

Hand in Hand

יד ביד: המרכז לחינוך יהודי ערבי בישראל (ע"ר)
يداً بيد: مركز التربية العربي اليهودي في اسرائيل

learning together **living together**

2008-09

Annual Report



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Dear Friends of Hand in Hand:

We are pleased to send you this annual report detailing the accomplishments of Hand in Hand over the past year. This was an eventful year for us, with many challenges that tested our resolve and strength. The most dramatic and difficult event was the war in Gaza, between Israel and Hamas. This was a stressful event for all Israelis, but especially for our Jewish and Arab students, parents, teachers and staff members. While everyone in our schools is committed to the ideal of partnership and coexistence, many differences and disagreements remain and it is a testament to our Hand in Hand community that even when strong political disagreements occur, everyone can come together to support one another and condemn violence and mourn loss of life on both sides. At the height of the war in Gaza, students from our schools collected blankets, toys and other basic items for kids and sent them to both the Israeli town of Sderot where Hamas missiles were landing, and to Gaza for needy residents there.

We think it is fitting to quote here from an e-mail sent by the co-principals at our "Bridge Over the Wadi School" in Kfar Kara at the height of the war in Gaza: "Shalom and salaam to all of our colleagues in Hand in Hand and our schools. Yes, we open with the words Shalom-Salaam because we very much need to keep the banner of peace raised high. We are all experiencing very difficult days right now, days in which the sounds of artillery, rockets and war planes overhead again remind ourselves why we build our schools and why we are doing our work in them. Today, we as teachers and staff at the Hand in Hand Bridge Over the Wadi School are coming together to enable each of us to openly prepare how we will work through this crisis with the students."

“We are all experiencing very difficult days right now, days in which the sounds of artillery, rockets and war planes overhead again remind ourselves why we build our schools and why we are doing our work in them.”

Today we have more than 900 Jewish and Arab students, along with more than 100 teachers and staff who daily are building the kind of partnership we could only dream about 12 years ago. None of this could have happened without our partners from around the world who join with us in making this dream a reality. To you we offer our deepest gratitude.

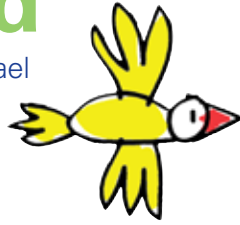
Amin Khalaf, *Co-Founder and President*

Sam Shube, *Executive Director*

Lee Gordon, *Co-Founder*

Hand in Hand

Center for Jewish-Arab Education In Israel



During the 2008-2009 year, Hand in Hand has made significant progress in its efforts to create a formidable network of bilingual, multicultural, integrated Jewish-Arab schools that embody a vision of mutual understanding and respect. Hand in Hand had a total of 901 Arab and Jewish pupils from preschool through 10th grade enrolled in its four schools. Only 11 years ago, Hand in Hand began with 49 students in two small experimental classes, one in the Galilee and one in Jerusalem.

Another significant achievement of the year has been the formation of a strong group of Arab and Jewish co-principals, five of them new, in the four schools who have excelled in leading the schools to educational excellence and administrative stability. They meet monthly with the leaders of Hand in Hand to help shape policy, deal with

a variety of issues, and learn from each other. These monthly meetings are a major source of strength for the organization.

Each school must deal with its own unique situation. For some schools, like Jerusalem, there is a waiting list for preschool, kindergarten, and first grade. For other schools, recruitment and retention, especially amongst the Jewish students, are issues that have demanded constant attention and effort. While continuing to emphasize the education of children for becoming responsible members of civil society, the schools have also placed a new emphasis on the more traditional academic instruction of mathematics, science, reading, and English. The principals report on significant improvement amongst many of the students.





Some simple numbers indicate the success of Hand in Hand.

Number of Schools

4 – Jerusalem, Galilee, Kfar Kara, and Beersheva

Student Enrollment

Jerusalem	Preschool through 10th grade – 460 students
Galilee	1st through 9th grade – 197 students
Kfar Kara	Kindergarten through 7th grade – 195 students
Beersheva	Preschool and kindergarten – 49 students
Total student population – 901 students	

Number of Full and Part Time Teaching Staff

Jerusalem	68
Galil	34
Kfar Kara	28
Beersheva	8

Total number of teachers and assistant teachers – 138

Estimated total number of people directly connected to schools

6,000 including students, teachers, administrators, parents, brothers and sisters

Achievements

Early Childhood Education

Hand in Hand launched a major effort to improve the level of education in its **preschools**. A well known and respected expert in preschool education, Aziza Manna, was hired to run a program of supervision and training for the Hand in Hand preschools. She led two training seminars for the staff on “Strengthening the Arabic language through activity and books in the Pre-School” on November 21, 2008 and the second on “Identity and Loyalty in Times of War” and “Songs in Arabic and Hebrew, Games, and Movement to Develop the Varied Abilities of Children” on February 27, 2009. On May 31, a major seminar was held for the preschool staff of 5 bilingual preschools throughout Israel, in addition to the preschools of Hand in Hand, on the subject of “Bilingualism and Multiculturalism in Early Childhood”. Leading staff of the Ministry of Education and educators from around Israel attended the program, which was held at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem.

Aziza is also revising the curriculum of teaching Arabic in the preschools. She is working hard to create a strengthened role for Arabic in the classroom since Arabic literacy skills have lagged among the Jewish students. If bilingualism can be strongly rooted in the preschool years, it will carry over throughout the entire schooling and indeed life of the child.

Israeli Government Support

During this year, a report on a “Shared Life Between Jews and Arabs,” was issued by Dr. Yuli Tamir, the outgoing Minister of Education. The prestigious committee, which investigated how the Ministry of Education could help create a more just and equal society of Arabs and Jews in Israel was headed by Dr. Mohammed Issawi, head of the Al Qassemi College of Education and Professor Gabi Salomon of Haifa University.



The report cited the model of Hand in Hand and urged the Ministry to support the creation of bilingual, multicultural schools with an integrated Arab Jewish student body and faculty. The committee also recommended that all schools adopt a curriculum similar to that of Hand in Hand in regards to democracy, equality, human rights, acceptance of the other, understanding and respect for the religion and culture of Arabs and Jews.

Outreach in New Communities

Each year, groups of parents turn to Hand in Hand and begin negotiations for help in creating new bilingual, multicultural, integrated schools. Hand in Hand is happy to help as much as possible but is also limited in the financial aid that it can provide. During the year, Hand in Hand had contact with groups of parents in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Ramla-Lod, interested in establishing integrated schools in their communities. Also during the year, Hand in Hand co-founder and president Amin Khalaf began initial work with leaders in Haifa aimed at the opening of a school there.

Hand in Hand met with the newly elected mayors of the towns of Sha'ab and Sakhnin in the Galilee (northern Israel), and Kfar Kara to discuss ways to promote the Hand in Hand schools in their vicinities.

Restoring Faith in Coexistence

The efforts of Hand in Hand are not just devoted to strengthening the current four schools of the network but in having a broader impact in Israeli society. As more people in Israel and around the world become frustrated at the never ending conflict between Jews and Arabs and what seems to be the impossibility of ever reaching peace, it is important that the example of Hand in Hand be brought to the awareness of larger numbers of people and presented in as many local and international frameworks as possible. The message of what takes place in the Hand in Hand schools every day and the hope for peaceful co-existence that it inspires needs



Third graders on a field trip.



Students at Hand in Hand Kfar Kara School.

to be brought to the attention of people in the Middle East and all over the world. This year Hand in Hand has been featured at numerous conferences and meetings and has delivered to thousands of individuals, from world decision makers to ordinary pupils, its seminal principle that Arabs and Jews can live together in peace.

The following are some of the forums where representatives of Hand in Hand have inspired audiences to believe in the possibility of peace.

- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe-Mediterranean Seminar in Amman in October 2008 – Hand in Hand President and co-founder, Amin Khalaf, spoke before the conference and steered several resolutions encouraging bilingualism and integrated education through the plenum.
- Conference on “Teaching Arabic as a Second Language in Israel” at the Beit Berl College on December 16, 2008, cosponsored by the University of Haifa’s Jewish-Arab Center along with Hand in Hand and other educational organizations. The experience of Hand in Hand in creating bilingual schools was one of the main features of the conference with Amin bringing greetings and participating in a panel discussion.
- UN Alliance of Civilizations on February 18, 2008 in Lisbon, Portugal – Hand in Hand President, Amin Khalaf, and Executive Director, Sam Shube, spoke to the assembly of national leaders at this important UN sponsored conference.



Teachers Arij and Efrat.

Also on page 5, column 2 - please change the word “Palestine” to “West Bank”

Actress Debra Winger with Hand in Hand students Jamie Bregman and Bassel Eid at reception in New York City, May 2009.



- Conference of the Catholic University of Milan, Italy on March 20, 2008. Husam Abu Bachar, principal of the Wadi Ara Hand in Hand School, spoke to Italian academics and peace activists about the experience of Hand in Hand. He then continued to Montreaux, France and joined Hand in Hand's Executive Director, Sam Shube, at a large meeting, organized by the town's mayor, of French citizens from Arab and Jewish backgrounds.

- Approximately 40 gatherings throughout the U.S. in which co-founder and American Friends director Lee Gordon, American Friends New York director Maura Milles and U.S. board members presented Hand in Hand's mission and impact.



- Europe Day Celebration on May 9, 2009 at the Wadi Ara Hand in Hand School in Kfar Kara co-sponsored by the Delegation of the European Commission to Israel and Hand in Hand. The European Union chose Hand in Hand as the site for its annual celebration honoring European-Middle Eastern collaboration. The event is meant to bring to light the important role initiatives such as Hand in Hand play in the advancement of a shared vision of a peaceful future for the Middle East. The theme of the day – "A Bridge Between Cultures" – is played out at Hand in Hand every day.

The students, in preparation for the celebration, studied the various countries and diverse cultures of the European nations. After the honorary participants – including the Ambassadors of Britain, Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Slovenia, and Malta, the President of Hand in Hand and the Mayor of Kfar Kara – addressed those in attendance, the students concluded the program with song and dance performances.



European Union celebration at Kfar Kara school.

Delegations

Students, teachers, and principals from Hand in Hand schools are in demand for exchanges in countries in Europe and even in the United States. This year, numerous delegations have travelled abroad to be guests of various schools and often to speak in front of national and international conferences, often with delegations from the West Bank. These include a junior high class from the Galil School to Italy and various classes of the Jerusalem Junior High School to Italy and to Germany. This year as well, a delegation from Jerusalem was invited by Rotary International to San Diego. In addition to joining the students of the local Francis Parker School, the delegation appeared on local TV and addressed the San Diego City Council with the Mayor and Council declaring April 21 as Pathways to Peace Day. U.S. Congressman Bob Filner, met with the delegation while in San Diego.

Finally, in May two Hand in Hand high school students, Jamie Bregman and Basel Eid, came to the U.S. to present the work of Hand in Hand. Among other things, they appeared at a reception hosted by American board member Warren Eisenberg and his wife Mitzi, together with the actress Debra Winger who has joined the Hand in Hand community in the U.S.



European Union celebration at Kfar Kara School with European Ambassadors to Israel.

Visits to the Hand in Hand Schools

All roads seem to lead to the Hand in Hand schools. This year, as in previous ones, the schools have hosted visits of dozens of individuals and groups from Israel and from overseas; politicians and journalists; donors and potential donors; representatives of national government and of local municipalities. Here is a very partial list: President of the State of Brandenburg, Germany; United Jewish Communities' Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society; the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco; the JCRC of Greensboro; the Nashville Jewish Federation; the Danish Ambassador to Israel; the Dutch First Secretary and a delegation from the Dutch Ministry of Education; the Los Angeles Holy Land Democracy Project; leaders of the Muslim community in France; BBC; French TV; World Dutch Radio; Canadian TV; Toronto Star; Christian Science Monitor; and Ha'aretz to name a few. The Israel Foreign Ministry sent a crew to create a short video about the vision and reality of Hand in Hand which was distributed throughout the world.

Perhaps the most impressive visit during this current school year was that of British Foreign Minister, MP David Miliband. On November 17, 2008, he arrived at the school with a delegation of Foreign Ministry staff and numerous reporters. He had asked to enter a dialogue with the students and it was arranged for him to meet with the 8th and 9th graders. He began the meeting by asking serious questions of the students. They in turn asked very direct questions of the Minister. The discussion was enthralling and the Minister brought all his intelligence, humor, and sincerity to play in creating a challenging and open atmosphere in the class. At the end of the meeting, he announced that the Foreign Ministry would continue and indeed expand its support of the Hand in Hand schools.



British Foreign Minister David Miliband visiting Jerusalem School.

Mention of his visit and of Hand in Hand arose in Parliament two months after Minister Miliband was there. It is worth including in the report:

Lord Janner of Braunstone: "Is the Minister aware of the exceptional work of an organisation called the Hand in Hand Centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel, which was founded to build peace and understanding between Jews and Arabs in Israel through the development of bilingual and multicultural schools and curricula? Does she agree that twinning Hand in Hand schools with schools in the UK, particularly integrated schools in Northern Ireland, would help to promote peaceful co-existence through shared learning environments?"

Baroness Morgan of Drefelin: "My Lords, I am aware of the important work that is going on in Hand in Hand schools. I understand that my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary visited a Hand in Hand school recently. My noble friend has an important point to make. We see through the work of these schools a joining up of Jewish teachers and Israeli/Arab teachers teaching in their own languages, bringing children together and encouraging a culture of tolerance among students. The British embassy in Tel Aviv has supported this work with funding of £28,000 from its bilateral programme budget. It is important and we can see great merit in this approach."

“We see through the work of these schools a joining up of Jewish teachers and Israeli/ Arab teachers teaching in their own languages, bringing children together and encouraging a culture of tolerance among students.”

—Baroness Morgan of Drefelin of British House of Lords

School Updates

In September 2008, the first bilingual high school class in Israel was established in the Jerusalem Hand in Hand School. Fourteen graduates of the school's 9th grade continued on to the 10th grade. The opening of the 10th grade class ensures that the Jerusalem Hand in Hand School will continue through the 12th grade and that a child starting in the preschool will be able to continue in the Hand in Hand framework until she/he graduates from high school. Lior Aviman, the new high school principal, has devoted much energy to ensuring that the senior high will be a success. Besides constantly monitoring and supervising the high school's teachers and students, he is involved with a wide variety of activity to ensure the success of the high school.

In addition, the Jerusalem elementary school as well as the high school is involved with numerous programs. The student council was elected after a week of studies devoted to democracy and is very involved in creating a positive atmosphere in the school. Special programs like Arab language day, physical education week, visits of Jewish and Arab authors, collecting clothes, food, and blankets for distribution to the residents of Gaza and Sderot, a costumed Purim parade in the neighborhood and distribution of "mishlochai manot" or gifts to the residents are some of the occurrences that take place at the school.



Four 10th grade students won an English essay contest sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Israel on the timely subject of "What Democracy Means to Me." The school expects to have more than 500 students for 2009-2010.

Purim at the Jerusalem elementary school.



In the Galilee School, several new projects have been launched. The school has joined forces with a company called "Alef-Beit Zraeim" and the children learn how to construct hot houses, how to plant seeds, how to grow food, and how to monitor growth. The project allows the school to make use of the company's research labs for their science classes. An entire education program has been constructed around this unique cooperation.

The Galilee junior high school, in cooperation with the Center for Humanistic Education at Kibbutz Lochemei Hagetaot, started a community involvement project in November 2008. Students participated in workshops and later volunteered with various organizations in the towns of Sachnin, Misgav and Carmiel. These organizations work with the physically and mentally disabled, as well as with elderly and other at-risk communities, both Arab and Jewish. The children learned both the theory and practice of community involvement.

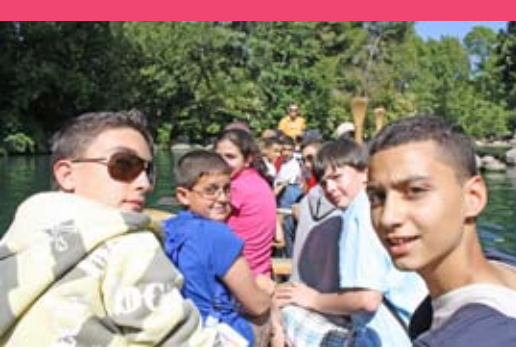
The Beersheva School received authorization from the Ministry of Education and the Municipality of Beersheva to open up a first grade in September 2009. *In September 2009, 25 students are enrolled in first grade there.*

Challenges

Despite the growth, there have been some serious difficulties. Perhaps it is a sign of successful growth but all the schools including the newest school campuses now face problems of overcrowding and a lack of classrooms. The Beersheva School opened in September 2008 and was to have opened its first grade in September 2008. Due to the lack of a suitable building, the school could not open the class. Learning from



Students at Galilee School in science lab.



Folk dancing in the courtyard at the Jerusalem School.

this lesson, the school worked with the municipality and secured a building for September 2009.

One of the main challenges this year was the War in Gaza. This particularly affected the Hagar-Hand in Hand school in Beersheba where schools were closed for quite some time due to Hamas missiles falling in that city during the war. The schools decided that the best way to deal with everyone's discomfort was to create a framework where the students would be encouraged to openly discuss their feelings according to the principles of mutual respect of Hand in Hand – no name calling, no derogatory comments, no cursing. The class discussions were on an extremely high level with the teachers impressed and proud of the maturity of their students in discussing such a difficult and emotional subject.

The financial situation of Hand in Hand is quite delicate due to the world economic crisis and the fall off of donations. Hand in Hand receives about a third of its funding from the Ministry of Education, a third from parents' fees, and a third from donations of individuals, foundations, federations, businesses, religious institutions, and governments in the U.S., Europe and Israel. Like all non profit organizations, Hand in Hand has been hurt by the situation. The organization has made cuts in its budget and has redoubled its efforts to find additional funding.

New Government in Israel:

It is imperative for Hand in Hand to do all it can to nurture positive relations with both the appointed political leadership in the ministry of education as well as the professional staff. Hand in Hand's vision and mission draws interest and support across party and ideological lines. Since its founding, Hand in Hand has witnessed 5 different prime ministers and 6 different ministers of education in Israel. Our goal is to secure funding and support from local and national government in Israel so as to build a model of quality education within the public school system in Israel.

Fundraising/Fiscal sustainability:

Even before the current economic crisis, Hand in Hand, due to its constant growth in both numbers of students as well as actual sites, faced financial stresses. Key challenges include:

- How to develop ability of school communities (parents mainly) to take on more responsibility for fundraising.
- Whether and how to raise parents' fees to bring in larger revenue for general operating support.
- How to encourage growth and establishment of new schools without having to commit to huge and indefinite financial support for the schools.

You are our Partner for Peace

Hand in Hand's mission is to promote partnership and coexistence between Israel's Arab and Jewish citizens through integrated educational models. The organization intends to widen its impact by working on the grassroots, municipal and national level in new communities to help build new schools and other educational programs. Like all non profit organizations, Hand in Hand has been hurt by the economy. The organization, with the help of friends around the world, has redoubled its efforts to secure funding and continue to raise awareness for the incredible partnerships that are built and reinforced every day in our schools – 5 days a week, 10 months a year. We are deeply grateful to all of the supporters of Hand in Hand who are Partners with us for Peace and are making an impact in Israel and around the world, for today and for the future.





Financial Report

Hand in Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel



Kfar Kara School students performing at European Union celebration at their school.

Hand in Hand Expenses
September 2008
through August 2009

EXPENSES

National Management	\$327,487
Development & Fundraising	\$67,329
National Programs	\$67,753
Gallilee School	\$302,868
Jerusalem School	\$624,525
HIH-Bridge over the Wadi School	\$332,154
HIH-Hagar	\$135,241
Deficit Carried Over from 07-08	\$125,925
Total	\$1,983,282



Special Thanks to Our Donors

Thank you to everyone who supported 2008-2009 programs at Hand in Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel

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Under \$1000

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We would like to especially thank the Alfred Z. Solomon Charitable Trust for their generous support to Hand in Hand this past year.

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Hand in Hand co-founder Lee Gordon with 9th grade student Tamer Jbara during a youth exchange program in San Diego.

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Contributions to Hand in Hand are essential for building and supporting existing and new schools, developing curriculum, training teachers and building key partnerships at the local and national levels. Assistance from individuals and organizations that support our vision is critical to our work. Credit card contributions can be made on our website www.handinhandk12.org. Contributions are tax-deductible in:

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