**Every Ramadan, more US schools are embracing the needs of fasting Muslim students**

The article “Every Ramadan, more US schools are embracing the needs of fasting Muslim students” describes the growing acceptance of Islam in many U.S. schools and highlights the particular example of Tucker High School in Richmond, Virginia, which, for the second year now, has hosted an *iftar*, which is the meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan.

We know from our readings that Ramadan is a month commemorated to the time that The Prophet Muhammad took as a spiritual retreat, during which Gabriel, an angel in human form, dictated to Muhammad what was to become the Qur’an. During this month, fasting from dawn to sunset as well as abstaining from sexual intercourse and smoking is obligatory to all who are able. This is an important time period for Muslims as it reinforces faith to God and His commandments, as well as an assertion of control over “lower desires.” It also forms a sense of connectedness with other Muslims around the world that are also observing Ramadan. Furthermore, another pillar of Islam is a round of prayers every day, called *salat*. However, such practices can be very challenging in places such as U.S. schools, where most times Christian practices are most popular. The article highlights the efforts that schools in Richmond are doing to ensure that Muslim students have safe spaces to practice their faith by providing dedicated rooms for prayer, places to stay during traditional lunchtime, as well as providing care packages with nutritious food for fasting students to take home and eat after sundown. As mentioned above, Tucker High School also hosted an *Ishtar* for both Muslim and non-Muslim students who are interested in learning more about Islam.

This is a tremendously important phenomenon, as it is paving the way for more freedom for religions/faiths to be practiced in schools (and public places in general). To see some schools like this adopt more inclusive practices that make students of all faiths more comfortable to express themselves and learn amongst their peers is empowering.

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