



TALI Education Fund

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“ July 20, 2004 is a historic date for pluralistic Jewish education and religious freedom in Israel. On that day, Israel’s Supreme Court ruled that TALI prayer is legitimate Jewish prayer in the eyes of Israeli law. In effect, their ruling confirmed that every Israeli child learning in a TALI school, by law, has the right to pray, and that this prayer must be funded by Israel’s Ministry of Education. ”

Rabbi Dr. Eitan Chikli, Director General, TALI Education Fund

The Year in Review

In 2003-04, the TALI Education Fund (TEF) provided educational services to 50 TALI schools and 71 pre-school classrooms around Israel. A total of 22,000 pupils studied in TALI schools this year. The following represents a summary of TALI Education Fund activities.

Historic Supreme Court Ruling Validates TALI Prayers

In a landmark decision in July 2004, Israel’s Supreme Court closed the books on nearly a year of litigation between the TALI Education Fund and Israel’s Ministry of Education. The court ruled that prayer in TALI schools is legitimate, and that the Ministry of Education is obligated to fund instructional hours for prayer in TALI schools to the same extent that it funds the state religious schools. The decision is retroactive to the 2003-04 school year. Twenty-seven of TALI’s 50 schools held daily prayer services in 2003-04, and will therefore receive funding.



Morning prayers at the TALI Givat Ze’ev School

Genger Prize for Outstanding TALI Principal

The winner of the third annual Shraga and Devorah Genger Prize for Outstanding TALI Principal for 2003 was Miriam Peretz, principal of the Givat Ze’ev TALI Elementary School outside Jerusalem. (see focus on Miriam, p. 8-9). Presenting the award in December 2003 was Salai Meridor, Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency and the WZO. After hearing Miriam speak at the award ceremony, Meridor later wrote: “This Jewish woman, a TALI educator from the Atlas Mountains, is an inspiration, and a model for shaping a Jewish identity that is rooted in contemporary Israeli experience. It is an identity fed and informed by all the sources of Judaism, from all of its streams, and combines openness to the world with rootedness and authenticity. Judaism and Israeliness can co-exist as long as one complements and supports the other. Miriam Peretz is proof of the success of this dialogue...and an inspiration to us all.”

New Core Curriculum Strengthens TALI Education

The TALI school network began to use a new syllabus in the fall of 2003. The revised TALI core curriculum is the result of a two-year review and revision process which took place between professional teams from the Ministry of Education, the TALI Education Fund, and the Schechter

Institute. The new syllabus, combined with the Ministry of Education Set of Directives that were published last year, ensures quality control in the development of the TALI school network in the years ahead. Implementation of the Directives, facilitated by the various TALI Education Fund departments, has already reaped tangible results throughout the TALI system.

New Schools and Pre-Schools

The focus this year in TALI was on consolidation and implementation of the Ministry of Education Set of Directives for quality programming within existing schools. Six new schools and four kindergartens joined TALI in 2003-04. Outlook for 2004-05: the opening of three new schools in Ashdod, Yokneam and the Maboim regional council near Ofakim. Two new pre-schools will open in Ra’anana and Maboim.

Human Resource Development Department

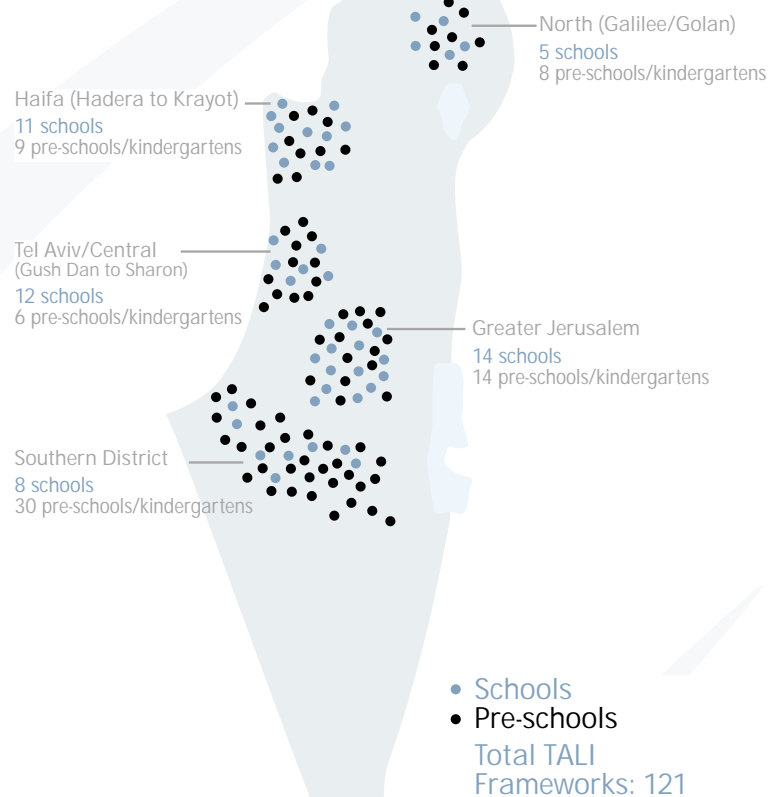
Pedagogic Counseling A new model for pedagogic counseling, instituted this year, has effected revolutionary change in TALI schools. Eleven pedagogic counselors met regularly with the teachers in 42 TALI schools, with joint work geared specifically towards curriculum development in line with the multi-year TALI syllabus. Most gratifying is that a number of veteran schools have implemented new Jewish studies programs for the first time in several years largely due to the work of the pedagogic counselors.

Teacher Room Workshops The in-service teacher training workshop enriches the teachers' Jewish backgrounds and builds a common basic vocabulary of Jewish knowledge. In the 2003-04 school year, 180 workshops (each 3-4 hours in length) were conducted in the vast majority of TALI schools, providing 700 hours of courses to teachers. TEF's initial goal of 1,000 hours was not met mainly because of severe budget cuts by the Ministry of Education, which had agreed to fund 30% of the program and did not uphold its commitment.

In-Service Training Seminars Intensive study sessions augment the Pedagogic Counseling and Teacher Room Workshops which are scheduled for the entire school year.

In 2003-04, seven seminars were held, including a Leadership Course at Bet Yatziv in Beersheva and study days focusing on "Academic Reading and Writing" in October 2003; an all-day seminar on teaching about Diaspora communities, attended by 48 teachers from TALI schools around the country in July 2004; and a three-day seminar for 22 music teachers from TALI schools, introducing them to the musical dimension of prayer in July 2004.

TALI Leadership Course The program, designed for principals and Jewish studies coordinators, prepares these educators to initiate and oversee curricular changes essential in creating and running a TALI school. Now in its third year, the program sponsored two classes this year (20 first-year students and 16 second-year students). Participants spent one day a week at the Schechter Institute learning in a specially designed academic program leading to an M.A. in Jewish Studies. There is a huge demand from the field and next year will see over sixty TALI principals and lead staff studying in the program. Many schools have by now sent 3-4 staff members to the course, creating a core of teachers within the school with the knowledge to implement a curriculum of pluralistic Jewish studies.



Educational Resources Department

Two new textbooks were published in 2003-04:

- My Weekly Torah Portion Book, for 3rd grade, earned high marks for its attractive graphics and creative materials. Over 6000 children studied weekly from the Torah Portion series of books produced for all age groups.
- Tolerance in the Mishnah: We Care (Ichpat Lanu), for 4th grade, offers an introduction to some of the ethical commandments via the wisdom of the Mishnah.

Textbooks to be published in the coming months:

- Weekly Torah Portion Textbook: In the Family (for 2nd grade), publication September 2004.
- Weekly Torah Portion Textbook: "My People and My Land" (for 5th grade), publication September 2004.
- One Jewish Family (a curriculum on understanding Diaspora Jewish Communities for 7th - 8th grades), publication September 2004.
- Saving Life and Sanctifying Life (a curriculum that focuses on organ transplants from a Jewish perspective for 8th and 9th grades), publication December 2004.
- Valuable Tales: Bible Stories for Kindergarten and 1st Grade (the curriculum has been written and is now being tested in a number of pre-schools, publication September 2005)



Artwork from the TALI Ben Gurion School in Yavne

Integration of materials Principals in fifteen schools have already ordered 11,000 textbooks for 2004-05. The advanced orders are evidence of an increased level of curricular integration of Jewish studies in TALI schools. TALI textbooks are no longer a luxury, they are a necessity.

New Directions – Electronic Publishing TALI is now entering a partnership with Snunit, the largest educational internet gateway in Israel. Snunit will be placing TALI Weekly Torah Portion materials on its Galim website for elementary schools beginning in September 2004. This is a site that has 300,000 “hits” per month, and promises to ensure maximum exposure of TALI materials to the entire educational system. In addition, “Art and the Book of Exodus,” an electronic educational resource developed by a team of artists and educators, (see Center for Judaism and the Arts, p. 17) will appear on the Snunit site in the coming school year.

TALI School Rabbis Program

The TALI School Rabbis program completed a second year of service, strengthened in numbers and in the positive feedback received from the field. The program was initiated in response to requests from TALI teachers and principals in search of a spiritual educator able to integrate into their school community and serve as a role model for Jewish commitment.

In 2003-04, TALI Rabbis worked in 15 schools on an ongoing basis (2 full days per month), and provided workshops and one-time programs in 11 additional schools. A large grant has recently been secured which will enable TEF to increase the number of schools receiving rabbis, and provide more intensive rabbinical intervention in several schools which have requested it.

Workshops in 2003-04:

- **Twenty-six TALI Parent-Child Workshops** provided a memorable Jewish experience shared by the entire family, utilizing art, drama, and interactive learning. A new workshop on Tu B’shvat was introduced in the schools.
- **At Kibbutz Gezer, some 1500 TALI pupils participated in sixteen all-day seminars for 4th and 5th graders.** The “All Jews are Responsible for Each Other” seminars teach values of community, leadership, and peoplehood through informal activities held in an aesthetic outdoor setting at “Pinat Shorashim,” Kibbutz Gezer.
- **Sixteen groups of 6th and 7th grade pupils from various schools participated in the two-day TALI Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminar,** introducing pupils to concepts of Jewish community, and to the spiritual and practical aspects of Jewish ritual, all through informal lessons and creative activities.

TALI Pre-School Program

Seventy-one TALI preschool classrooms operated this year throughout Israel; four of those joining the TALI network in 2003-04. In 2004-05, two new kindergartens will open. One, in Maboim, near the Negev town of Ofakim will stream into a new TALI elementary school opening in the same district. A second pre-school will open in Ra’anana.

Seven Early Childhood Education counselors provided on-site supervision for the study units of Prayers and Liturgy, Jewish Values, Jewish Holidays, Jewish Music and Art, and Telling Torah Stories. In 2004-05, two additional counselors will join the staff.

A special symposium on “Values in Literature of the Sages” led by TALI Rabbi Elisha Wolfen was conducted for TALI pre-school staff from all parts of the country. Some sixty preschool teachers and TALI pedagogic counselors took part in TALI’s annual national conference of pre-school teachers held in Jerusalem in July 2004. Theme of the conference: “From the Jewish Bookshelf to the TALI Pre-school: Jewish Texts and Pre-schoolers.”

Workshops and Seminars for Parents and Pupils

Although budget limitations caused TEF to cut back on subsidies to schools for informal educational programs, thousands of TALI parents and children participated in TALI family workshops and pupil seminars, designed to offer experiential, informal learning to supplement TALI curricula.



Pesach Workshop at the TALI Frankel School in Jerusalem

TALI Newsmakers

- Rabbi Dr. Eitan Chikli, TEF Director General, completed his doctorate on "TALI Education: the Development and Realization of an Educational Concept in the Context of Changing Realities."
- Prof. Oded Shremer, recognized expert in Jewish education and Schechter faculty member, was appointed to serve as academic advisor to the TALI Education Fund.
- Prof. Hanan Alexander, Director of Haifa University's Center for Jewish Education, has been appointed special advisor to the TALI Education Fund. In 2003-04, he conducted six workshops for TEF staff on assessment and evaluation in preparation for the major TALI evaluation to be undertaken by the Ministry of Education in 2004-05.



Parent-Child Workshop at Neve Dekalim TALI School, Ashkelon

Multi-year Ministry of Education Evaluation

The Ministry of Education's Division of Evaluation will begin a multi-year study of TALI this fall, by measuring the changes in knowledge and attitudes of TALI pupils and teachers over the next four years. Results will shed light on the impact the Human Resource Development Program is having on TALI education.

TALI Masorti High School Student Wins National Bible Quiz Competition

Yair Segev, a 12th grader at the TALI Masorti High School in Jerusalem, won first place in Israel's National Bible Quiz competition. The win entitled him to compete in the World Bible Quiz for Jewish Youth which took place in Jerusalem on Israel Independence Day. Mazal Tov to Yair and the entire staff at TALI Masorti.

Write On For Israel New York Teens Meet with TALI Counterparts

Students of the TALI Masorti High School in Jerusalem were chosen to meet with a group of 28 students from Write On For Israel, a project which is sponsored by the New York weekly newspaper, The Jewish Week. Write On is a two-year program for high school juniors and seniors which teaches them how to be advocates for Israel when they get to college. The group toured Israel in July.

For 2004-05: National Service Youngsters to Volunteer at TALI

A team of five 18-19 year-olds who have enlisted in Israel's National Service (instead of the army) will join the TALI staff to market and facilitate TALI workshops and seminars. In 2004-05, TEF is planning to conduct 130 seminars and workshops (double the number in 2003-04) for TALI pupils.

Chapter Cover Page: Vladimir ("Vladi") Tzachmayster, a student in the first grade, TALI Givat Ze'ev School

1. 3rd graders busy at work and play at the Ben Gurion TALI School in Yavne.
2. Youngster from the TALI Yuvalim School in Petach Tikvah involved in the creative learning of the Tu B'shvat Workshop.
3. "The Jewish Baker" is part of the Bar-Bat Mitzvah Seminar's experiential work stations, David Yellin TALI School, Tel Aviv.
4. Rabbi Elisha Wolfen, Schechter Seminary graduate, leads synagogue services for the children of the TALI Tzafirim School in Hadera.
5. TALI pre-schoolers create their own "mini-synagogue" at the TALI Moreshet Avraham pre-school, Jerusalem.
6. Fran Brandt, of Long Beach, N.Y., discusses the newest TALI textbook, "Tolerance in the Mishnah" with a student at the TALI Bayit V'Gan school.
7. Genger Prize winner, Miriam Peretz, with Sallai Meridor, Chairman of the Jewish Agency and WZO Executives (right) and Genger Family representative and TALI Board Member, Adv. Itay Hacohen.
8. Gali Nahori, Head of TALI Workshops and Seminars, "tries out" an English rendition of "To Be a Jew in Times of Danger: A Question of Life or Death," on members of the Detroit Miracle Mission who visited Schechter in April 2004.
9. Gary Rosenblatt, Editor of New York's weekly newspaper, The Jewish Week, (center), together with participants of the paper's Write On for Israel project, meet with students from the TALI Masorti High School in Jerusalem, July 2004.
10. TALI "Book Worm" leading an in-service training session for new TALI workshop facilitators.

