



Member of Qatar Foundation عضو مؤسسة قطر

Press Release

Awsaj Academy Focuses on Learning Challenges at Annual Conference

Doha, Qatar, 16 March 2014: Awsaj Academy, a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, hosted its third Annual Conference on Saturday, which focused on 'Teaching Students with Learning Challenges'.

The conference was sponsored by ORYX GTL and was held in collaboration with Qatar University's National Center for Educator Development.

The conference targeted educators from independent schools in Qatar who work with students with learning challenges. The keynote address highlighted the process for successfully implementing programs that serve students with learning challenges such as the program for developing School-Wide Positive Behaviour Intervention and Supports (SWPBIS). It was followed by three breakout sessions. The first session highlighted the work of the Awsaj Teaching and Learning Center in implementing inclusionary practices that support all students. The second session elaborated on the keynote address, with Awsaj Academy staff members giving their own opinions on the process of implementing SWPBIS. The third session focused on assistive technology with staff members from MADA, the Qatar Assistive Technology Center.

Dr Chris Borgmeier, the keynote speaker from Portland State University, Oregon, USA, discussed the critical need for a positive school and classroom climate in order to maximise learning and support for all students. He presented research and strategies for implementing SWPBIS and the need for schools to implement its principles in a way that conforms to the local culture and context of the school and community.

Dr Borgmeier said, "I am very excited to participate in such an exciting conference. I want to congratulate Awsaj Academy on its successful implementation of SWPBIS to support Qatari students. I look forward to working with Awsaj Academy to help many other Qatari schools implement this outstanding program."

Leading the 'Inclusion Practices that Supports All Students' session, Joshua L. Fritts, Head of Teaching and Learning at Awsaj Academy emphasised that, "Awsaj Teaching and Learning Center is committed to the success of all children. To do this, we not only focus on each individual child's needs within the classroom, but also strive to improve the instruction that is provided through high quality and meaningful professional development."

Awsaj Academy's Director Dr Ralph Pruitt was pleased with the turnout, the topics highlighted and the overall success of the conference. He stressed the importance of the strong partnership with conference sponsor ORYX GTL and its value in promoting the academic growth of both students and educators through the funding of various academy activities and projects. Over 200 delegates attended the conference on Saturday, representing more than 40 schools across Doha.

Awsaj Academy is a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. It is a K-12 specialised school that addresses the needs of students with learning challenges, an outreach centre that provides evaluation and professional development services to the community and a Centre for Education Research and Development that conducts and promotes education research and reform initiatives that benefit all students, including those with academic challenges.

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