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# **WORK PLAN**

# **FOR**

# **2007**



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## FOREWORD

***“Rabbi Elimelech of Lizansk said:***

***Before a soul enters the light of the world, he must pass through all the worlds. Ultimately, he is shown the Great Light that, when the world was created, illuminated everything, but when man ruined the world, that light was hidden away. And why is this light shown to the soul? So that from that time on, you will try to attain it and gradually come closer to it during your life on earth. For those among the righteous who attain it, the light enters them, shining out of them into the world. That is why it is hidden.”***

The Hidden Light – Martin Buber

Since time immemorial, education has always been meant to provide a direction. Education is intended to acknowledge the reality of our lives, to understand how the world conducts itself, to comprehend the system of laws that underlie existence, and to create what is lacking: to come closer to the light, to build a moral world that is grounded on the values of justice, equality and liberty. The way to do this is by learning and investigating human culture, engaging with the laws of physics, logic and mathematics, drawing inspiration from the poetics found in human texts, learning critically about the history of humanity - learning that is made possible by assuming a personal and collective position in order to build strong foundations for the common culture.

Genuine educational endeavors brings together the world of values and norms with the world of knowledge and enlightenment, by imparting the tools and skills that construct both a worldview and a world of broad opinion based on the Jewish and universal heritages.

In the complicated reality that we inhabit, it is incumbent on us to bring into being a flexible education world, on the one hand, that also possesses clear boundaries - on the other.

Those boundaries must be broad enough to provide space in which to clarify misunderstandings, create consensus and a broad foundation, but should also provide the critical space that is a prerequisite for all intellectual development.

The operative program presented below includes a rationale that both presents the complexity of the issue and proposes a direction for building a stable and reliable framework. We present a coherent work-plan inspired by an ideological outlook and by realistic options for its implementation.

## **BACKGROUND**

In a gradual process, the Sha'ar Hanegev Joint Educational Institution has been transformed from a homogenous educational institution into a heterogeneous one.

Kibbutz students come from communities set up as ideological collective secular communities, with a mutual aid mechanism, that are now undergoing change and privatization processes.

Students from the moshavim and towns are drawn from traditionally observant or religious communities, to which they are emotionally attached, while other youngsters come from secular communities that now resemble the renewing kibbutz communities.

In the past, the Zionist ethos saw itself as the foundation of the cultural melting-pot by empowering the new Israeliness. The kibbutzim and secular Israelis chiefly plugged into this approach - a process that

generated feelings of inferiority among the other groups that tried to assimilate within them.

Although the Zionist ethos never denied its Jewish roots, traditional Jewish identity was neglected and the focus shifted to the Zionist ethos, which constrained the ability to create a shared infrastructure for all the groups that constitute our school.

## **THE INNER CONTRASTS BETWEEN AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND AN INSTITUTION OF ENLIGHTENMENT**

***“The Rabbi of Kucek said about a renowned righteous man: ‘He is a rabbi in furs.’ His students asked what he meant. ‘Look,’ the rabbi explained, ‘when winter approached, one man buys himself furs, while another buys wood for the stove. What is the difference between the two? The first wants to warm only himself, while the second wants to warm others as well.’”***

The Hidden Light – Martin Buber

A school that considers itself as having a community-oriented ideology has to cope with the dialectic between values and enlightenment. That challenge is liable to be expressed in dual messages and in misunderstandings created as to the nature of education

An agreed-on value system does not exempt us from having to cope internally with conflicting values in that same system. For example, if the educational system sets integrity and self-realization as the two formative values - what happens when one value contradicts the other?

Enlightenment itself is not exempt from inner contradiction; enlightenment is a significant element in structuring individual and collective cultural identity but it is also oriented to achievement – and thus aimed at personal advancement.

All learners find themselves in the position of having to choose between the system’s two components – a value-based outlook and an achievement-oriented outlook.

<b><i>Focus points</i></b>	<b><i>Value-based outlook</i></b>	<b><i>Achievement-oriented outlook</i></b>
<b><i>Motive for learning</i></b>	Realizing a worldview	Improving achievements
<b><i>Curriculum</i></b>	Overt and covert	Mostly overt
<b><i>The teacher’s outlook</i></b>	Imparts values and teaches	Transmits knowledge and enables access to knowledge
<b><i>The student’s outlook</i></b>	The student is part of the community	The student is an individual in a learning class

Ostensibly, a system that presents the two components simultaneously projects an inner contradiction and dual messages, and ostensibly the only solution is to choose one of the two.

In fact though, here we have an immanent dialectic system for an educational endeavor in which there is a conflict between values and achievements, between differing abilities of the students, and between the different cultures of the groups of which the community consists. To ensure that these inner conflicts do not present a cognitive obstacle, we must openly present the conflict between them as part of the educational process.

That inner conflict - when it is an overt aspect of the educational experience of an educational institution, between loyalty to its

fundamental values and students' orientation toward achievement – underlies the educational institution's outlook on education.

**DIFFERENCE AS A BASIS FOR RENEWING COMMUNITY**  
**SPIRIT**

***They told Rabbi Menachem Mendel about a man who was greater than his unknown friend. He replied, if I am I because I am I, and you are you because you are you, then I am I and you are you, , while if I am I because you are you, and you are you because I am I, then I am not I and you are not you”.***

The Hidden Light – Martin Buber

The idea of difference is a sufficiently rich narrative that has generated numerous proposals by educators for an educational trajectory. It should, however, be applied for the right reasons. For example, a destructive reason would be using the facts of difference as inspiration for a curriculum built on affirmative action; that is, a group that suffered in the past from cultural oppression tries to emphasize its uniqueness by differentiating itself from Israeli culture. Such a program might lead to isolation and separatism. Education of that kind is hostile to the very existence of joint education and to the growth of a common culture.

Difference does not imply the disintegration of criteria – quite the contrary - solid criteria enable difference to be perceived as legitimate in human culture, the same way that language, art, politics and other expressions of human endeavor flourish and are enriched by a blend of different ideas, this is what enables an organization to learn and acquire a sense of pride. We read Sammy Michael's books because of their quality,

not to encourage students from a Mizrahi background. We do not choose this or that kind of teaching materials in order to promote a political agenda or to raise the students' levels of self-worth. There are two reasons why we choose teaching materials - because they illustrate how the human vitality and creativity depends on difference, and because they set criteria and broaden the knowledge of cultured people.

Difference is a narrative that relates how interaction with different kinds of people makes us what we are. It does not assail ethnic pride but locates ethnicity in the context of our shared culture. It helps explain the past, clarifies the present, and provides guidance for the future.

Among the numerous expressions of cultural difference, four are particularly important – language, religion, customs, and art. In each of them, it is visible how difference contributes to enhancing vitality and excellence.

Two links that connect all the groups making up Israeli society are the Hebrew language which has become the national language, a living language that brings together cultural and historical heritage with the experience of our contemporary life; and religious tradition, with its special days and ceremonies as part of every definition of our national identity. Both these links should be the first - and common - links in building our shared Jewish-Hebrew identities.

The hegemony of those two links does not make one or another group inferior, but brings us back to our shared starting-point.

The school can allow itself to legitimize the multiplicity and variety in the realm of school culture, but at the same time we must ensure that there is a meeting-point and dialogue between the different sectors, so all of them acknowledge the core of shared Israeli culture in Hebrew.

To create a joint foundation, there does not have to be a single unified and homogenous culture system, but we must acknowledge the hegemony of one culture that forms the joint foundation – and this alongside a unique cultural system. That hegemony implies that there is a set of cultural assets common to all the groups that create the educational institution, and it provides the anchor for creating our Jewish/Israeli identity.

That cultural infrastructure imparts the community with symbolic meaning, cultural uniqueness that unites its members in feelings of belonging and solidarity, yet without injuring the existence of subgroups which are part of the whole.

### **THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY – CHARACTERISTICS OF A COMMUNITY**

Since primeval times, the feeling of Jewish community has provided the basis for the existence and continuation of the Jewish people - an existential anchor that enables internal negotiations over the meaning of joint existence, a constant debate over the nature of participation. Judaism empowers the community's symbolic significance. Members of the community are identified as possessing a common identity and a cultural uniqueness that brings together its members in feelings of belonging and solidarity.

Community education is a process that acknowledges the importance of involving all components of the community in identifying needs, wishes, aspirations and translating them into programs and actions. If community education is meant to respond to questions and urges, it must be encompassing and all-embracing; the programs deriving from it must achieve numerous purposes at one and the same time. The community

education approach must be integrative; that is, we must try and engage with the phenomena from several perspectives simultaneously.

If there are more systems in the community designated for the same goal, then we must collaborate with them, come closer and supplement them.

The most important basis of community education is the ideological one. It is the most basic common denominator and must be nurtured, built up and inculcated.

Two figures who shaped Jewish tradition over generations saw the shared ideological foundation of Judaism in the relationship between people. When Hillel the Sage was asked what is Judaism's chief tenet, he replied "Do not do to others what is hateful to you," while Rabbi Akiva added "You should love others as you love yourself". We can build on that foundation a scale of values that is also connected to a set of humanistic, universal values. The first anchor of community spirit is heterogeneity and difference, and the need to create accepting and acceptable relationships with all elements in the community, thus adhering to the belief that Jewish cultural roots have shaped our experience in every diaspora.

## **JEWISH IDENTITY CONTRASTED WITH HUMANISTIC UNIVERSALISM**

Members of a learning community will assume a shared identity, with a unifying cultural uniqueness if they accept the perception of Judaism as a national pluralistic culture, which is still in process, and is an integral part of the humanistic universalist outlook: in other words, its values do not clash with universalist, humanistic values. The program's true test is how

the values of traditional Judaism cope with general-human and general-societal values.

That intellectual coping is accompanied by a dual realization by the community's members of the chief points of Jewish and global tradition and culture, both of them imparting culture and values that provide tools for assembling a worldview.

Structuring an educational process grounded on studying, criticism and dialogue will bring to the surface problems of identity and the lost framework of values in education during the postmodern era.

The Shenhar Report set clear goals for coping with this issue via humanistic studies, in order to satisfy the following needs –

- Expressing individual feelings and needs, seeking the right path by debate - as a condition for constructing a clearer sense of identity.
- Understanding the historical and philosophical processes that led to the contemporary sense of confusion and impaired identity.
- Clarifying the concept of Jewish identity at the theoretical, value-based level, while providing approaches and options for different interpretations.
- Educating for pluralistic thought and tolerance.

At a time when individualism has become a sacred value, it is hard to accept and internalize binding ties between individual and social frameworks, and Jewish national and political identity.

Loyalty to the values of the state and those of the Jewish people means positioning others at the center of awareness; education has to encourage the student to internalize the fact that her unique identity is empowered by national-societal belonging.

That contradiction can be reconciled by accepting the principle that a learning community may be grouped under the heading “a nation of people” - which means that the national aspect merges with the human-personal one.

Belonging to a nation does not mean being alienated from whatever lies beyond its boundaries. It is an attempt to stand on your rights without trampling those of others, to acknowledge that every human being was created in human form.

Democracy is one of the tools available for maintaining a balance between particularist values and universal ones. Here too, democratic thought - which sanctifies pluralism - must remain on guard and not confuse pluralism with atomism.

Atomism is found among those who seek unlimited freedom of every opinion and for every act, causing society to disintegrate into atoms, instead of groups or divisions. Worse than this, they are liable to lead to the abandoning of every position and principle. Pluralism is characterized by freedom in relationships, while atomism is typified by freedom without affinity. Freedom is exempt from the awareness of responsibility and commitment. Freedom leads to lawlessness and disintegration.

Democratic thought believes that people have control over their acts and they are what motivate history, and so democracy expresses a humanistic outlook. Humanism is grounded on belief in rational thought which is aimed at correcting the human world.

The discourse that connects up the two value-based foundations of the Jewish democratic state led to the legislation of the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, which emphasizes the following issues:

1. The fundamental rights of the individual in Israel are based on the recognition of the value of human beings, the sanctity and freedom of human life, as well as on honoring the spirit of the principles set out in the declaration of the founding of the State of Israel.
2. This basic law, aimed at protecting human dignity and liberty, was intended to enshrine the values of the State of Israel as a democratic Jewish state.

Educational endeavors in Israel are justified, contingent on their acknowledging the universal rules that recognize self-determination for every people and nation, as well as belonging to a sovereign state with ties between state institutions and the particularist national culture.

The existence of the State of Israel reflects the interest of ensuring the physical existence of the Jewish people outside its borders; the existence of the Jewish people in Israel includes the maintaining of human dignity, and there is no institutionalized racism. The Jewish state acts as a barrier to assimilation. There is now no doubt that for secular Jews, maintaining a Jewish way of life is possible and more convenient in Israel, with a response defining secular Jewish identity. Demanding that the Jewish people give up its state is tantamount to demanding national suicide. It is clear that this justification of the state of Israel exacts a heavy price from its non-Jewish citizens, and this is where the Declaration of Independence enters the picture and its interpretation to the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty. A dialectic educational reality is created, that can provide a humanist and democratic discourse.

## **MORAL, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ECOLOGY**

### **Song of the Grasses**

Know deeply, that each and every shepherd,  
Has his own special melody.

Know deeply, that each and every blade of grass  
Has its own special song.

And from the song of the grass,  
Is created the melody of the shepherd.  
How beautiful, how beautiful, how comely,

When people hear their song.

It is good to pray in their midst,

And to worship God with joy.

And from the song of the grass,

The heart is full and yearns.

And when the heart is full from the song

And yearns toward the Land of Israel

A great light is then continually drawn out

From the holiness of the land upon it.

And from the song of the grass,

Is created the melody of the heart.

*Rabbi Nachman of Braslev*

In his unbending debate with Nietzsche, A.D. Gordon assumed that the supreme man, towards whom humanity is committed to develop and whom it must create out of itself, is the holy man: "Holy you shall be

because Holy is the Lord your God". Gordon explains holiness itself thus - "life is responsible for life in the world, for man's sensing the song the world and the sorrow of the world, until man himself is entitled to all the good and all the lofty in the world and responsible for the evil and ugliness in the world."

It is that harmony between human beings and the created world that creates holiness and the individual who corrects. Judaism understands disharmony as moral subversion that sets off cosmic subversion. The meaning of human life is to restore to the world the harmony given it during the Creation of the world.

The individual who corrects the world is a free person who coexists in affinity with others, and understands that the principle of holiness is not inherent in conquest but in mutuality. All relationships such individuals and their friends are constructed on mutuality, every cultural development is built on a cultural encounter and on mutuality that develops into a new culture whose foundations contain the basic elements of the intercultural encounter.

We can define the relations of people with the natural world around them using that same principle of mutuality. Those who try to conquer nature ultimately cause the destruction of the created world and of their own world, while those who live in harmony with nature take what is possible from nature and return what is possible to it, thus building temple in nature to its holiness.

Both the perception of education and that of ecology commit us to that scale of moral values, a culture that merges us into nature that surrounds us. An aesthetic that's produced by nature and by human hands can generate hope for a better world: an ecological aesthetic is part of that

cultural message that can serve as an infrastructure for the shared culture we are trying to build.

## **A SHARED CULTURE AND THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER**

*“We are doing a lot – possibly too much – to prepare and train our students for a future which may possibly be a period of war. We are doing very little - certainly not the required amount - to prepare and train our students for a future that will bring peace, at least in our region, and for which we bear direct responsibility.”*

Akiva Ernst Simon, 1982

So far we have dealt with building a cultural infrastructure as a basis for a learning community. We have tried to bring together Jewish values and humanistic universal values, to connect Judaism, humanism and democracy. We attempt to assemble a shared platform for the various rifts in Jewish society, within Israeli society. And we are left with the question whether that infrastructure also provides us with a response for an encounter with the definitive other – the clearest dichotomous distinction, that is – Jews and Arabs. Which moral implications stem from such a distinction? Does the education community that we have founded on the basis of a Jewish humanistic cultural infrastructure meet the test of the encounter with the genuine other?

The moral implications also stem from the constituting document that forms the declarative basis of our being a sovereign people in its own country – the Declaration of Independence. The relevant section of this issue is the clause determining explicitly that “...it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will

ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.” Although the declaration of Independence does not have the status of a constitution, it serves as a moral, educational beacon. If the educational community that we have structured does indeed constitute a socialization agent according to the accepted definition in the social sciences (which sees in socialization a process through which members of a society internalize its values) then the encounter with the other must reflect the success or lack of success of the process. In other words, does the value based-message stand the test of reality?

### **OUTLINE OF A WORK-PLAN FOR “COMMUNITY DAY”**

Creating a community is the most important thing in the school’s outlook. Everything else that’s involved in the procedure of improving the system - such as improving teaching, creating new patterns of control, or boosting professionalism - must rely on creating a community. The community is what links teachers and students together into something more meaningful than they themselves - clarifying values - which raises both students and teachers to a higher level of self-understanding, commitment, and performance.

Previously we indicated that involving components of the community in identifying needs and translating them into programs and is the operative basis of creating community life.

Such programs and activities must provide expression for the community’s worldview, that is not limited to reciprocity between

teachers, students and parents, but also between teachers within the teaching staff, between students in the student-body, and between parents. The program transforms the groups of teachers into a *beit midrash* (study-hall) that learns chiefly from itself, but from external factors as well.

A dialogue between the parents is created in activities by a parents forum that creates a control and support system in the school, reflected in involvement pedagogic, disciplinary and value-based dilemmas and takes a stance that benefits the school.

The most challenging space, and that with the greatest potential, is the space of the students. The material difference that characterizes the student-body enables various forms of bridging between different gaps - bridging the learning gaps between younger and older students, or between the different customs that characterize one group or another.

That difference enables a mechanism learning support to be built, in the framework of children teaching children, or in the formal schedule, with the participation and involvement of teachers and educators.

Older and stronger students can provide support to students with learning difficulties. Students receive responsibility for safety issues at school by forming safety shifts where older students take responsibility for the well-being of the younger ones.

They can act as agents of culture through proactive cultural activities in the framework of planning Jewish holidays or active school-breaks. Students can run afternoon clubs for students who are not in the formal framework during the school day.

They can take responsibility for environmental quality in and outside the school.

Students can take responsibility for developing in-school communications by means of a newspaper, radio or TV.

Students take responsibility by becoming involved in the school's pedagogic council.

Or they can get involved by representing the student-body by launching an official students council.

Most of the programs proposed here are characterized by recruiting the higher age-levels, to benefit of the entire student-body, particularly the junior high-school students.

All these activities are made possible because the school has announced a Community Day - in which every senior high student his or her contribution to the school community, and thus fulfils the community vision that perceives students as active partners in identifying community needs and translating them into practical activities. Ultimately, the Community Day integrates the community vision and its realization that brings together the senior and junior high school - with its "head" in the senior high and its "feet" in the junior-high school.

### **OUTLINE OF A WORK-PLAN FOR JUNIOR-HIGH SCHOOL**

Junior high-school begins with a first meeting between the different groups which will make up the school's educational community. This initial meeting can serve as a promising basis for making preliminary ties, but it can also prove to be a crisis point. So the first meeting must focus on three circles of acquaintanceship -

- (a) with the other students
- (b) with the school framework, and
- (c) with the school spirit.

At the end of these initial stages, a very precise process begins that presents the program of demands that will be made on individuals and at the group-level, at the end of which the school's framework and spirit is received the teachers-students-parents community.

Part of that process is the stage of internalizing the perception of the "red lines" in place at the school. It is a stage that must start with understanding the process that led the school community to test the five constituting values with the norms deriving from them, and to present the red lines that are a primary condition for safety in the school. Each of these activities should be done jointly by teachers, students, and parents, and they conclude with a ceremonial meeting that reflects the entire process. This process should be repeated, with the necessary modifications, at the start of every school-year and in every age-group level.

As a preliminary step, it responds to one of the first characteristics in the community education outlook, which is involving components of the community in identifying needs and then translating them into activities. The process is performed with an initial flooding of possible contrasts between values, education, and behaviors, between the needs of wider society and those of the individual. Ultimately, the process generates joint criteria for building a shared culture and community.

The school runs along two educational tracks –

- the yearly cycle – which is the yearly schedule
- special dates – reflecting the community's desire to underscore specific principles or content that might otherwise become submerged in the yearly cycle.

A three-day workshop will be given this year, as part of the school's perception of Jewish holidays.

The yearly cycle, around which most work is concentrated, is expressed in a fixed schedule. This cyclical quality gives students the ability to acquire skills and contents methodically, complying with the appropriate behavioral norms that respect all elements of the learning community.

The ideological trajectory that connects the school's annual cycle and the special dates will be a clarification of the Jewish and universal identity of all components of the learning community.

This responds, as we have noted, to the following needs:

- giving expression to personal emotions, unhappiness, path-seeking, and dilemmas as conditions for constructing a clearer sense of identity.
- Becoming familiar with identity-shaping ceremonies in clarifying the concept of Jewish identity at the level of theoretical values, by providing different approaches and options for interpretation.
- Educating for pluralistic thinking and tolerance.

The process comes into being via exposure to the content-world that deals with the Jewish life-cycle, becoming aware of Jewish ceremonies and the Jewish bookshelf, learning about personal family heritage and the distinct roots of each group, and the points that connect each group to the next. An in-depth exposure of Jewish culture by means of formal study content and through holidays, emphasizing one or another section of Jewish and universal cultural heritage, with a preliminary definition of shared Jewish culture. In the second phase, students will confront the encounter between Judaism and democracy. If we present members of the learning community with a dynamic approach to Judaism, as a national, pluralistic culture still undergoing a formative process, they will obtain a shared identity with unifying cultural uniqueness,

Learning can occur through theoretical study, by encountering the Jewish bookshelf, and the multi-generational intersection points, through the ceremonial aspect, which endows participants with a sense of belonging, and commitment to content and ceremony - and its production, and via the practical aspect, which is real work within the community and for the community's sake.

The yearly cycle contains the fixed ceremonial framework of “*Shavua Tov*” which opens the week: it includes engaging practically and textually with the week ahead, with group and personal dialogue about a text from the world of Jewish culture. Opening the week could include traditional prayer, a scriptural text or one from contemporary literature, or taken from a newspaper; even a song or musical excerpt, on condition that it leads to a multi-generational discourse than can bring together the shared yesterday with the future in process.

Toward the end of the week, we will apply the same structure, with an emphasis on summing up the week and anticipating the Sabbath - a day that is unrelated to school, and is a personal one, in the family realm. That day draws together both the historical and the contemporary aspect, since the Sabbath is the national day of rest in the Jewish sovereign state, as well as being a coming together of the family.

In midweek - the entire age-group level meets around the Weekly Torah Portion. The meeting is divided into two sections. The first half deals with the weekly portion in the class framework, in which students discuss the text, become familiar with its historic core and the philosophical outlines that characterize it, as well as confronting the contemporary aspect of the issue. The meeting will be open to different interpretations and to multicultural approaches.

The second part will be ceremonial in nature, in which the entire age-group level attends a cultural meeting that begins with community singing, followed by a short address by a teacher on the weekly portion's topic, and closes with community singing. It is intended to instill a framework of belonging and to develop group skills, enabling a shared learning experience in a large-scale framework.

This meeting has the symbolic significance of a community activity as a component in personal collective identity – I am a partner in the text, I take part in the ceremony, but am free to give my personal interpretation of the entire process.

The shared learning of common sources creates a familiar dialogue around the differing interpretations given by different groups, as they study the sources in greater detail.

The ideological framework creates a common cultural infrastructure and presents an opportunity to clarify personal, Jewish, and universal identity. Additionally, it enables enlightenment by creating norms of behavior, textual literacy, the ability to listen, and the capacity to make a personal presentation of ideological contents and emotions.

Enlightenment includes scientific knowledge that allows observation of the world we live in, using mathematical logic and knowledge so we can assess those observations, acts, or quantities – it is knowledge of the world that blends with knowledge of other people. The meeting of the particular with universal is a vital condition for belonging to the cultural world and developing humanistic feelings, while still preserving our identity as a group.

Alongside the yearly cycle, this program devotes substantial attention to learning about Jewish holidays, festivals, cultural meetings with Israeli art, and encounters with other generations - parents, students, teachers and

grandparents - annual trips that reflect the experience of learning about the beauty of Israel, creating a sense of group belonging that is etched into Israel's landscapes.

Until now we have acted to create a community framework that clarifies its identity, creates ceremonial rituals, and produces a joint experience that produces the “adhesive” for the sense of community belonging.

In order to create a stable community, we must create an activity that reflects reciprocal help and societal commitment. All the activities presented so far must be performed with the involvement of all components of the community - creating leadership and performance mechanisms consisting of teachers, students and parents. Such performance mechanisms should be composed of different age-groups, and provide varied possibilities for creative social expressions. For this dream to take shape, we have to generate change in the organizational perception of the junior high-school - from an organizational framework of educating and teaching, to an organizational framework that is a educated and taught, alongside educating and teaching.

The teaching staff attend a workshop to train itself in how to assume the burden of change, a study-hall of teachers will develop the program, translated into an operative language, and deepen this cycle of participation between educators and professional teachers, who play a major role in administering the program.

The division of labor between age-group level coordinators is aimed at creating more effective options for diverse educational activity, where each age-group level coordinator assumes responsibility for three age-group levels, which generates an overall triennial perspective of the program, and each one has a share in the overall system.

To make this program realistic, we must develop communication between all components of the community - in every way possible - starting from developing electronic communication channels, via effective organizational channels, and including open dialogue between all components of the community.

The teaching process will also be applied with a triennial perception setting clear goals in the field of content and learning skills, by developing a tradition of a culture of debate and open communication.

Each subject will be taught using that triennial perspective; there will be a defined curriculum, acquisition of skills, and a final project.

To sum up the hoped-for results of the educational process:

1. Creating a shared cultural framework as part of a process clarifying personal and group Jewish identity.
2. Creating a community of teachers studying as a *beit midrash*.
3. Creating criteria for learning and societal processes.
4. Creating communication cycles
5. Enhancing capacities for personal and group presentations of a specific content-world, in writing and verbally.
6. Proven endeavors of helping others.
7. The ability to internalize a ceremony and foster belonging.
8. Multigenerational encounters between children, parents and grandparents to create intergenerational solidarity with common cultural infrastructures.

These results will be expressed in the final diploma that summarizes the process and the hoped-for goals.

## OUTLINE OF A WORK-PLAN FOR SENIOR-HIGH SCHOOL

*Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kucek asked his friend and student, Rabbi Ya'akov of Hedzimin: "Ya'akov, why was Man created.?" He answered "To correct his soul," "Ya'akov," said the righteous man, "Is that what we learned from our teacher, Rabbi Bunem? The truth is, that man was created to raise the sky higher."*

The Hidden Light, Martin Buber

Educational ideology presents the senior high-school with the need to cope with the conflict between values, and education.

The consensual value system which ostensibly takes shape in junior high school is not free of internal contradictions – and those are exacerbated in senior high school. The battle for the student's time tests the need to develop skills for building a worldview, in the face of the need for scholastic achievements. What we have here is in fact a dialectic system that reflects educational endeavors, expressed in a clash between values and achievements, between different skills of learners and the different cultures reflected in the various groups within the community. To prevent those contradictions from creating a cognitive barrier, we must raise them openly to the surface, as part of the educational process.

The inner argument, which is revealed during the learning experience at the school, constitutes the foundation of the program we are dealing with.

As is the case in junior high school, in senior-high as well, educational activities are divided into the yearly cycle, which is expressed in the fixed schedule, and it imparts the ability to gain skills and contents while

complying with appropriate behavioral norms that respect all components of the learning community, and also into dates, which are outside the annual cycle. They express the community's need to emphasize those aspects not expressed or stressed in the yearly cycle.

It is only natural that the annual cycle in senior high-school is directed at the final examinations (*bagrut*) that determine much of the learning agenda. However, alongside preparations for final exams and as part of the preparations for the maturity needed to cope with new content worlds, there are also dilemmas in terms of values. Intellectual honesty alongside the uncompromising need for scholastic achievements do not necessarily conflict with each other, and if so, this is the place for an inner debate as a part of the educational process.

During junior-high school we tried to create a cultural, value-based infrastructure and identification system for ourselves, so we can view ourselves as a part of it, as people who learn and internalize, who act and create. We focused on our Jewish identity and learned to accept the different groups who make up our entire community. Ultimately though, we remained with the question whether the cultural infrastructure that we created stands the test of encountering the definitive other – the Arab? Does the Declaration of Independence that we took on ourselves as the constituting document of Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Yisrael (and particularly the clause that presents the aspiration of universal justice) withstand the test of encountering the Arab minority?

The learning confrontation that students face and that shapes their worldview requires the system to create a trajectory for development built on three elements:

1. Developing personal capability for consistent and in-depth profound learning, while taking personal responsibility for the process.
2. Developing tools for constructing a worldview, while deepening and internalizing the Jewish and democratic values of the State of Israel, and clarifying the connection between that internalized Jewish identity and the State's democratic values.
3. Developing social and civic responsibility for active partnership on Community Day.

The perception of dates in the program creates a year-round framework focused on three development components that underlie the structuring of personal and group capability. The year opens with a workshop dealing in a focused manner on learning skills, developing life skills, and developing tools for choice. In the middle of the school-year, a workshop is held to sum up interim progress. At the end of the year, achievements are summed up. Throughout the year the students will experience two special days, one a seminar dealing with values, and the other focusing on cultural aspects, in the form of a specific sphere of art.

Dates will be set aside for consultative programs, and a date for the annual trip – in compliance with the school's worldview.

Students who graduate ninth grade and enter senior high-school must present a final diploma from junior high in order to be accepted to senior high school. New arrivals from other schools who experience difficulties will be able to attend a course during summer vacation, followed by personal interviews and a meeting with their parents.

In the 10th grade age-group level, the school year begins with an inclusion workshop consisting of the following - acquisition of basic skills by

constructing a teacher-student and student-student communication tracks, choosing learning tracks, selecting Community Day, discourse and leadership at the age group level. At the end of the first half of the year, a workshop will be held to assess personal and group achievements in the first half.

At the end of this school-year, achievements will be evaluated and presented.

In the yearly cycle, students in the 10th grade will take civic studies in the framework of the Hamlin University project. The project is structured around meetings between Arab educators from Gaza, the West Bank and Sha'ar Hanegev Joint Educational Institution. It tests our desire to be considered as "one people" - which implies merging the national aspect with the human one. One of the tools for maintaining a balance between particular and universal values is democracy - and this is what the program engages with. It is administered simultaneously in Sha'ar Hanegev, in several schools in Gaza, and several in the West Bank.

Eleventh grade also begins with a workshop – this time, dealing with adjusting expectations, presenting the curriculum, learning strategies and engaging at the age-group level with solving the dilemma of values relating to central trajectory – the encounter with the Other.

Throughout the year, in the framework of elective groups, students from the school meet Arab youngsters in two frameworks - one is the JITLI project with group meetings of youngsters from Gaza, from Sha'ar Hanegev, from Segev Shalom, and San Diego with the goal of investigating the shared roots of Islam and Judaism. The meetings take place in San Diego, Spain and Israel.

The second framework is the initiative of bereaved families who organize contacts between Jewish youth and Arab youths in order to deepen

mutual acquaintance and create some sort of understanding for the future.

The third elective group is one chosen by children that meets with Jewish youth from San Diego at a joint seminar held during the High Holidays in San Diego and continuing on Independence Day in Israel. This program is based on ties with the Jewish Academy – San Diego's Jewish school. The fourth elective structure is a group of students that meets with Arab youth from East Jerusalem and the West Bank (and possibly also from Gaza and Jordan); it deals with encountering the other, empowering communication tools and influence, as well as active citizenship.

The twelfth grade begins with a different workshop, one that deals with clarifying personal Jewish and Israeli identity. The twelfth year is characterized by separation from one's peers in the same age-group level. Feelings of uncertainty regarding the future create disquiet that can be allayed by enhanced activities ahead of military service, or ahead of a year of service, activities in the school for the sake of the school, and stronger focus on the final exams.

Learning is focused throughout two semesters, with two clusters of final exams in each semester.

Socialization processes focus on ongoing culture activities of the twelfth grade steering-team which continues to organize the Jewish holidays and active breaks at school, the annual trip as a farewell to school-life, and the journey in the footsteps of the Holocaust which is the high point of the identity clarification process.

The graduation party is an event that sums up all the fine and beautiful experiences that the students underwent during their education process at the school.

In practice, the two links that form part of the annual cycle and connect senior-high school with the school community are the “discourse” and “Community Day.”

The discourse is the platform for presenting the dialectic reality that characterizes the school - expressed in the inward clash between values and achievements, between the different cultures representing different groups within the community.

The discourse presents the inner debate, as part of the experience of learning, accepting Judaism as a national pluralistic culture, still in process, and rooted in a humanistic universal outlook.

The discourse tests the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty as the law that links together the state’s Jewish foundations and its democratic foundations. It attempts to engage with the moral implications deriving from the dichotomous distinction between Arab and Jew.

The second link is Community Day which serves as a practical lever to implement extensive sections of the school's worldview.