

**Tarek ibn Ziyad Academy**  
**Press Release**  
**For Immediate Release**

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has completed its review of the operations of Tarek ibn Ziyad Academy (TiZA) to ensure that the school is nonsectarian in its programs and operations. According to the department, TiZA was not in violation of Minnesota law or federal guidelines on constitutionally protected prayer in school. Most importantly, MDE maintained that TiZA is not an Islamic or religious school.

The faculty, staff, parents and students of Tarek ibn Ziyad Academy are pleased with the findings. Today's findings show that TiZA has provided its over 400 students with a quality education based on academics, not religion. Our students and faculty are free to voluntarily practice their personal faith as in any public school.

A summary of the findings is listed below:

1. The review found that *"TiZA's regular accommodations for student prayer on Monday through Thursday appear to satisfy applicable legal requirements. Prayer appears to be voluntary and student led"*
2. The review determined that the one religious after-school activity available for students is *"entirely voluntary and not provided, organized or coordinated by TiZA"*. The MDE also found that many students choose to participate in the nonsectarian after-school activities that are provided (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and CARE).
3. The review of TiZA's curriculum found it to be in full compliance with the state law stating that they *"determined that there were no concerns with respect to the law's requirement that operations be non-sectarian."*
4. The MDE also toured the TiZA school library and reviewed titles available to students. The final report states, *"MDE staff found no curriculum regarding one or more religions beyond generalized discussions in standard textbooks. No religious titles were observed in the library."*

The report mentioned a couple of minor concerns, which TiZA is currently reviewing. TiZA takes these concerns very seriously and, in the coming weeks, will bring together faculty, parents and outside experts to work with the Minnesota Department of Education to address the concerns. TiZA is committed to resolving these concerns and continuing to provide a quality education for every child at our school.