

PROGRAM ALIGNMENT GUIDE v 2.0

FAITH

FAMILY

FRATERNITY

Isa Islamic Society of Allentown

WHY THIS GUIDE

One ecosystem, three pillars — and why none can stand alone.

A masjid's purpose is not to run programs; it is to raise people. Our goal is an ecosystem that builds better Muslims, and through them, a better world around us. That growth never happens in one place: faith is planted in the heart, nurtured at home, and sustained in community. This is why the guide measures every program through three interdependent pillars. Strengthen one while neglecting the others, and the whole structure weakens.

FAITH · THE ROOT

Deepening each person's relationship with Allah above all else, through a faith forged in facts, experienced in sincere devotion, embodied in character, and persuasively shared.

Without faith, everything else is lost: a person's salvation, in this world and the next, is at stake.

FAMILY · THE TRUNK

Thriving families are the nucleus of a healthy society. Character is best shaped and most truly measured at home, where stable, compassionate families pass faith across generations.

Without family, faith rarely lasts, and where it survives, it is often a hollow shell of itself.

FRATERNITY · THE FRUIT

It takes a village for faith to blossom, and faith moves us beyond isolated, self-centered lives to live with others and in their service; both the ummah and the wider human family.

Without fraternity, we lose the support to live by Allah's guidance and fall short in serving Him through His creation.

"The believers, in their mutual love, mercy and compassion, are like one body: when one part aches, the whole body responds with sleeplessness and fever." — Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (Bukhari & Muslim)

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1

ASSESS

Rate each program against the rubric, from Emerging to Exemplary, to see where your community truly stands.

2

BALANCE

Map every program to a pillar. Give each pillar dedicated owners, with no gaps and no overlap.

3

PLAN

Turn findings into a plan: set a clear Goal, Objectives, Strategy and Tactics for each pillar.

4

MEASURE

Re-assess every year. Success is people moving up the gradient, not more events on the calendar.

Built by ISA, designed to travel: the pillars and the gradient are universal; the committees and programs you plug into them are your own.

FAITH: SOUND BELIEF

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Purpose of Life	Lives a mostly atheistic lifestyle. Unable to articulate a specific life purpose connected to their faith.	Can state a general purpose for life (e.g., "to be a good Muslim") but struggles to connect it to his/her daily life.	Articulates and demonstrates a sense of purpose and meaning in life derived from Islamic teachings.	Clearly and thoroughly explains how each of their life choices is guided by their ultimate purpose of serving Allah.
Articles of Faith & Names of Allah	Cannot list the 6 articles of faith or distinguish Allah's Names from His Attributes.	Lists and defines the 6 articles of faith; defines Tawḥīd and several Names of Allah.	Connects the articles and Allah's Names to daily life (e.g., "Allah is al-Ḥakīm, so I trust His wisdom").	Draws peace and strength from faith; invokes Allah's Names in du'ā' and conduct (e.g., "I show mercy because He is al-Raḥmān").
Prophets of Allah	Can name several prophets and affirms the finality of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood.	Can tell the prophets' main stories and recall major events of the Sīrah (e.g., Hijrah, Badr).	Draws lessons from the prophets' lives (e.g., "Ayyūb (as) teaches us ṣabr") and cites the Sīrah to prove his ﷺ prophethood.	Models decisions on the prophets; turns to the Prophet ﷺ for solace and guidance in ethical challenges.
Prophet's ﷺ Companions	Cannot name any major Companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.	Can list the 10 promised Paradise, & the Prophet's ﷺ immediate household, and identify some basic information about each.	Can recall the distinct virtues and major accounts of the leading Companions.	Maps their own personality type to a Companion. Identifies a specific challenge a Companion's account helped them overcome.
Conviction in Islam's Truth	Does not confidently assert that Islam is the one and only true religion of God.	Can articulate why Islam is objectively true; why they are Muslim; referencing the Qur'an, Sunnah, and sound logic.	Can provide a learned response to debunk a common myth (e.g., "Islam does not degrade women; the Qur'an says...").	An articulate ambassador of Islam's truth. Can provide thorough responses to myths. Actively engages in da'wah.

FAITH: RITUAL DEVOTION

Prayer (Ṣalāh)	Understands that prayer is an obligation, but performs them superficially or inconsistently.	Able to perform wuḍū' (ablution) & ṣalāh correctly. Can identify what invalidates each. Largely consistent in praying.	Prays correctly and punctually (e.g., before sunrise, at school). Grasps the basic meanings of the statements and movements.	Proactively prepares for prayer without reminders. Experiences khushū' (reverential awe). Offers nafl (voluntary) & night prayers.
Qur'anic Literacy	Handles the Qur'an with respect. Can recite with some difficulty.	Recites with fluency and some application of Tajwīd (recitation rules). Actively memorizing.	Recites with satisfactory Tajwīd. Memorizes & generally understands the short sūrahs.	Demonstrates love for the Qur'an by reciting voluntarily, tadabbur (reflection), and connecting the verses to their life.

FAITH: RITUAL DEVOTION

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Fasting (Ṣiyām) & Charity (Ṣadaqah)	Does not pay Zakāh properly. Does not fast Ramadan consistently.	Understands the basic how of Zakāh and fasting Ramadan in Islam. Donates during major charity campaigns.	Fasts Ramadan dutifully. Donates to most appeals. Understands the deeper spiritual purpose of Zakāh (tazkīyah) and fasting (taqwā).	Seeks to improve their conduct through fasting. Fasts voluntarily. Donates & encourages others. Plans their ṣadaqah.

FAITH: BELIEVER'S PERSONALITY

Contentment (Riḍā) & Psychological Resilience	Anxious about future; frequently expresses discontentment ("Why me?"); reacts to emotional crises with despair or aggression.	Mildly optimistic; easily disheartened by negativity. Copes through social media or binging. Sees worship as unrelated to emotional regulation.	Maintains a hopeful, content attitude ("Alḥamdulillāh"). Considers prayer, du'ā', and Qur'an as therapeutic during hardship.	Instinctively turns to Allah when stressors hit. Finds inner-peace in trusting divine wisdom amidst the adversity.
Spiritual Resilience (Rajā') after Sins	Despondent after making a mistake, sees it as a permanent failure, and continues committing it.	Exhibits healthy regret and admits their need to behave better in the future.	Acknowledges mistakes, seeks forgiveness, and is driven to compensate for the misconduct.	Rushes to tawbah (repent), thoughtfully plans to avoid the sin in the future, and reflects on the wisdom of faltering here.
Gratitude (Shukr) & Humility	Takes full personal credit for successes; arrogantly dismisses Allah's favor. Usually needs to be reminded to thank others.	Makes little positive mention of others. Dominates conversations with others. Speaks on events or disciplines without qualification.	Downplays personal effort as a default. Shines light on others. Gives credit where due. Says "I don't know" without hesitation.	Accepts advice, course corrects, celebrates others. Recognizes how countless other variables made an achievement possible.

FAITH: ETHICAL CONDUCT

Integrity (Amānah) & Manners (Adab)	Does not recognize the centrality of integrity and ethics in Islam. Unaccustomed to basic Islamic etiquettes.	Observes basic Islamic adab ("Assalāmu Alaykum," "Bismillāh," "In shā' Allāh," "Alḥamdulillāh."). Lacks honesty or respect with other people.	Honest (keeps secrets & appointments), admits mistakes, speaks positively, credits others, avoids gossip, listens attentively.	Models positivity and respect. Stands up for others, judges fairly, & encourages others to do good.
Compassion (Raḥmah) & Empathy	Self-centered, heedless or dismissive of others' pain. Often acts without regard for the feelings of those around him.	Aware of the primacy of compassion in Islam. Empathic "in the moment" but does not proactively or regularly exude it.	Is usually kind, empathetic, and sensitive in their interactions with peers, teachers, family, & strangers.	Sacrifices to support, defend, include others, & alleviate people's suffering, citing the Prophet ﷺ as their motivation.

FAMILY: IDENTITY FORMATION

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Confidently Muslim	Shy about their Muslim identity in public. Most decisions based on peer pressure and social norms.	Happily and confidently identifies with Islam even beyond Muslim circles (e.g., "Yes, I am Muslim.")	Openly practices their faith (e.g., prays on time, observes hijab). Not swayed by peer pressure to compromise values.	Demonstrates 'izzah (pride) in their Islamic identity, sees it as a source of strength, and inspires Muslims and non-Muslims with it.
Islamic Literacy (Intellectual)	Knows little beyond basic rituals. Rarely attends classes; cannot explain core beliefs or answer common questions about Islam.	Knows the pillars of Islam and faith and key stories of the prophets. Attends weekend school or ḥalaqah when expected.	Explains core beliefs and the fiqh of daily worship in their own words. Reads or listens to Islamic content on their own.	A self-driven learner with a study routine. Answers peers' questions from sound sources and knows when to say "let me ask a scholar."
Upright Character (Behavioral)	Character shifts with the crowd: cuts corners, avoids standing out, keeps things to self, and consumes immodest content without concern.	Values honesty and modesty but is inconsistent. Generous or brave when it's easy; lowers the gaze when reminded.	Truthful even when costly, shares readily, speaks up for what's right, and keeps ḥayā' in dress, speech, and screen time.	Known for amānah, courage, and generosity. Ḥayā' governs private conduct too. Models these traits and nurtures them in peers.
Life Skills (Socioemotional)	Free time is mostly solitary screens or aimless hanging out. Few hobbies; rarely joins group activities or tries hands-on skills.	Joins sports, camps, or outings when others organize them. Dabbles in a hobby or practical skill, but inconsistently.	Regularly bonds with good friends through wholesome activities (sports, trips, service). Builds life skills hands-on (e.g., cooking, repairs, first aid).	Plans wholesome outings for peers. Teaches practical skills to others. Sees recreation as recharging to better serve Allah.

FAMILY: HARMONY AT HOME

Forbearance at Home	Quick to anger with siblings and parents; mocks, retaliates, or holds grudges. Indifferent when family members are hurting.	Knows "the best of you are the best to their families," but snaps when tired or provoked. Apologizes when prompted.	Calm in family disagreements; lets small things go. Notices when a sibling or parent is struggling and helps unasked.	A source of calm and mercy at home. Forgives quickly, defuses sibling conflicts, and sacrifices comfort for family.
Carrying Family Responsibility	Does not clean surroundings, respect others, or forgive easily. Allows devices to intrude on family, worship, study.	Can cite Islamic texts on family duties, but is hardly reliable in upholding them (e.g., chores, schoolwork, respecting authority and family privacy).	Highly responsible toward family's needs. Good listener (e.g., eye contact, genuinely considerate). Conscious of family's dignity.	Assists with others' duties, thoughtful communicator, infuses surroundings with warmth and stability, wisely remedies intra-family disputes.

FAMILY: HARMONY AT HOME

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Kindness to Parents (Birr al-Wālidayn)	Acknowledges "we must obey our parents," but often defies them or addresses them inappropriately.	Can list parents' rights in Islam. Generally agreeable but may express frustration (e.g., sighing, eye-rolling, arguing).	Consistent and expedient with parents' wishes. Speaks to them with kindness and appreciation. Avoids complaining about them.	Highly sensitive to this sacred duty. Honors parents during and after their lives. Prays for them regularly. Seeks ways to serve them before they ask.
Maintaining Family Ties	Can name close relatives (e.g., grandparents, aunts, uncles), but does not communicate with them unless pressured to.	Understands that being kind to relatives is important. Communicates with extended kin when prompted or only on special occasions (e.g., 'Eid).	Connects (e.g., calls grandparents) without parental encouragement. Rejects feuds or taking sides in conflicts. Speaks positively about connecting with extended family.	Proactively builds bridges within the family. Plans trips around seeing relatives. Is a peacemaker in dispute. Validates ostracized relatives for Allah's sake.

FAMILY: MARRIAGE & PARENTING

Thriving Islamic Marriage	Unable to explain why a healthy Islamically centered marriage is important in life.	Aspires to build a strong Muslim family around the Qur'anic spirit of tranquility, love, and mercy.	Marries someone serious about their Islam. Knows respective roles & responsibilities (e.g., mother, father, wife, husband) in an Islamic family framework.	Spouses continue learning skills that make marriages thrive and last, from both Islamic instruction and relationship coaches.
Mastering Parenting	Absent, avoidant, toxic, belligerent. Cannot identify what Islam says about the trust of parenting or children's rights.	Present, aware of kids' rights, varying needs, & vulnerabilities. Can cite examples of Quranic or prophetic parenting techniques.	Eats regularly with family. Prays/reads with kids. Supportive of kids' hobbies. Seldom blames; positively reinforcing. Customizes approach to different ages.	Attends seminars & reads books on effective parenting. Child's best friend. Overwhelming spirit of love and affection reciprocated between parent and child.

FRATERNITY: COMMUNITY

Masjid Engagement	Rarely attends the masjid, even for Jumu'ah. Only attends for Eid or janāzah.	Attends Jumu'ah consistently, but rarely attends other masjid functions.	Lives within ~10 minutes of the masjid. Attends ~5 prayers and 2-3 programs weekly.	Is a "regular" at masjid; attends prayers and programs on a near-daily basis. Encourages others to find them at the masjid.
Friendships	Does not seek out righteous Muslim friendships. Does not host or build fellowship with Muslim peers outside the masjid.	Socializes with Muslim peers in community spaces, but does not introduce themselves or welcome other Muslims they first meet.	Builds friendships with practicing Muslim peers. Introduces themselves to and welcomes newcomers in community spaces.	Only keeps friends who support growth in faith, positively influence their family, & strengthen community's brother/sisterhood.

FRATERNITY: COMMUNITY

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXEMPLARY
Volunteerism & Service (Khidmah)	Understands that helping others is a good deed, but generally uninterested in getting involved. Focused primarily on themselves.	Helps reluctantly when required (e.g., school credit) or only when it offers a personal benefit (e.g., public recognition, friends' acceptance).	Evidently selfless public servant (e.g., holds doors, cleans masjid debris, gives up seat, welcomes newcomers, checks on neighbors, kindly reminds of prayers).	Lives to serve. Actively seeks out formal and informal opportunities to serve and volunteer. Initiates own projects beyond the masjid.
The Sick, Elderly, & Deceased	Unlikely to revere the elderly around them, or to visit / check on a sick community member. Only attends janāzah for close family and friends.	Prioritizes the elderly in seating and speaking. Objects to casual criticism of them. Checks on the sick. Attends janāzah(s) of non-relatives, even if slightly inconvenient.	Visits sick and prays janāzah often, and shares news with others. Generous with time and words around orphans, elderly, and vulnerable.	Praises / appreciates the elderly, cheers up the sick with a gift, offers help (e.g., grocery pickup, snow-shoveling). Follows up beyond death condolences.
Mentorship	Keeps to their own age group. Seldom helps younger peers, even when asked; sees guiding others as someone else's job.	Willingly helps youngsters when asked (e.g., explaining a concept before a test, letting them vent from problems at home).	Consistently acts as a mentor to those younger. Offers academic or social support (e.g., check-ins, life plans). Shares Islamic knowledge informally (e.g., graphics, videos).	Mentors formally. Studies Islam to improve aptitude for mentorship. Leads ḥalaqah (study circle), jumu'ah, etc.
Ummatic Concern	Indifferent to the concept of ummah (Muslims worldwide), let alone its major issues today.	Has a baseline understanding of ummah, and "headlines" level awareness of ummatic wins, strengths, and challenges.	Privy to the state of the ummah and the world. Regularly makes du'ā', spreads awareness, and donates towards ummatic causes.	Leverages local actions to the global ummah and humanity. Participates in ummatic campaigns. Can discuss them factually and productively.

FRATERNITY: HUMANITY & PLANET

Social Welfare & Civic Engagement	Recognizes large-scale, obvious injustice (e.g., "poverty is bad") but remains mostly passive or stops at expressing outrage.	Shows fairness in personal settings (e.g., games) and points out unfairness affecting them or a friend. May occasionally volunteer or sign a petition when invited.	Stands up for peers being treated unfairly, even if not friends. Commits regularly (e.g., monthly) to a service cause. Actively participates in advocacy groups.	Fills service projects or advocacy gaps. Articulates the Islamic call for justice and actively recruits, organizes, or voices public support for the oppressed.
Environmental Stewardship	Understands basic truths like "we should not litter" and "wasting food is wrong" but does not reflect them in their lifestyle.	Conserves water during wuḍū' (ablution), is mindful of resources (e.g., doesn't waste food, recycles), is a conscientious consumer, etc.	Can explain the Islamic basis for environmentalism (e.g., humans as khalīfah/trustees). Encourages others to be mindful.	Actively promotes environmental stewardship. May start an initiative (e.g., school recycling program, water-conservation campaign).



Islamic Society of Allentown

"I do not know of any masjid that has articulated standards of religiosity that so clearly affirm prayer and religious knowledge as the masjid's central purpose while also addressing how they should transform communal life. If supported by the masjid leadership and implemented well, this rubric could help masājid in the West recover depth without sacrificing relevance."



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