The Huda Academy Strategic Plan (2019-2024)

"A Forward Look into the Future"

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Executive Summary

The Huda Academy was established in the year 2000 by several members of the Muslim community in Little Rock. These members of the community were from different backgrounds and cultures, but they all shared a common view: the need to establish a school that would excel in academics and provide an environment to nurture spiritual growth. The founders hope was to form a school that would produce valuable members of society who maintain their Islamic identity. Their objective was to create a learning environment where children are taught academically rigorous material while learning moral values that will enable them to think critically and become leaders and contributors to their community at all levels.

The Huda Academy School Board (HASB) in its capacity as the governing body of the school has set the goal of completing the Strategic Planning for the upcoming five years within the academic year 2018-2019. This effort was intended to provide a platform to review and revise the school mission and vision, perform SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, review the current affairs of the school, and set the future strategic goals for the next five years through the lens of its stakeholders. A strategic planning committee was formed with representation from all stakeholders including the school board, school staff (executives and teachers), students, representatives of parent body, and representatives of the Muslim community of Little Rock. The committee was tasked with achieving the objectives mentioned above within the academic year of 2018-2019.

The Huda Academy mission statement as well as its vision underwent a critical analysis by all stakeholders to examine its relevance and comprehensiveness. Our primary mission remains consistent and well-stated. The Huda Academy intends to give students a strong sense of belonging to the Muslim community, to provide excellent well-rounded education in a healthy Islamic environment, and to provide students with a solid grounding in Islam and Arabic, which will enable them to live God-conscious lives.

The shared vision of The Huda Academy is to fulfill the educational requirements of our children based on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and pursue a holistic approach to education that nurtures the individual's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and physical development. We strive to instill habits of lifelong learning of Islamic values, promote the importance of showing our faith through our actions and service to others, and nurture the development of a strong Islamic identity.

Academic affairs, school culture and marketing, technological advances, and administrative affairs were the four domains of interest. These four domains were chosen

to achieve better synergies and integration into the day-to-day operation of the school. The academic affairs domain revolved around establishing a structured review process of our existing curriculum in the context of Common Core Subjects, Islamic Studies, Arabic, Qirrah and Hifz, coupled with provision of professional development opportunities to assist school faculty with the content delivery, and leveraging data obtained from Standardized Testing to complement the curriculum updating process. The school culture and marketing domain focused on fostering an engaging Islamic school environment where morals, manners and behaviors are integrated into the daily life of the students, improve communication between all stakeholders (school administration, teachers, and parents), and develop an efficient and effective strategy to showcase and highlight the school achievements within the community. The technological advances domains addressed the provision of a safe, efficient and effective digital learning platform which will augment the learning experience of the Huda Academy students and the delivery model used by the teachers. The administrative affairs domain focused on developing strategies to establish and update school policies and / or standard operating procedures, establish a Huda Academy School Board Bylaws, providing optimal resources to achieve goals critical to our mission (whether investment in teachers or fiscal resources) and promote fiscally responsible spending. Action plan and outcome measure is assigned to each domain to assist with tracking the progress of achieving that particular goal.

The Huda Academy School Board leadership acknowledges that this Strategic Planning will require continued engagement of all stakeholders for it to succeed. We are committed to have an annual review of the strategic planning as well as the progress of in each of the four domains listed above.

The Huda Academy School Board leadership, the Executive Management, Teachers, Students, Parents, and Community Leaders are all committed to work toward making The Huda Academy the educational institute of choice when it comes to our children educational needs.

The Huda Academy Strategic Planning Process

At the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year, the Huda Academy Leadership began the process of constructing a strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Committee membership was by invitation and comprised of parents, teachers, administration, community and board members (Exhibit A). The committee had a shared view that a quality strategic plan that engages the entire school community ensures that the school is united toward a common purpose. The plan helps to establish a clear and shared understanding of the school's strategic direction for the next five years, expressed through goals, targets and key improvement strategies.

A SWOT analysis was performed identifying the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The Huda Academy's Strategic Plan was informed by a thorough and multi-faceted feedback and discussion process that included all stakeholders (i.e. parents, students, leadership, faculty/staff, and community) through surveys, town-hall meetings, committee meetings, and focus group discussions (Exhibit B).

Four main domains were identified as key strategic areas which will influence the future direction of the Huda Academy. These domains include academic affairs, school culture and marketing, technological advances, and administrative affairs. Under each domain, three to four goals were set using SMART goal writing methodology. The goals were constructed in the context of committee members deliberation as well as various survey responses from all stakeholders. Each goal was assigned a target outcome to serve as its measure of growth and / or achievement.

The plan establishes a clear direction for the growth and advancement of our school over the next five years. It creates a strategic approach to decision-making and a focused, consistent effort toward accomplishing our goals. The committee delineated the processes necessary to make this possible as follows:

- Clearly articulating the school's vision, purpose and values

- Focusing on the school's bright future, its students, and the community more broadly.

- Selecting a small number of improvement strategies that, based on the available evidence and the context of the school, will most likely lead to the achievement of the agreed outcomes.

- Identifying what success will look like when it has been achieved.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was performed identifying the school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths

The only Islamic school in Central Arkansas
Islamic studies, Arabic and Hifz Program
Comprehensive early childhood education
Standards based report cards
Accessibility of Principal and Faculty
Community support
Strong curriculum

Accreditation
Certified teachers
Student teacher ratio
Standardized testing
Board support
Active parent involvement

Weaknesses

Limited market and marketing
Space constraints
Curriculum shortcomings
Early childhood phonics / assessment / ESL
Lack of Gifted and Talented Program
Recruitment of Arabic and Islamic teachers

Financial sustainability
Labs (science and computer)
Humanities (Art / Music)
Time constraints
Retention of teachers
Teachers benefits package

Opportunities

Provision of competition opportunities
Sports activities
Marketing and branding
Customer service
Partnership with UALR and other academic institutions

Enrollment
Parents engagement
Nutritional and physical health

Threats

Safety issues
New Islamic educational institutions (likely)

Academic Affairs Domain

Goals

1. Evaluate and update the current curriculum and professional development opportunities for Common Core Subjects including English, Math, Science and Social Studies.

2. Evaluate and update the current curriculum and provide professional development opportunities for Islamic Studies, Arabic, Quran, Qiraah and Hifz programs, incorporate project/service based assignments and additional middle school material, and explore the option of full-day Hifz Academy.

3. Enrich extracurricular activities and electives including technology, sports, art, and music.

4. Evaluate and update testing materials and procedures as well as plan and align instruction and remediation based on data from standardized tests.

Action Plan

1. Create a task force committee to provide the basis for an ongoing discussion each year about what is taught, why it is taught, how it is assessed, and how to improve to better serve all students. Seek out a curriculum representative and schedule professional development for training. Ensure all curricula have a digital component, are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and are up to date.
2.
    a. Create a task force that will find professional development for current curricula to train teachers on research-based, classroom-proven "best practice" teaching strategies.
    b. Teachers will undergo training in instructional methods to implement more project-based learning.
    c. Create a task force that will explore the need and market for a full-day Hifz Academy
3. A team of teachers will find outside resources for more options and identify ways to capitalize on current teachers' talents. Options for electives in middle school will change by semester. The team will also seek out part time teachers to enhance elective program.

4. Create an assessment team who researches different assessments based on student population and demographics and what will fit the needs of our students.

<div style="background-color:#1a2a5e; color:#f5a623; text-align:center; font-weight:bold;">Outcome Measure</div>

1. Recommendations from committee will be reviewed and leadership will take the necessary actions to provide resources for teachers. Each year, at least one discipline's curriculum will be updated over the next five years.
2.
    a. Within the next five years, curricula for Islamic Studies, Hifz, Qiraa, Quran, and Arabic will be updated. Teachers of these classes will complete at least three hours of professional development in their field per academic year.
    b. Islamic studies and Arabic teachers will complete at least three hours of instructional training for project and service-based activities.
    c. Survey parents to identify the need for a full-day Hifz Academy. Conduct a visibility study to determine the market for a full-day Hifz Academy.
3. Surveys from students and parents will guide the decision-making process for finding enriching extra-curricular activities.
4. Assessment team will gather data and refer students for remediation and create an Action Plan for those students. Data from multiple test results will ensure fidelity.

School Culture and Marketing Domain

Goals

1. Promote an engaging Islamic environment where Islamic values are highlighted, manners are emphasized, and citizenship behaviors are celebrated and agreed upon by all teachers through intentional teaching and modeling as well as consistent celebration of learned traits.

2. Within the next year, staff and parents will create a structured inter-school and community service program which promote educational, spiritual, cultural and strategic values in the school and its students.

3. Develop a collaborative culture between school administration, parents and community members geared toward the success of The Huda Academy students including but not limited to an online forum, updated website, and updated Sycamore.

4. Launch an integrated marketing campaign focused on showcasing the achievements of faculty and students through effective use of website and social media platforms leading to high visibility and recognition of Huda Academy maintained by administration.

Action Plan

1. Develop a matrix of traits and behaviors which will be used to assess the demonstration of these traits and behaviors by students.
2. Develop a well-rounded community service program including specific objectives and delivery models which will help achieve the intent behind such program.
3. Update the school website (format and content) to reflect the achievements of the school and provide an engaging platform for first-time users (prospective parents and teachers).
4. Develop and implement an effective communication strategy between all stakeholders.

Outcome Measure

1. Number of citizenship behavior awards on an annual basis and its impact on encouraging other students to adopt such behaviors.
2. Number of community service programs / initiatives performed on an annual basis and its perception by the students and the community it served.
3. Completion of the website updating process and surveying end-users of their satisfaction with the usability of the website functionalities.

Technological Advances Domain

Goals

1. Provide safe and effective access to digital learning to students and faculty members to enhance the learning process.

2. Apply a One Window Digital Operation to include Student and Staff Interface, investing more time and money into programs like Sycamore to utilize it to its full potential.

3. Transform the current network from Stand-Alone PC to Cloud Based Network to allow everyone linked to the cloud base to be controlled by one person.

Action Plan

1. Develop and implement controls delineating the nature of interaction between students and different technology platforms such as Google Classrooms, and web browsing.
2. Expand the utility of Sycamore beyond score report capability to include other functionalities such as registration and attendance record.
3. Identify and purchase (within budgetary constraints) technology software as well as hardware to enable a fully functional learning environment via the integration of digital learning means.

Outcome Measure

1. Number of software purchases and the end-user engagement metrics such as submissions and / or entries.
2. Percentage of hardware updates performed.
3. End-user (students, teachers, and parents) evaluation of the digital learning environment.

Leadership, Financial, Capital and Human Resources Domain

Administrative Goals

1. Establish and update school policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the school mission and any applicable laws.

2. Provide fiscal resources to ensure the delivery of superior quality academics, and the hiring and retention of high quality teachers.

3. Implement leadership training for board members and school staff in leadership positions through ISNA as well as local universities and colleges.

Financial Goals

1. Decrease budgetary deficit by 25% of projected (over 5 years) while accommodating growth.
2. Minimize expenses through efficient and lean operational performance and reduction of waste.
3. Secure additional sources of funding to help offset budgetary deficit.

Action Plan

1. Develop a process of annual review and revision of school employee handbook and standard operating procedures.
2. Develop a board bylaws to assist with performance of board governing function.
3. Change the current spending pattern to be in accordance with performance against budgetary goals.
4. Increase the tuition structure by 10% every two to three years.
5. Increase the fundraising activities by expanding the outreach to other communities in Arkansas and neighboring states.

Outcome Measure

1. Date of initiation and revision of school employee handbook, and standard operating procedures.
2. Completion of board bylaws and onboarding process.
3. Year-to-Date (YTD) comparison of income statement and balance sheet.
4. Total dollar amount collected as donations and the percent contribution toward budgetary deficit.

Exhibit (A) Committee Membership

The Huda Academy Leadership appreciates the valuable contribution of the Strategic Planning Committee members to this important effort of setting up the future direction of the Huda Academy.

Huda Academy School Board	
Ahmed Abuabdou **(Chairman)**	Yasir Sultan **(Vice-Chairman)**
Samer Nakkar***	Zainab Siddiqui***
Serhan Dagtas	

School Staff Representatives	
Ziad Abdulla **(Principal)**	Rula Sajdieh
Stephanie Kerns **(Assistant Principal)**	Negeen Ghasedi
Regaysha Shelton	

Parent Body Representatives	
Muhammad Yousaf	Abdul Rahman Abunasrah**
Ali Jarallah	Suhail Malik**
Mohammed Qassas	Summaiya Shah
Waseem Shah	Younus Shajaat
Abdelrahman Saleh	Amir Mian***

Community Representative	
Ibrahim Duyar	

** *Islamic Center of Little Rock Board of Trustees Member*

*** *Madina Institute Shura Council Member*

Exhibit (B) Timeline of Major Strategic Planning Activities

Date	Event
10/13/2018	**First Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (0800 to 1100)** Venue: *Holiday Inn, 10920 Financial Center Parkway, Little Rock, AR 72211*
11/10/2018	**Second Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (0800 to 1100)** Venue: *Hilton Garden Inn, 10914 Kanis Rd, Little Rock, AR 72211*
01/12/2019	**Third Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (0800 to 1100)** Venue: *Hilton Garden Inn, 10914 Kanis Rd, Little Rock, AR 72211*
01/24/2019	**Students, Teachers, and Parents Survey** Tool: *Survey Monkey*
01/30/2019	**Middle School Open Forum (0800 to 0900)** Venue: *Huda Academy, 3221 Anna St., Little Rock, AR 72204* **Community Survey** Tool: *Survey Monkey*
02/09/2019	**Community Open Forum (1900 to 2000)** Venue: *ICLR – Main Campus, 3224 Anna St., Little Rock, AR 72204*
02/16/2019	**Fourth Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (0800 to 1100)** Venue: *Hilton Garden Inn, 10914 Kanis Rd, Little Rock, AR 72211*
04/06/2019	**Fifth Strategic Planning Committee Meeting (0800 to 1100)** Venue: *ICLR – WLR Campus, 15110 Kanis Rd, Little Rock, AR 72223*
04/28/2019	**Last Strategic Planning Committee Meeting & Retreat (1700 to 1900)** Venue: *Bravo!, 17815 Chenal Parkway, Little Rock, AR 72223*