

## Dawa in public schools

### Definition of Dawa

Dawa means to invite non-Muslims to accept the truth of Islam. Performing Dawa involves both our words and actions.

### Importance of Dawa in Islam

The Quran and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) give numerous references on the importance and the obligations of Dawa. The prophetic life of the Prophet involved spreading the message of Islam. Dawa is also reflected in the lives of the Sahabas (the Companions of the Prophet). Now the responsibility of spreading the message of Islam rests on our shoulders.

- "Invite all to the way of your Lord with Wisdom and beautiful Preaching" (Quran 16:125)
- "you are made witnesses unto mankind" (Quran 2:143)
- "Let there arise a group inviting to all that is good" (Quran 3:104)

Provided below would be some practical suggestions that Muslim students as individuals and as a group should undertake to accomplish the above-mentioned goal.

### Students: receptive to new ideas

Students are routinely exposed in their classroom to new information and opinions, hence they tend to be more receptive to new beliefs and ideas.

Schools are therefore fertile grounds where the seeds of Islam can be sowed inside the hearts of non-Muslim students. Muslim students should take ample advantage of this opportunity and present to their schoolmates the beautiful beliefs of Islam.

### Getting started

First and foremost the Muslim students should establish themselves into a Muslim group (Muslim Students Association, Islamic Circle, Quran Study Group etc.) if they haven't yet instituted one.

Organized efforts give better results and contain blessings of Allah in them. The prime aim of this group should be to evolve Muslim themselves into dynamic Muslim personalities and also to portray Islam to their non-Muslim peers and school staff in a positive way using words and actions.

### Personal contact



Sharing Islam

#### eNewsletter Signup

Name:  Email:

Food for thought  
... and action

"And it is thus that We appointed you to be the community of the middle way, so that you might be witnesses before all mankind and the Messenger might be a witness before you." *Quran 2:143*



It has been proven that one-to-one contact with non-Muslim students in the classroom is the most effective way to share Islam. Personal contact tends to be more informal and invites more questions from non-Muslims. It is advised that brothers work with non-Muslim boys and sisters work with non-Muslim girls.

### **Inviting questions**

Muslims can create opportunities for non-Muslims to ask questions by simple actions that reflect living Islam like saying "Insha Allah" (God willing) when talking about a future activity; saying that they are going to prayer during Salaat time; brothers wearing Kufis; sisters wearing [Hijab](#); not using swear words during conversations; telling the truth; wearing modest clothes etc.

The questions that do crop up from peers should be dealt with in a very concise and eloquent manner. Doing this will require some basic knowledge on the part of Muslim students.

### **Be prepared to explain:**

Some of the topics that all Muslims should be able to explain are:

- The concept of Tawhid (oneness of God)
- Prophet Muhammad as being a real Prophet
- News reports about violence by Muslims
- Polygamy in Islam
- Reasons for wearing Hijab
- Reasons for praying five times daily
- [The Quran and Science](#)

All students should obtain the ways to explain these topics through knowledge gained from their study circle, by reading articles in Islamic magazines, watching videos, attending lectures, and through experiences of other students.

### **Dawa through the school newspaper**

The school newspaper is another effective way of doing Dawa. Muslim students are highly encouraged to become writers and editors of their school papers. Inform the writing staff to consult you before publishing articles on Islam and Muslims. Being a writer will give you ample opportunity to provide Islamically oriented articles which will Insha Allah open the hearts and minds of readers.

As a group, the Muslim students should try to contribute an article on Islam in each issue of its paper. The school may not allow you to preach in the school paper, but Alhamdu lillah, there are ways to circumvent this problem.

When your Islamic group holds any Islamic event like lectures, religious/ cultural events etc, submit an article about this event as a "news" article. This way, you are still presenting an aspect of Islam without coming across as a preacher.

The second way to circumvent the problem is to write articles about Islamic holidays, the two [Eids](#) and again submit them as "news"

articles. It also helps to have a good rapport with the editor and the writing staff of the paper. Invite them to your Iftar parties, gatherings, lectures etc.

### **Relief booths to help disaster victims**

When natural and human created disasters occur, Muslims students should be the first ones to respond by setting up a disaster relief assistance booth, which collects money, canned food, clothes etc. This gives a very positive picture of Islam and Muslims as servers of humanity, compared to the negative images of Islam portrayed by the media.

### **Including Islamic holidays in the school calendar**

Many school events and exams are scheduled around Jewish and Christian holidays. Muslims students should approach the school authorities as a group and get Islamic dates included in the school diaries to be considered during the scheduling of important school events.

### **Islamic books in school libraries**

Encourage school libraries to shelf books and magazines on Islam written by Muslims, and to provide the librarian with a list of recommended books on Islam. If the library is unwilling to purchase the books themselves, Muslim students should raise funds amongst themselves and from their parents and come up with the required books.

### **Scanning textbooks for misinformation on Islam**

Students of all grades and their parents should regularly scan textbooks to detect any biased material on Islam. If any is found, it should be brought to the attention of the teachers and the school authorities, providing them with the correct information with evidence, and have the teacher announce to the students the correct information.

In this area, the [Council on Islamic Education](#) can also help.

### **Starting an Islamic newsletter**

A newsletter on Islam and Muslims can be started by the Muslim students, if the school allows it. This newsletter can be funded mostly by advertisements and donations. A newsletter on Islam and Muslims will again help in dispelling the misinformation circulating about Islam and encourage Muslims to be organized and proactive.

### **Incorporating Islam into class projects**

Some aspects of Islam can be incorporated in school projects. For example, for a speech class, if there is freedom to choose a topic, an Islamic topic should be selected. Similar opportunities can be created in history, social science, writing and other classes.

Remember, it was the Will and help of Allah, Iman (faith) and Muslim creativity that won victories for the Muslims. Schools and

campuses are no exceptions as places where Islam can be victorious.

### **Other Miscellaneous activities**

- Setting up Dawa tables with Islamic literature
- Hosting Islamic exhibitions
- Placing advertisements in the school paper with the toll-free telephone number for non-Muslims

**1-800-662-Islam**

It is highly recommended that all Muslim students carry Dawa flyers in their schoolbags and purses to pass them on to their friends at school. To obtain free Islam brochures for distribution, contact the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) at 718-658-1199.

### **The bottom line**

We should use every opportunity to sensitize non-Muslim peers and school staff to Islam and to establish an environment in which everywhere a non-Muslim turns, he notices Islam portrayed in a positive way, is influenced by it and eventually accepts Islam with Allah's guidance, Insha Allah (if God wills).

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