



MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL

ABN: 41003 864 891

KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT & WORK IS WORSHIP

www.mfis.nsw.edu.au

INFORMATION UPDATE

FROM THE BOARD OF MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL

Wednesday, 4 December 2019

Assalamualaikum

The Online Petition

The Board continues to examine the claims in last week's online petition. To date, there is no information that these anonymous claims, including those against Mr Bruce Rixon, are factually correct.

Once these and all matters raised with the Board have been fully examined, we will advise the outcome. We encourage anyone with any concern whatsoever to raise it through the School's well-established and proper channels.

The Board acknowledges parent and community desire for students to receive a quality education in a shared and supported Islamic setting that maintains our identity and values. This will be a continuing focus now that we have together saved our School from closure and turned it round over the past three years.

In addition to the existing and regular communication between the School and parents, the Board has identified the need to improve two-way communication between the Board and parents. Board *Updates* are a useful way to provide information but do not enable two-way communication. The Board will work with the Parents' Advisory Committee (PAC) to strengthen 'two-way listening'.

On Sunday evening, Board members met the Grand Mufti, Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohamed, and the executive of the Australian National Imams' Council (ANIC). This was a warm and constructive meeting at which we shared and considered views.

Much discussion centred on the work being done to incorporate the use of Islamic Pedagogy into the delivery of the curriculum. This approach, which incorporates the values and ethos of Islam, is consistent with Islamic beliefs and develops values such as integrity, respect, excellence, perseverance, care and compassion and self-discipline.

As reported in our 13 November Board *Update*, we will keep you informed and involved in the School's *Islamic Pedagogy* initiative with the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education at the University of South Australia. The Centre is headed by Professor Mohamad Abdalla who, with his team, visited all three campuses in October.

The School's Registration for 2020

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has recommended that the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning grant the School a license to operate in 2020.

The report noted that only one outstanding matter stood in the way of the School receiving a full five-year registration. It is referred to as 'Financial Viability'. In effect, what this means is that the School needs to have a plan to continue to operate if the Minister decided that the School needed to repay the \$11 million provided to it from the NSW Government in 2014 and 2015 and the School was unsuccessful in its appeals against the severity of this decision.

The Board is developing such a plan. It will be provided to the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) for its approval and then submitted to NESA.

In recommending that MFIS be registered for 2020, NESA did establish some conditions and requires the Board to notify parents of these conditions. These are:

- (a) *that, if the School receives notice from the NSW State Government of a requirement to repay any monies, the School is to notify NESA within seven days of receiving the notice from the NSW State Government;*
- (b) *that if (a) occurs, the School's notice to NESA is to advise of the School's plan to ensure the financial viability of the School;*
- (c) *that if (a) occurs, the School provide to NESA a quarterly report, for a period of 12 months commencing in January 2020, to describe how the issue is being managed and resolved; and*
- (d) *that the School advise parents of students at the school in writing of the conditions of registration.*

The NCAT Appeal

Our appeal to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) against its earlier decision relating to the NSW Government Funding was heard yesterday. The Tribunal's panel has reserved its decision.

Our legal representatives presented strong arguments to support our case. We will inform you of the outcome as soon as it is provided to us.

Finally...

The Board wishes all students and staff a happy and well-earned holiday. We look forward to an exciting and productive year in 2020.

Jazakallah Khairan for your ongoing support.

Wassalam

DR JOHN BENNETT

Chair