

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC COLLEGE



In our culture – we are taught that a teacher is
the second parent,
the caring father or mother for our children.

2022 Academic Year Commencement Address

By
Founder of Australian International Islamic College
and
The National Grand Mufti of Australia

The Most Eminent
Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari

On 28 January 2022
Via Zoom
From Darwin Campus Australia

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, and pay my respect to their elders past, present and emerging.

Honourable Principal Mr. Andrew Taylor, our respected CAO Mr. Azim Ahmed, our board delegate Imam Mohammed Azhari, respected teachers from our various campuses, Durack, Carrara, Logan, Buranda and Darwin, on behalf of the Australian Islamic Educational Trust and the Australian International Islamic College Board, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 2022 academic year.

I would like to share with you my wishes, desires, aspirations, and dreams on how we can improve our service delivery at the school and work together as one team.

Dear friends, the year 2022 is upon us. This new year brings with it new challenges, with COVID 19 transformed into Delta and now the Omicron which is at its peak so much so that our QLD government has delayed the commencement of our academic year by two weeks.

The commencement of the new academic year 2022 also brought new promising opportunities. A brand new building of 12 classrooms which will be inaugurated on 1st March 2022 by the premier of QLD, members of government, ministers and dignitaries. Insha Allah.

2022 also brought the good news of our new campus in Darwin. This has enabled us to fulfil our long overdue commitment to the Darwin Muslim community. School will commence on the 31st January 2022 Insha Allah.

Respected teachers, our aim this year is to intensify our efforts to make three key achievements

1. Create a great effective teaching environment that equips the teachers and educators with needed resources and facilities.
2. Ensure that our children reach their potential and achieve excellence in a safe, friendly and caring school environment, away from unwanted and undesirable influences.
3. I would like to plan and prepare for post covid 19 programs with international and CRICOS students for all our campuses including Durack and Darwin.

I am very proud to have such a great professional leading team such as Mr. Andrew Taylor, Mr. Azim Ahmed, Imam Mohammed Azhari and our very capable, experienced, dedicated teachers, highly qualified and experienced educationalists.

Remember the Board are all working together with you in contributing to raising the next generation to be very successful in developing the future of this nation and in helping parents to ensure that their children can be the best that they can be.

My dear friends, these children are our children they need us to be a caring sister or a caring big brother to educate them with the aim that they will achieve great results.

Teaching is not just a job like other jobs, teaching is one of the most noble and honourable professions.

Doctors for example provide healing, lawyers deal with pedantic legal matters, but teachers are the second parent of the child. Teachers mold the citizens of the future; teachers help guide the outlook of the child toward adulthood. Remember what Prophet Mohammed (SAW) peace be upon him, said.

“I have been sent as a teacher”

- If a teacher teaches with care the child will always keep that memory with them right into old age and his students will approach the rest of their lives with care.
- If a teacher strives to prepare and produce excellence, the pupil and parents will appreciate the importance of excellence and will be high achievers.

- If a teacher shows respect and understanding, then the student will reciprocate with respect and understanding throughout their lives.

Being a faith-based school, it is very important for us to make sure that we nurture the aspects of respect, love and understanding in our pupils. We need to make them appreciate the value of respecting their parents and respecting their teachers. We need to make them appreciate the value of loving their fellow human beings. We can only achieve this by letting them know that we are their second parents and we care for and take pride in their success and wellbeing, just like their parents.

My dear respected friends, the students are with us as an “Amanat”, they are trusted to our care. Parents have brought you what is dearer to them trusting you to look out for their best interests. This is a trust that deserves to be remembered and repeated so that we do not allow the frustrating behaviour that we see from time to time. I use this reminder during times of frustration caused by the behaviour of our children – when this happens, we must always reach out with compassion, understanding and the will to guide them to do right.

A large number of our families live close to public schools, they could have just walked into those schools and enrolled their children there. However, the parents and our community have trusted us for the care and quality education that they know we provide. We have made a promise and commitment and told them that our school is a school of excellence that is safe for their children.

We must honour and fulfil our promise and commitment. We always strive and find better ways to help our children improve, achieve and excel in both internal and external assessments.

Southside Christian College is our sister school, we have learnt much from them. We have a beautiful relationship with them, we always sought their help and we cooperated with each other. I was always impressed with the presentation of their Principal Mr. Graham Johnson. I would like to quote some of the statements of Mr. Johnson that were delivered at a Professional Development (PD) program about getting mums and dads onboard.

Please note the following advice:

- Communication is vital for parents to be fully aware of the schoolwork and events that occur in our classrooms.
- Find a way to communicate effectively and timely with parents.
- At the start of the term email the parents of important dates and events
- When work is due, inform parents of students who did not hand in their work
- When emailing parents, the course outline should include the following:
 - Subject and teachers’ name
 - Topic covered during each term
 - Assessment types, size and dates, (parents will note these first)
 - General tips for the age group to improve, such as homework, assignments, research and presentation, Exam preparation and note taking.

My dear teachers, during my welcoming address last year in 2021, I shared with you some of the High School Certificate (HSC) results from various schools in Australia including Al-Faisal Al Risala and Minaret College. I would like to share with you this year the Minaret College VCE High Achievers. I am attaching the newspaper cutting from the Australian Muslim Times for your information.

I would like to see the results of our year 12 ATAR scores to be among the best in Australia.

Please remember our sister school Al-Faisal College, whose founder, Mr. Shafiqur Rahman Khan, is my best friend, he visited our college two weeks ago and talked and discussed with our leadership team on various aspects of a successful school.

Al-Faisal college ranked 26 in New South Wales.

Respected Andrew Taylor, Azim Ahmed and honourable teachers, please always keep in mind the importance of communication with parents, they are our customers. If any parents have any concern, we must address it. Please also keep in mind that it is of the utmost importance for you, the teachers to have confidence in your school, when parents and students see this confidence in you, they will respond much better to you.

I would like to make more time to listen to your concerns as teachers. I would like to request our board delegate Imam Mohammed Abdur Rahman, our Honourable Principal Mr. Andrew Taylor and our CAO Mr. Azim Ahmed to help me to organize and meet the teachers and leadership teams. I want you, the teachers to be proud of your school. I want you to see this school as a place that gives you fulfillment. You are the front line that has the most influence in shaping future pioneers, producing future good citizens who can contribute both for the betterment of our wonderful country Australia and for the betterment of the world. I want you to know that the school board is here at your service to assist you.

Before I conclude, I want to share with you a poem translated from Arabic that tells how much our culture values and celebrates teachers:

A candle throughout the classroom looking up
You give light to the path of glory while you burn
May Allah never extinguish a light coming from you
You are the true dawn, you are the zenith
A teacher, a symbol of giving, always
Safe may the hands of those who give be!
Teachers are the best amongst those who truly give
May your breath continue pouring goodness
May you never fall before foe or friend.

Dear friends, please remember that our school board is comprised of diverse and experienced individuals including well experienced educators. Our education advisor Mr. Shahid Khan came with 40 years of educational experience from various TAFE colleges in Australia, our chairman Mr. Mohammed Taher Sukkarieh in overseeing and managing all the campuses, and myself, over 40 years' experience as an educationalist, our newly appointment Mr. Andrew Taylor has 35 years' experience as principal and educator and our CAO Mr. Azim Ahmed has 20 years educational experience. We all have long histories in education. We are here to serve you, to assist you and to work with you. Together, let us make this a school of excellence for the sake of the future generations and for the prosperity of Australia Insha Allah.

Thank you very much for listening. I wish and pray to Allah (SWT) to give you a very successful, enjoyable and educationally rewarding 2022.

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu

Imam Abdul Quddoos Azhari

Founder of Australian International Islamic College
National Grand Mufti of Australia