

Why We Oppose the The Khalil Gibran International Academy

Who is Dhabah Almontaser: Almontaser is a KGIA founder and the school Principal. She is on the board of the Muslim Consultative Network,¹ whose members include unindicted co-conspirator CAIR, the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA, associated with Muslim Brotherhood of Pakistan, Jamaat-e-Islami²), and the Majlis Ash Shura, the largest network of local imams and Shariah Law (extreme Islamist laws). ICNA also founded the Islamic Learning Foundation (ILF): “The main objective for ILF is enriching the lives of Muslims in general and Muslim Youth in particular by educating their minds and affecting their hearts with sound knowledge of Islamic Shariah.” Almontaser has been given an annual award by CAIR, a group associated with Hamas.³

What is Almontaser’s planned curricula for KGIA’s initial 6th grade class: In an interview on May 19 with Dana Rubinstein of The Brooklyn Paper⁴, Almontaser described her planned curriculum: “What will be different [is that] we will be able to infuse historical information into math and science and literature. ... With any foreign language you engage in, you need to learn the history, culture and customs of the people in order to navigate the language effectively and not offend anyone.” And according to Garth Harries of the NYC Department of Education, “the KGIA program integrates intensive Arabic language instruction and the study of Middle Eastern history and historical figures to enliven learning across all subject areas.” Yet in the same interview she stated that the Arabic language training would not be provided in the school day: “The language aspect of it will take place during our extended day, from 3 to 5 pm.”

So what will Almontaser actually teach during the day as the Arabic cultural “history, culture and customs of the people”? Will she teach her views as she expressed them in a January 2002 interview with Amnesty International’s Ellen Stokland:⁵

- “President Bush is trying to destroy the United States that I love and of which I am a result. He has abandoned our forefather's ideals of a society of freedom; democracy and pluralism build by immigrants. He is a nightmare.”
- “I would like to see Norway taking the risk demanding that USA stops the killings, spreading suffering, emergency and fear in countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, Venezuela and Sudan.”
- “Fundamentalist Muslims were blamed for the terror attacks...I have realized that our foreign policy is racist; in the "war against terror" people of color are the target.”
- “Today I believe that the terrorist attacks can have been triggered by the way the USA breaks its promises with countries across the world, especially in the Middle East and the fact that it has not been a fair mediator with its foreign policy.”
- “The American people believes that everything is all right and that the USA lives by its ideals of democracy, individual freedom and the American dream out there as well. So did I, until 11 September 2001. But I have experienced that when you talk to people and explain what is going on, then they are as strongly against the "war against terror" as I. That gives me hope for the future.”

For more information and to volunteer with the Stop The Madrassa Community Coalition, contact us at <http://stopthemadrassa.wordpress.com>

¹ <http://www.mcnyy.org/>

² <http://frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=28316>

³ <http://www.cair-net.org/default.asp?Page=articleView&id=1541&theType=NR>

⁴ http://brooklynpaper.com/stories/30/20/30_20almontaser.html

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<http://www.amnesty.no/web.nsf/ac1a1a01ea7194a3c1256a07004fad10/ffac5a3601aba908c1256c3d004ef7c5?OpenDocument>

What organizations are behind the KGIA?

DOE Chancellor Joel Klein and spokespeople have said they will close KGIA if it becomes a “religious” or “political” school.”

We demand that the KGIA should never be opened – it is both a religious and political school, Mr. Klein.

Dialogue Project: KGIA principal designate Dhabah Almontaser is on the board of the Dialogue Project together with Linda Sarsour who heads the Arab American Association of New York (AAANY) . <http://www.arabamericanny.org/>. Many of the partnering organizations of AAANY are involved with KGIA as well.

Arab American Family Support Center: The main partnering organization for KGIA is the Arab American Family Support Center (AAFSC).⁶ The single curricula link at AAFSC’s website is to the radical Council on Islamic Education (CIE). Here is the CIE approach to teaching Arabic and Islamic culture and history:

Council on Islamic Education: CIE teachers’ guides refer to Muhammed as a Prophet and the Quran as revelation. In an interview with The Message Magazine in May 2004,⁷ CIE stated: “There are more full-time Muslim schools being established all the time. This is a positive development, especially if Muslims recognize that to be an “Islamic” school it takes more than adding some deeniyat and Qur’an studies to the curriculum. The ‘Islamic nature’ of the institution should become evident in all areas of study, but not simply through a naive effort to simply ‘Islamize’ the curriculum.” In a typical passage from a lesson on the Crusades, CIE describes Muslim leader Salah Al Din: “The qualities for which he is praised revolve around Muslim ideals of justice, piety and good conduct rather than military courage or prowess alone. This contrasts with the greater emphasis placed upon military prowess by the Crusaders with regard to their rulers.”⁸

Who are the KGIA Board Members: Twelve members of the advisory board members for KGIA are religious clerics (Islamic, Christian, and Jewish) – an unprecedented religious affiliation for a public school. Their involvement raises issues about separation of church and state.

KGIA Board Members:

- Imam Shamsi [Syamsi] Ali, director of a Jamaica Muslim Center Koranic Memorization School in Queens
- NYU Imam Khalid Latif, who forced the NYU administration not to show the Muhammed cartoons
- Imam Talib Abdul-Rashid, Harlem Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood, Deputy Amir of the Majlis Ash Shura (Sharia Law)

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⁶ <http://www.aafscny.org/home.htm>

⁷ http://www.cie.org/ItemDetail.aspx?id=N&m_id=32&item_id=127&cat_id=58

⁸ <http://www.cie.org/pdfs/smplcrus.pdf>