



ISLAMIC FOUNDATION • OUTSTANDING EDUCATION • CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS

Az-Zahraa Islamic Academy is seeking applications for an exemplary educational leader for the position of Elementary and Middle School Principal, commencing August 2023.

The Az-Zahraa Islamic Academy (AZIA) is an independent elementary and middle school that is inspired by the doctrines and values of the Islamic faith and offers a broad and balanced program that is in line with BC's redesigned curriculum. It strives to nourish spiritual and academic excellence in its students. AZIA is currently ranked in the top 10% of schools in B.C. The school strongly values its partnership with parents and the wider community.

AZIA is a Group 1 classification of independent schools under the BC Ministry of Education guidelines. The school opened its doors for the first time in September 2003 and currently offers Junior Kindergarten to Grade 9 education. The school is located at the Az-Zahraa Islamic Center in Richmond BC, which includes a beautiful mosque, a large library, playgrounds, and a full-size gymnasium. AZIA is a destination school with students from Richmond, New Westminster, Burnaby, Vancouver, North Vancouver, Surrey, and the Tri cities.

AZIA aims to provide our growing community of >250 students with (i) a solid foundation of Islamic values, nurturing and strengthening the faith of our youngsters in thought and in practice, (ii) an outstanding educational experience, and (iii) the skills to confidently and effectively interact in society.

With a commitment to nurture strong individuals and members of society, AZIA aims to instill Islamic wisdom, thinking and practices within its students, manifested in meaningful pursuit of spiritual, intellectual, artistic, technological, athletic and service endeavours. AZIA ensures that each student feels known and is challenged. The focus is on empowering students to become courageous, compassionate, powerful thinkers and leaders, and aware of the impact they can have on their community and beyond. There is an atmosphere of respect, caring and support to encourage independence, resiliency, mindfulness and innovative thinking for all ages.

Our strong staff team is made up of 40 enthusiastic, dedicated and deeply committed members who bring tremendous strength to the school. They are a highly qualified group of professional educators who are committed to providing an exceptional educational experience for the students. They also work hard to ensure that the students' daily experience is a quality one. Staff are encouraged to be leaders in their areas of expertise, supporting one another in their own commitment to excellence in their craft. Over the last few years, though still developing its programs, AZIA has considerable success and growth. We aim for curricular and co-curricular programs being driven by a talented staff group. The tight-knit administrative team is a professional and capable group of individuals who work alongside teaching staff to help create the necessary environment that will ensure the whole staff team is working toward achieving the mission and vision of the organization.

AZIA is a community-based school and envisions the education of children in collaboration and partnership with the greater community. A strong robust educational program will assist in preparing a strong Muslim community; similarly, a supportive community, which is invested in the religious and educational needs of its members, will be able to enhance the quality of the school. It is for this reason that the school needs to work to ensure a strong positive relationship with both the Az-Zahraa community as well as other Muslim communities that the families are a part of. Strong collaborative efforts on the basis of faith will bring about greater blessings for all parties and help us realize holistic nurturing and education of our children. In addition, AZIA has great ties with the outer communities and neighboring schools by having joint activities, programs and competitions regularly.

The school is anchored by a dedicated Board, parent volunteers who are deeply committed, and loyal community members who participate in a range of efforts. Parent involvement is a cornerstone of the school's success as involved parents help to develop inspired students.

Over the past 20 years, the aim of Az-Zahraa Islamic Academy's staff, board, parents, students and community has been to create an excellent educational institution with its own unique culture. Over the coming years, the school has an exciting mission to achieve AZIA's vision of the school: *To be recognized as a top-tier school that provides a solid foundation of Islamic values, an outstanding educational experience, and the skills to confidently and effectively interact in society.* Leading the school with this vision will be the key focus of the new principal. The new principal will be fully supported and charged with leading the school through the next phase of its evolution.

The Position: Principal of School

AZIA is looking for a visionary, dedicated and effective Principal. The Principal will be responsible for the leadership and day-to-day operations of AZIA, comprised of Grades JK to 9, and for implementing the school's mission, strategic framework, policies and procedures, established and collaboratively developed by the School Board, to ensure that all students are supervised in a thriving, dynamic, nurturing and safe Islamic learning environment which strives for educational excellence. The Principal's compensation package will consist of a salary that is 5% higher than the B.C. Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA) standard. Additionally, the package will include an RRSP program and comprehensive benefits.

The Principal's responsibilities:

General

- Fostering an environment of instructional excellence integrated with a foundation of Islamic values and thinking
- Ensuring adherence to B.C. Ministry of Education regulations and standards
- A commitment to recruiting, hiring, growing, and retaining top teaching faculty and staff
- Consistently implementing best practices in education, curriculum, and assessments to support student engagement and learning
- Working closely with the School's Islamic Studies Director to help cultivate an environment promoting Islamic values and thinking amongst students
- Ensuring student well-being and safety; addressing student concerns; ensuring support for students with diverse learning needs

- Inspiring and supporting students and staff to reach their full potential
- Annually developing a School Plan in alignment with the school's strategic objectives and other priorities as identified through collaboration with the School Board and staff
- Overseeing effective communications within the school and externally including with parents
- Building relationships with our neighboring schools, local school district(s), and Associate Secondary schools to foster successful community integration and transitions for our students
- Effectively and efficiently overseeing the operations of the facilities and school organization
- Overseeing and being accountable for school-based budgets through close collaboration with the School Board Treasurer
- Encouraging parent participation with events and to support school goals through facilitation of the Parent Volunteer Group
- Designing and implementing fundraising and volunteering strategies, programs, and events

Educator

Serving as the educational leader of AZIA, through the provision of guidance and direction to academic and co-curricular programs governed by the laws and practices of Islam, through inspiring students to be their best, and through encouraging staff to continuously develop their own strengths and skills.

Visionary Leader

Sustaining AZIA's educational mission, ensuring that the school continues to provide an exceptional experience for its students, and that the balance among academics, arts, technology, athletics and co-curricular activities is supported and maintained with developing a strong foundation in Islam.

Working in partnership with the Board, Islamic studies directors, staff and administration in the achievement of AZIA's goals and objectives, the Principal will work toward the development and implementation of the School's long-range strategic plan; reporting to the Board on operations and providing guidance and vision for the future of the School. They will maintain AZIA's reputation for excellence and celebrate the Islamic culture while, at the same time, ensuring that the School continues to grow and evolve as an innovative world-class learning environment.

Relationship Builder

Taking a sincere interest in the students, challenging them to reach their potential while maintaining the warm environment that is responsive to their needs and the needs of AZIA's community at large.

Maintaining excellent relationships and communications with various constituent groups which make up the School community – students, staff, parents, the Board, community and alumni.

Being an active, dynamic spokesperson and ambassador for AZIA, to various professional organizations and communities, other independent schools, and various external stakeholders, including university administrators, media and government officials.

Manager and Administrator

Ensuring the continued financial well-being of the school with the key partners and providing leadership for campus and enrollment growth.

Continuing to develop and enhance the policies and procedures that govern the operations of AZIA, and ensuring a culture of accountability, consistency, clarity and transparency in how decisions are made and implemented.

Challenging and mentoring the staff, through the creation of a team environment where all are encouraged to participate and assume leadership roles; leading the entire staff team – through recruitment, motivation, feedback, evaluation and on-going professional development.

The BC School Superintendents Association Framework for Professional Learning (<https://bcssa.org/about-us/dimensions-of-practice>) is also a helpful document identifying these dimensions of practice:

- Leading Learning
- Leadership and School Culture
- Communications and Community Relations
- Organizational Leadership
- Human Resources and Management
- Accountability

The Candidate Qualifications

AZIA is seeking an exceptional leader to build on the tremendous success that the School has enjoyed and to lead AZIA towards its 25th anniversary. They will possess courage of conviction, care towards well-being of students and staff, sense of fairness and justice, and the highest level of personal integrity and dedication. We recognize the challenge and complexity of the position and that no one individual will have all of these skills and attributes in equal measure; however, the following background, experience and personal qualities will be sought in candidates:

General

- BC Teaching Certificate (or eligibility for)
- Master's degree in education, preferably in Leadership or a related discipline
- A deep understanding of B.C curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- A thorough understanding of independent school culture
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Skilled at developing relationships with a broad range of stakeholder-groups
- Strong foundational understanding of Islamic beliefs, values, and practices
- Demonstrated excellence in teaching and school leadership
- A high level of initiative, energy, and motivation to contribute to the mission of our school to help educate and nurture confident, thoughtful, faith-driven individuals and members of society
- Able to demonstrate successful experience with developing, implementing, and managing strategy, policy, finances & budgets, and Human Resource processes such as hiring and evaluating staff
- Committed to nurture a strong Islamic identity and be a role model for both students and staff

Leadership and Vision

- Outstanding leadership qualities: the ability to develop and articulate the educational vision and long-range strategic plan for AZIA and to inspire the community in its pursuit of these goals.
- Forward thinking: the ability to identify trends and anticipate developments in our rapidly changing society and to inspire the staff and community to stay ahead of the curve.
- Strong organizational skills: a business orientation that allows the School's resources-both financial and human – to be used to greatest effect in the education of AZIA students.
- Relational ability: the capacity to lead with integrity and build trust.

- Risk Taker: does not shy away from innovation and is excited about implementing well considered and thought through new initiatives.

Educational Leadership

- A passion for education, a record as an effective teacher and as a mentor of outstanding teachers.
- A strong academic background and an impressive blend of teaching, administrative, and management experience gained in a complex educational institution.
- A deep understanding of, and continual curiosity about, the trends in education and the particular challenges and opportunities involved in educating all ages of school children.
- A leader who promotes rich opportunities for learning and educational programs and the future of learning.

Commitment to The AZIA Community

- A demonstrated commitment to the education of the whole child, a deep and genuine affection for students of all ages, and a record in their life of active support of and passion for: academics, athletics, arts, technology and community service.
- The capacity to understand and appreciate the importance of community, and to respect and embrace the unique traditions, philosophy, and values of AZIA
- A history of providing a highly visible presence on campus and willingness and energy to commit wholeheartedly to the particularly full schedule involved in a school environment.
- A leader who understands and believes in the vision, mission, values of AZIA that shape the school culture.

Management/Administrative Skills

- The skills and attitudes required for prudent financial management and the creative use of resources to achieve the goals of the School.
- A consultative yet decisive management style and desire and ability to both mentor and empower others to reach their own potential.
- A demonstrated ability to define, embrace and communicate transformative change, and the courage, judgement and wisdom to make important decisions when they have to be made culminating in the ability to delegate effectively to ensure that they are implemented.
- The ability to guide the organization through program expansion, collaboration and the required teamwork to grow and serve both school families and the local community.
- The skills to establish an effective and productive working relationship with the Board.

Personal Qualities

- A natural personal style that connects easily with others, balances firmness and fairness in problem resolution, and demonstrates an active interest in students' development as individuals in a community.
- An excellent listener, strong communicator and superior public-speaking and communication skills.
- A high level of personal strength, stamina, energy, and a good sense of humour.
- Being nimble, adaptable and versatile with the emotional intelligence to recognize organizational needs and the skills to act on those needs.
- Is charismatic to inspire through commitment, strong communication, personal empathy, positively define culture and unite behind a single vision.

The Opportunity

This is an exceptional opportunity for a motivated and energetic leader at an Islamic school. Be part of an exciting, bold community-vision and inspire AZIA to be a leading school in its class. The challenge is to

take an institution that has created a strong and capable foundation that is experiencing significant momentum and lead it through a new era of excellence – all with the goal of providing students at AZIA with the best education possible anchored by a strong Islamic foundation. The new Principal will work collaboratively with the staff, the administrative team, the board, the parents and the community to shape and implement the strategic vision for the future.

For additional information go to <http://www.azia.ca>

*Applications for **Principal** will be received until 4 pm on July 14, 2023 or until position is filled.*

Resumes and supporting documents should be sent to: chairman@azia.ca