as an elementary school teacher for several years at Round Rock and Leander ISD. She has several certifications related to education including the Talent and Gifted program, and has training in DRA (Development Reading Assessment), Texas Primary Reading Inventory, and TekTeams–Rethinking Elementary Math. She was recognized as the 'APA Teacher of the Year' in 2007-08. She is in her second year at APA

**Mrs. Loretta Kamara** has been working at APA for the past seven years. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from Paine College, Augusta, GA. She has extensive training in DRA (Development Reading Assessment).

**Mr. Yousef Saleh** has 13 years experience teaching Math and Science at middle and high school grades. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from the University of Jordan. He has authored a book in Physics that is currently used by education centers in Jordan. He has attended a 1-year extensive program on the use of computers for education.

**Ms. Giani Crow** has a B.S. degree in Applied Learning and Development from the University of Texas in Austin. In her second year at APA, she previously taught at Austin ISD. She has numerous certification and training including Early Childhood to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade ESL, CPR and First Aid certification, Project WILD training, Water Safety training, and Child Abuse Prevention training. She is a member of various professional organizations.

**Ms. Jabeen Haq** earned a B.A. in English from the University of Washington. Prior to joining APA, she taught English and Math at education and learning centers such as Kumon and Kaplan. She has also provided private English courses for middle and high school students.

**Ms. Jessica Foreman** possesses a B. A. degree in English and History from the University of Texas in Austin, with an emphasis on American and English Literature, Poetry, and Critical Writing. Most recently, she taught English in a private school in China. Her experience includes work as a Journalist for Gallery Watch writing articles covering the Texas Senate and House of Representatives and as a Membership Specialist for the Texas Parent Teacher Association. She has been active in various national clubs and honor societies.

**Ms. Chanele Brothers** has a B. A. degree (with Honors) in Russian Studies from Stetson University in Florida and a Master of Arts degree from UT Austin in Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. She has received several research fellowships and studied four languages, including French and Russian. She has been at APA for two years.

**Mr. Syed Fareed** has taught Math and Science in middle and high schools at the AISD for five years, and is SBEC certified in Math for grades 4<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup>. He has a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and is pursuing a master's degree in Education from Concordia University in Austin. He has passed numerous teacher development courses and is certified in the Talent and Gifted program.

**Mrs. Malalai Sayedi** has taught at APA for four years. She has a bachelor's degree in Biology with a Minor in Chemistry and Early Childhood Education. She attended the University of Kabul, Afghanistan as well as UT Austin and the University of New York. In early 2007, she obtained her teacher certification in the state of Texas. She also has UTEACH teaching certificate from the University of Texas. She is fluent in Farsi (Persian) and Pashtun.

**Mrs. Guyna Elabiad** is in her third year at APA. She has previously taught at Al-Manar Islamic School, Lebanon. She is fluent in Arabic and French.

**Dr. Nehal Khadr** has been teaching Arabic & Islamic Studies at APA and ICGA since 1998. She is a graduate of Alexandria University, Egypt, and holds a degree in Medicine.

**Mrs. Huda Qerqez** is very passionate about the Arabic language and has been teaching Arabic at different levels for many years. Prior to joining APA, she worked at an Islamic school in Knoxville, Tennessee, as well as taught Arabic and Islamic Studies in her native Gaza, Palestine. She attended the College of Saarland in Germany. She is in her second year at APA.

**Mrs. Najiah Hassuneh** has taught Arabic and Islamic Studies for over 20 years at schools in Jordan and Kuwait as well as at Virginia Tech University. Prior to joining APA, she taught at Dar al Arqam Islamic School in Houston. She earned a B. S. degree in Education/Islamic Studies (Sharia) from Kuwait University and has attended numerous workshops including 'Teaching Students to Think', and Tajweed (Qur'an recitation).

**Mrs. Samiah Ahmadi** has a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from the University of Fatih, Libya, and studied Islamic Studies at University of Tripoli. Since 2003, she has taught Qur'an and Islamic Studies and coordinated youth activities in Austin. She has earned certificates in Seerah and Fiqh from the Islamic American University and is well versed in Tajweed (Qur'an recitation).

**Mrs. Rana Mousa** has a B. A. degree in Economics and Commerce and a degree in Educational Aptitude, both from Syria. Since 1989, she has taught at various schools in Syria and the U. S., including Austin, Round Rock and Pflugerville school districts. During 2001-02, she worked at APA as a Pre-K and Arabic teacher. Her professional certifications include Texas Educator Certificate, English as a Second Language, Generalist Grades EC-4, and Secondary Business Administration. She has earned Continuing Education credits in Child Development, Substitute Teaching, and Math and Computers.

**Mr. Fernando Torres** is a senior at UT Austin majoring in General Kinesiology and is skilled in the field of Physical Therapy. He has several years of experience as a Baseball and Basketball coach at Little League and Boys & Girls Club. In his second year at APA, he is bilingual (English and Spanish).

**Mrs. Nahed Abou Galala** has a degree in Computer Science from Mu'tah University in Jordan and also holds a diploma in High Educational Skills. She worked as a Computer Programmer in Jordan and as a teacher in Chemistry and Computer technology in Indiana. She is also an administrative assistant at the school office.

**Mrs. Rania ElBaraday** has worked at APA for the past two years in various capacities. She has a Bachelor of Accounting degree from the University of Alexandria in Egypt. She is an administrative assistant at the school office.

**Mrs. Eman Kallash** has worked as a Family Therapist for the past 16 years. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Master of Arts degree in Developmental Psychology, both from Cleveland State University. She has provided therapeutic intervention services as well as counseling to children and adolescents, and has spoken at schools and community organizations about parenting and adolescent issues.