

## Teach First Israel April 2011 Update

Dear friends and supporters,

A year has passed since we began recruiting for Teach First Israel's (TFI) first cohort. Today, we are close to the completion of the second recruitment and screening process with approximately 1300 applications in the pipeline! Teach First Israel is becoming a strong brand in the education field and we are working hard to ensure that our second cohort will be an excellent one.

### Recruitment and Screening

After nearly four months, the recruitment process is close to completion. TFI's screeners are processing all the data in order to select the approximately 110 applicants who will join TFI's second cohort. Applicants came from various faculties from Israel's six leading universities and colleges.



Director of Recruitment and Screening, Itay Soudry, and cohort coordinator Yoni Ben-Pazi celebrating the 1200<sup>th</sup> application



Deputy Director General at the Education Ministry, Ms. Gila Nagar during a visit to TFI's screening day: "I am impressed with the immaculate organization, the quality of the screeners and the high level of applicants."

### Placement

TFI's placement team has been working hard at identifying the right schools for our second cohort, which is scheduled to begin teaching in September 2011. Many schools have expressed an interest in partnering with TFI and the demand for our teachers is high.

The director of the Haifa district in the Education Ministry, Ms. Rachel Matuki, summoned TFI to a meeting a few weeks ago, in order to plan a systemic expansion of the placement of TFI's teachers in the district. The meeting was attended by representatives from new schools as well as three schools that currently employ TFI teachers. Batya Browner, a highly-regarded high-school principal in Haifa said: "The contribution that TFI's teachers have made in my school is outstanding. These are high-quality people with great motivation and drive to succeed." Bruria Haspel, principal of Rogozi high-school in Kiryat Ata, which is currently not a participating school, said: "I have come to this meeting full of doubts, and I leave it with an absolute conviction that Rogozi must absorb a few of TFI's teachers." TFI's placement team seeks to create the best matches for Rogozi School

and many other schools in Israel who are keen to join TFI.

The Director of Education in the municipality of Jerusalem, Mr. Dani Bar-Giora, initiated a meeting with TFI's teachers in Jerusalem. The meeting focused on the challenges and the successes TFI's teachers face, as well as a deep discussion about education. TFI's teachers left the meeting strengthened by the knowledge that Mr. Bar Giora is someone they can talk to, and expressed an interest in continuing the discussion.

## Training

TFI's teachers had a tailored leadership outdoor activity in Ne'ot Kdumim at the start of their Passover break. The teachers participated in several activities that led to reflections and discussions on leadership in their classrooms. The bow and arrow was followed by a discussion about targets - how to define and reach targets and what we can learn from missing them. The teachers also herded sheep which illuminated various types of leadership and the challenges and opportunities associated with being in a leadership role and engaging followers. The teachers expressed their eagerness to use the insights from these activities in their classrooms, and were pleased to be able to think creatively and spend time together learning from peers and recommitting to our mission. The success of yesterday reaffirmed the need to continue investing in developing a strong cohort culture and ongoing professional development.



TFI's teachers in an ODT leadership activity in Ne'ot Kdumim Biblical Landscape Reserve.



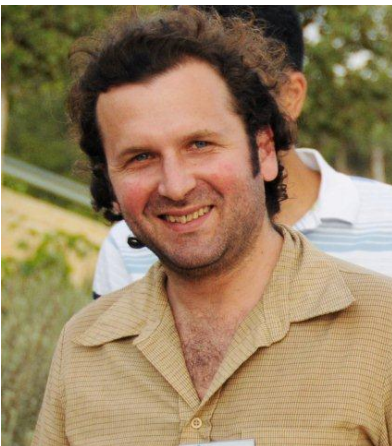
## Site Visits

JDC CEO and Executive Vice President, Steve Schwager, visited four of Teach First Israel's teachers in a Jerusalem high school at the beginning of April. The teachers described their challenges and successes, and were inspired by the words of Mr. Schwager who encouraged them to continue with their mission to change lives. Mr. Schwager also said: "JDC's Teach First Israel, is an opportunity to strengthen the Israeli education system by bringing in a unique group of teachers who will make a difference in the school and within the system."



Steve Schwager with four of TFI teachers in Jerusalem Avital Rosman, Gideon Igra, Keren Alison-Gerberg and Karni Arad. (left to right)

## Impacting the School and the Community Spotlight on Arik Zilber



Arik is a TFI teacher in Ironi He' in Haifa, who prepared his students for the winter matriculation exam for the first time. Arik's 12<sup>th</sup> graders, who took the 4 point (mid-level) matriculation exam in math, received a 78 average, a figure higher than the national average. Arik also teaches a particularly challenging 11<sup>th</sup> grade. In this class, the goal was to pass the test, and over 90% of the students, have managed to pass the test. "The recognition from the system is important because it opens doors and enables me to make changes. The scholarly achievements of my students are important to me: we were worried that one of my students would fail the exam because his father recently fell ill with cancer. This student got a 71 despite the family crisis. Another student, at the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, who was closed-up, disparaging and full of contempt, burst out in tears when we spoke about responsibility and when I told her I would be there for her to help her with anything. These successes are extremely gratifying and fill me with energy to continue."

## Spotlight on Lihi Gros-Avital



Lihi Gros-Avital is a first year TFI teacher in "Ironi Alef" school in Haifa. Lihi hold a bachelor's and a master's degree in literature from Haifa University; "Education, for me, is much more than the subject matter, much more than a lesson plan. This is why I identify with TFI's mission, and this is why I feel it is my mission to instill values of activism and social involvement in my students."

Lihi initiated a long-term volunteer effort with her class: "My 10th grade students have adopted a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class in a special needs school close to our school. We visited the kids several times: each visit is planned, organized and executed by the students themselves. It is

wonderful to see them playing with the kids and making them happy. These activities create a break from our schoolwork routine. The students are so satisfied and motivated by this activity; they are so happy to be doing so much good for others!"



Lihi's students in a comic relief – presenting to the special needs class they adopted

"Many of my students experience failure on a daily basis; they need help from other people all the time. When they volunteer and help others, they experience success in a new way. Beyond being satisfied with the result of their efforts, this experience boosts their self-esteem and helps them in their daily lives and even with their school achievements."

These are only two stories from TFI's teachers for whom teaching is much more than the subject matter. We are inspired by these stories and by our teachers dedication to the success of their students.

**Wishing you and your family a happy Passover!**

Shlomit Amichai  
Chairperson

Asaf Banner  
CEO

**TFI has a new Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/TeachFirstIsrael>  
Please 'Like' our new page so you will be able to interact via your NewsFeed!**