

**When It Comes to Peace & Understanding,  
Start with the Children**

This month, the Jewish community in the United States, Israel, and throughout the world will come together to celebrate the holiday of Passover. At my school, when we announced that the theme of our school this year was to be Community, one of my teachers chose to focus her students on the global community. She taught them that our first responsibility as a member of the global community is to understand other cultures, other peoples, other faiths.

And so, this teacher partnered with a 5th grade classroom in Japan. The students sent video messages to each other, wrote letters, shared photos of their lives outside of school, asked who their favorite actors and musicians were, what they ate for lunch and many other inquiries of great interest to eleven-year-olds. The lessons, as spoken by the children themselves, were amazing:

*We are different, but in many ways, we are the same.*

*They know more about us and about America than we do about them.*

*Wow, they really admire our country.*

*I told my parents I want to go to Japan on our next vacation.*

At Woodcrest School, a 44-year-old private elementary school in Tarzana, a project like this touches on all five pillars of our mission, which is to provide our children with a superior academic foundation, leadership skills, communication skills, strength of character and social responsibility. Our theme of Community and our outreach across the globe is one of many experiences that shape our children into tomorrow's responsible members of the global community.

On behalf of my teachers, staff, students and parents, I would like to wish all the Jewish families of our school community, our West Valley community and throughout our city *Chag Sameach*.

**- Luanne Paglione, Principal  
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