

# MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STRENGTHENS TIES WITH TALI

## NEW MISSION STATEMENT DIRECTS TEF

In August 2001, the executive staff of the TALI Education Fund (TEF) convened for four days of intensive discussions, conducting a careful evaluation of its goals and objectives. As a part of this process, TEF rewrote its mission statement, examined its work within the context of trends in Israeli state education, and assessed the needs of the TALI school network. Its work during the 2001/2 school year was a direct reflection of this process.

## TALI MULTI-YEAR SYLLABUS REVISED

Working in partnership, a Joint TALI Committee composed of TEF staff and Ministry of Education professionals met throughout the year to produce a revised syllabus for kindergarten through high school which reflects the full integration of Jewish studies into the school curriculum. The committee has completed the elementary school syllabus, and will finish work on the secondary school syllabus in the fall. Chairing the committee are Dr. Ilana Zeiler, Director of the Ministry of Education's Pedagogic Authority for state schools, and Rabbi Eitan Chikli, TEF Executive Director.

## REQUIRED PROGRAM FOR JOINING TALI

The Joint TALI Committee has also established a required program for schools wishing to join and remain within the TALI network. Most of the initial investment in its schools will be in the area of teacher training:

- 168 hours of in-service training in Jewish studies and Jewish education for the entire teaching staff

- Two-year leadership training courses at the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies for principals and Jewish studies coordinators at TALI schools
- Pedagogic counseling provided 2-4 times per month, with time for counseling meetings built into the regular work schedule of every teacher

The new required program was presented to TALI schools in April, 2002. The vast majority of schools in the network responded enthusiastically to the new criteria and registered for the workshops and courses. The program will enable TEF to fully implement a broad-based model for TALI professional leadership and pedagogic practice.

## DEVELOPING NEW TALI SCHOOLS

The new TEF Mission Statement refers to developing "new schools for pre-school grades through high school."

- Five elementary schools will enter the TALI network in the fall of 2002-3, joining the 52 TALI schools operating throughout Israel. Willing to commit themselves to the new standards demanded by TEF and the Ministry of Education, the schools are located in Jerusalem, Yokneam Elite and Mitzpeh Ramon. An additional six schools will join TEF later in the year.
- Nine new TALI early childhood frameworks were established in 2001/2. Fifty TALI pre-schools now operate from the Upper Galilee to Beersheva. TEF plans to open 5-7 new frameworks per year over the next three years.



Rabbi Eitan Chikli with Israeli Minister of Education, Limor Livnat.



Children from Kiryat Bialik school, the newest school to enter the TALI system, visit a synagogue.



Children from the TALI Gilo School in Jerusalem standing before the neighborhood's defensive wall erected to protect against terrorist shootings from nearby Beit Jalla.

Positive developments are occurring at the secondary level where two middle schools (grades 7-9) in Jerusalem have turned to TEF for pedagogic guidance beginning in 2002/3. These schools are in neighborhoods where TALI elementary schools operate, and are a natural continuation of successful TALI elementary education. The Jerusalem municipality has offered financial support, and TEF is committed to matching that support in-kind.

### FIRST GENDER PRIZE AWARDED

The first winner of the annual Shraga and Devora Genger Prize for Outstanding TALI Principal was Barbara Levine, Principal of the Frankel TALI School in Jerusalem. The prize was presented at a festive ceremony held last Hannuka, in the presence of Hon. Limor Livnat, Minister of Education, MK Zvulun Orlev, Chair of the Knesset Education Committee, and hundreds of TALI educators. For over twenty years, Barbara has been a leading force in TALI education, and a shining example for other pioneers in the area of enriched Jewish studies.



Barbara Levine (left) receiving Genger Prize from Minister of Education, Limor Livnat, with Genger family representative, Itay Hacohen, Adv., looking on.

## PILLARS OF TALI EDUCATION

### PEDAGOGIC COUNSELING

Ongoing pedagogic counseling, between 1-4 times per month, depending on need, was provided to over 100 TALI schools and early childhood frameworks in 2001/2. TALI counselors work directly with teachers, providing resource materials, planning lessons, and reflecting on classroom practice in Jewish studies. They also work with Jewish studies coordinators found in each school to design a multi-year, whole-school TALI curriculum. This year TEF has begun providing regular supervision and professional training for its pedagogic counselors.

### CURRICULAR MATERIALS

TEF publishes practical curricular materials for teachers, designed to provide them with lessons and activities that demonstrate the integration of Jewish sources into various school subjects. The TEF materials have received high marks from educators and parents for their creativity, design and applicability.

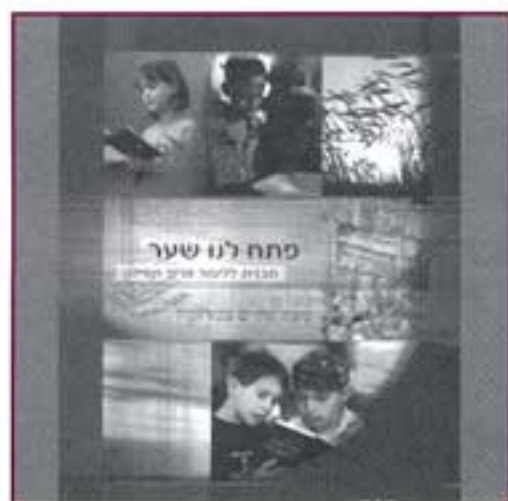
In 2000, TEF began working on a series of TALI Curricular Units to serve as models for teachers merging Jewish sources and general curricular areas. *Getting Well (Refuah Shlemah)*, a unit dealing with issues of illness and health, was produced this year for teachers in schools and hospitals. It was received enthusiastically at a conference of hospital teachers, and is also being used by regular TALI teachers. In March 2002, TEF published *Open the Gates (P'tach Lanu Sha'ar)* – a curricular unit on prayer for the first grade. **Plans for 2002/3:** TEF will publish two more units - *Tolerance in the Mishnah* (4th-5th grades) and *Rites*

of *Passage: The Lifecycle* (5th and 6th grades).

- The graphically impressive *TALI Portion of the Week Diary* for grades 4-6 was used weekly in over 200 TALI classrooms this year and its activities, texts, and assignments received enthusiastic feedback from teachers, children and parents. Plans for 2002/3: *Two Weekly Portion Books* using the same graphic format will be produced, one for 4th-6th grades, the other for 2nd-3rd grades, along with an additional book on *Storytelling from the Torah* for kindergarten and 1st grades.
- This year, TEF experimented with curriculum writing on the middle school level (7th-9th grade), directing middle school teachers from Tel Aviv in the writing of three booklets that integrate Jewish sources into the search for identity and expression that are part of early adolescence. The enthusiastic feedback has also produced much interest from other schools. The booklets will be part of curricular planning as TEF broadens its presence in middle and upper schools.

creating a multi-year curriculum for the holidays. Twenty principals and coordinators completed the two-year in-service TALI leadership course, which integrates Jewish text study, methodology in Jewish education, curriculum-building, and strategic planning. The final learning program of the course was a two-day tour of the Galilee around the theme "Tikkun Olam in Jewish history", which used sites to discuss this core theme of Judaism - for Elijah the Prophet on Mt. Carmel, for the rabbis of Zippori in Talmudic times, for the kabbalists of Safed, and for Zionist pioneers at Kibbutz Degania.

In September of 2002, a new course with separate tracks for TALI principals and Jewish studies coordinators will begin at SIJS. Over 40 participants are registered for this innovative course, which meets one full day a week. The courses will be taught by SIJS lecturers on a graduate level for M.A. credit. The participants will be encouraged to enroll for Master's Degree studies at SIJS.



"Open the Gates" Workbook.



TALI student working on a curricular unit.



"Open the Gates - Voices of Prayer" CD.

## LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR TALI TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

TALI principals and Jewish studies coordinators are engaged in developing as TALI educational leaders at the TALI Principals' Center, which offers courses and seminars to empower school leaders as innovators in the area of Jewish studies. Thirty school coordinators attended a four-day leadership seminar around the theme of "Values, Symbols, and Meaning of the Tishrei Holidays", in Beersheva on July 7-10. Special focus was placed on building a model for the supervision of teachers, and on

## TALI PARENT-CHILD WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Informal education seminars continued to operate, though the security situation has impacted on participation in the seminars at Pinat Shorashim and in TALI Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminars. The feedback from these activities continues to be excellent, and many schools have expressed a desire to renew these programs for next year. Plans for 2002/03: Much effort will be focused on the development of a new set of family education workshops, and on creating TALI fieldtrips focused on sites and

experiences connected to the Jewish heritage in the Land of Israel. A special grant for heightened security from the United Jewish Communities Israel Emergency Fund is expected to increase participation.

### “TALI RABBIS” PILOT PROGRAM

The presence of a rabbi in TALI schools is a new and an important educational resource, offering enrichment workshops for teachers, learning communities for parents, and facilitating holiday programs and special school events. This year, with SIJS graduate Rabbi Elisha Wolfin, TEF piloted a successful “TALI Rabbis” program for TALI schools in the Krayot suburbs north of Haifa and in the Hadera area. In April, 2002, the program opened up to all TALI schools, and thus far, 27 schools, a number well exceeding TEF expectations, have requested rabbis for 2002/3. To date, rabbis, most of whom are graduates of the Schechter Institute

Rabbinical School, have been assigned to twenty schools. Each school meets with its rabbi and plans between 15-20 educational activities to take place during the school year.

### TALI LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Completing a second successful year, twenty learning communities located throughout the country brought together parents and teachers to study Jewish texts and build together a relevant vocabulary based on Jewish identity and learning. The learning communities met six times at each TALI school and were facilitated by Schechter Institute rabbinical students or graduates. Although attendance was at times affected by the security situation (people were simply reluctant to go out in the evening), over ninety study sessions were held, with an average of 20-25 participants each.



A student from the TALI school in Ma'ale Adumim.



“Getting Well” Workbook.



Prayers at TALI Ma'ale Adumim School.