

“When Jews and Arabs get together, work together, live together, they create their own miracle: Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is such a miracle—it deserves our warmest support, for it justifies our highest hopes.”

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate

“It is always risky to be lured by metaphors, especially in the Middle East, but those who live in this ‘Oasis of Peace’ have managed to achieve the impossible: by refusing to be lured, they have concretized a metaphor. We, who are wandering in the desert, envy them.”

Anton Shammas, Palestinian author



“My day-to-day life with Jewish pupils in NSWAS gave me a base of understanding that is on a totally different level from that of the pupils with whom I learn today. Up to today—and I’m sure forever—my education in NSWAS will guide me when I think of how we must deal with Jewish-Arab issues.”

*Shirin Najjar,
Palestinian Primary School graduate*

“I am always aware of how much broader my perspective is than that of my friends regarding Jewish-Arab problems. I know Arabs from my own experience and not from stereotypes and other people’s stories.”

*Sagi Frisch,
Jewish Primary School graduate*

MISSION STATEMENT

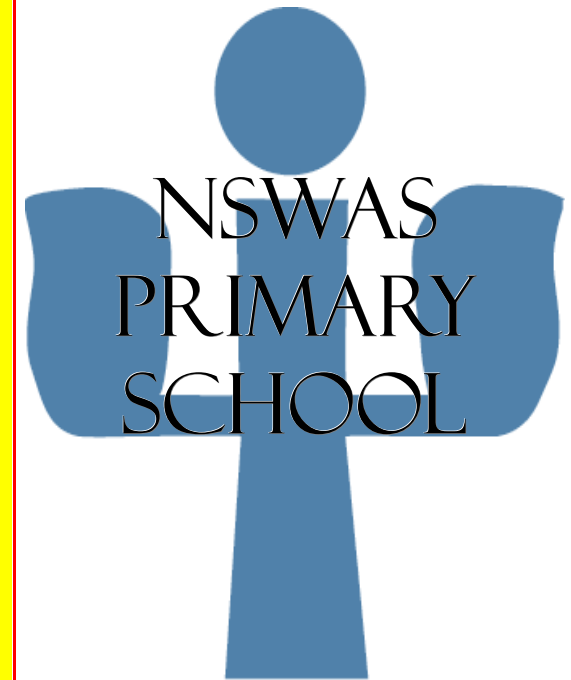
The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam encourages, supports and publicizes the projects of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, the “Oasis of Peace.” For more than thirty years, Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam has been dedicated to dialogue, cooperation and a genuine and durable peace between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis.

Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel have chosen to live and work together as equals in this community to promote trust, understanding and mutual respect well beyond its own borders. At Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, the bilingual, binational, multicultural Primary School, the School for Peace, the Pluralistic Spiritual Center, and other projects, serve the village and beyond reaching thousands of Jewish and Palestinian youth and adults.

The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status under Internal Revenue Code.

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

12925 Riverside Dr, 3rd Fl.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
Phone: 818-325-8884 ~ Fax: 818-325-8983
Email: afnswas@oasisofpeace.org
Web: www.oasisofpeace.org
Village web: www.nswas.com



*Providing bilingual,
bicultural education to
Jewish and Palestinian
children in Israel*

NEVE SHALOM/WAHAT AL-SALAM
THE “OASIS OF PEACE”

INNOVATIVE EDUCATION AT NEVE SHALOM/WAHAT AL-SALAM

Nestled in the hills between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is a village where Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel live together, work together, and educate their children together. The “Oasis of Peace” is one of the few places in Israel where Jews and Palestinians can feel equally at home, sharing in decision making and responsibilities. With these principles as a starting point, the village has developed an educational system that serves as a model for other schools hoping to build a bilingual curriculum.

Established in the 1980s to educate its own children, the Primary School at NSWAS today



serves more than 200 Jewish and Palestinian children from the village and 26 nearby towns within Israel. This remarkable school was the first educational institution in Israel where

Jewish and Palestinian children can learn—together—in two languages and about the traditions of both peoples. In addition to strong academic preparation, the Primary School (K-6) also provides bilingual and bicultural enrichment through classes in theater, music, and the visual arts.

Cover photo provided by Art Chimes of Voice of America; all other photos courtesy of the NSWAS public relations department.

LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER:

By the high school level, most of Israel's Palestinian community learns to master Hebrew as a second language. However, only a small percentage of Israel's Jewish citizens achieves a working level of Arabic. The Primary School understands that language is integral in developing identity. Therefore, creating a curriculum based on equality and mutual



respect starts with exposure and study of both Hebrew and Arabic. This starts the moment the child enters the NSWAS educational system, either in the Nursery, Kindergarten, or Primary School.

THE TEACHERS:

The Primary School, which is staffed by an equal number of Palestinian and Jewish teachers. Each teacher instructs in his or her own language to classrooms consisting of equal number of Jewish and Palestinian children. Some teachers are residents of the community, while the majority live in other villages and travel to teach at the NSWAS Primary School. Most have numerous years of experience teaching in a bilingual environment.

EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS:

In addition to the regular curriculum, the school implements a series of special projects each year. Among these projects are: an *environmental school*, which involves the children and teachers at all levels, and tries to inculcate environmentally friendly principles. Created during summer 2007, the *Zoo Lab* is home to small animals: students come to feed the animals and interact with them, learning about ecosystems and animal behavior. The *Archaeology Project* allowed the uncovering of a Byzantine mosaic by the children.

MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGH BINATIONAL BICULTURAL EDUCATION



Israel's Palestinians and Jews may share a common citizenship, but they are products of different cultures and national histories. The NSWAS Primary School confronts these differences through study and discussion. All of the children observe their own holidays, while sharing with their classmates in celebrations. As children experience difference as enriching cultural events, they increase their understanding of their own identity.

