

Teach First Israel

January 2011

Update

Dear friends and supporters,

A year has passed since we began the recruitment and screening process of Teach First Israel's (TFI) first cohort, and today we have over sixty teachers in more than 20 schools. The teachers are working hard, challenging their students and are bringing a fresh wave of enthusiasm to their schools. We are already witnessing success stories on a small and large scale. Here are the impressions of Shmuel Boanish – a homeroom teacher and civics teacher at Yuvalim School in Or Yehuda:



"I want to tell about something that happened to me not long ago: I have a pupil named Mamit, and she saw me next to the school gate and called out to me enthusiastically: "Teacher Shmuel, Teacher Shmuel, I am already up to Chapter 5 in the book you gave me!"

At the start of the school year I walked into a room in the school that was in disrepair and neglected – this was the school library. I very much wanted to change the situation, and asked the principal for permission to take responsibility for the project. Together with another teacher at the school, we were able to recruit many volunteers among the pupils, and with their help we cleaned up the library and returned the books, most of which were lying about on the floor, to their place on shelves.

Afterwards, I gave out books from the renewed library to about 30 of my pupils and set them a goal: Each pupil in the class had to read at least four books per year. I asked the pupils to bring the book to school every day, and was very glad to see initial signs of success and clear enthusiasm among the pupils. My pupil Mamit publicly announced at first that she had never read a book – and the fact that she was reading a book during school recesses gives me motivation for the future. Mamit's friends have said: "Since the library project has started, Mamit is a different person..."

I am glad that I was able to mobilize other school teachers for the project, and as far as I am concerned this is another great success."

A month ago, we began the recruitment process for the second cohort of TFI. Our recruitment efforts focus on Israel's six leading universities around the country and colleges that have a disproportionately high number of socially-minded students. TFI's recruiters are themselves graduates of these universities and have an intimate understanding of how to reach the most promising students. They underwent a week-long training to prepare them for this important role so that Teach First Israel has a wide pool of qualified applicants from which to choose. The recruiters use two main strategies:

- The “head hunting” technique: our recruiters locate candidates of very high caliber, with impressive academic achievements, and whose life experience, leadership and academic background, and the recommendations we receive from current participants, university lecturers and leaders of social programs all attest to their quality.
- The second strategy is a widespread appeal to students in their third year of university studies by advertising on campuses, web sites and the like in order to create a ‘buzz’ about the program.

In just a month of recruitment, almost 770 high-caliber candidates applied for the program. Our aim is to select 70 participants from a total of 1,200 applications. **You too can contribute:** If you know any potential candidates or have creative ideas that might be useful for the recruitment team, please contact us by phone at 02-6511236 or email us at tfi@jdc.org.il .

Teach First Israel received the 2010 Leadership Formation Award from the Wharton, Harvard Business School (HBS)-Harvard and Penn alumni clubs of Israel at their annual gala event. The event took place on December 27th at the Dan Hotel in Tel-Aviv and was attended by club members, many of whom serve as leaders of Israel's business and academic community. *Teach First Israel* (TFI) received the award for its unique contribution in developing a critical mass of young leaders that are likely to contribute to the well-being of Israel and the Jewish people.



Mr. Elli Streit, board member of the Wharton Alumni Club in Israel, presenting the award to Teach First Israel's Chairperson, Ms. Shlomit Amichai, and CEO, Mr. Asaf Banner

During the Hanukkah holiday, TFI participants took part in an experience that was different from those that they encounter every day in the classroom and school: TFI members attended a workshop at "Adama" hangar in Mitzpe Ramon. The workshop on movement and acrobatics exposed the participants to non-verbal languages and ways of expression, inspiring our teachers to find new and creative ways to communicate with students and also contributed to the group's cohesion.



At the beginning of January, Teach For All, the global network of independent social enterprises working toward expanding education opportunities in their countries, to which TFI belongs, held a conference in Mumbai, India for representatives from all 18 member programs. Two TFI participants, Keren Lehman and Avital Rosman, were chosen by the global network, in cooperation with the TFI staff, to represent us at the conference. The conference's theme was "Change Begins Within" and focused on increasing teacher's impact and making a lasting impression on pupils. The TFI delegation came back inspired and motivated to generate change in schools and communities across Israel.



"Participating in Teach For All's conference and spending time in Indian schools opened my eyes and empowered me as a person and a teacher. The challenges Indian teachers face differ from the challenges Israeli teachers face like heaven and earth, and still, we have a lot in common. Indian teachers have taught me that any experience is a learning experience. It is not about failure or success, but about learning from the process and learning how to bring it into class on the following day. We came out of this conference inspired, motivated and filled with many fresh ideas. It is a wonderful feeling to be a part of a global effort to improve the quality of education for children in four continents."

TFI teacher Keren Lehmann with schoolgirls in Mumbai, India

Wishing you a fruitful and successful year,

Shlomit Amichai
Chairperson, Teach First Israel

Asaf Banner
CEO, Teach First Israel