Program: Meitarim Lachish Mechina
Activity year: 2016-2017

The report writer: Oren Shefer, Mechina's principle.

Current state of the program:

September of 2017 we began the fourth year of our Mechina program with over forty students, each coming from a different background: Urban, Kibbutz, Religious, Traditionalist, and Immigrants from all over the world.

Throughout the year, our Mechina program has reached a stable state educationally, physically, and financially and has been able to establish its influence on the Lachish area.

The program's involvement in the neighboring villages, near and far, mostly come in the form of social and cultural activities.

Main achievements during the last year of activity:

We have finished the school year of 2016-2017 with 35 students.

Our main accomplishment of this year was the program's advancement in the educational field; we have set a very high standard of learning. Our syllabus has improved; our staff has grown, along with our amount of lecturers. Additional resources were invested in renovations and equipment, and we have succeeded to raise the program's standard in every aspect.

Our connection with the nearby town of Eliav, a mixed town with both religious and secular residents, has gotten stronger; Eliav has allocated land for the Mechina to build a new campus in Eliav. We continue to grow closer to Eliav with the help of our involvement in the community of Eliav; each student has an adoptive family from Eliav, which they visit every week, our student are counselors for the youth movement, and we are a vital part of ceremonies and holidays in Eliav.

We feel that we have accomplished these goals while simultaneously succeeding to reach out to every student and help him or her go through a meaningful and personal process. Our students finish the year with a rich collection of values, an established identity, and the desire to contribute to society. Our students leave Mechina with high learning skills and the ability to demonstrate seriousness and ethical thinking in any framework they may be in,
military or otherwise. The students are now better prepared for a meaningful military service in training command and contribution to the Israeli society.

We have succeeded in creating a group that can learn, a group that has explored the country and volunteered with the Israeli society. This group has bonded with the help of social activities, the endless support they have shown for one another, and countless projects they have raised as a group.

Even with all of the effort we have put into advancing this year's group, we have not neglected the recruitment of students for next year and have been to schools all over the country in search of next year's group of students.

Our students volunteer on a regular basis with hundreds of teenagers, children, and seniors in a variety of activities and centers. In addition to this, our students were involved in a multiple number of events for the population in the area.

**The evaluation:**

During the year, we operated a few systems of internal and external monitoring.

Both an experienced accountant, and an examination committee that consists of two members, monitor the Mechina as an organization. The examination committee's job is to inspect the organizational, administrative, and budgetary conduct of the Mechina. The examination committee noted that the budgetary conduct is very organized and controlled, and recommended to authorize the annual report.

In addition, during the year we held three events dedicated to giving internal feedback, in order to examine the quality of our lecturers and lessons, and in order to measure the degree of satisfaction with the operation and activities of the Mechina, among the students. The feedback conclusions lead us to make a few changes in the curriculum.

In addition, we extensively monitor our staff and their function, through the early interviews, and the student feedbacks, which function as a utility for development and improvement during the year. In retrospect, you can say that the feedbacks constituted one of the meaningful milestones in the instructor's personal development. As a result of the feedback, we had a deep personal conversation with every staff member that taught us valuable lessons on improving our staff and our work.

With the hopes of improving the quality of our staff, we have employed an external instructor to escort and accompany our staff- Avigail Moshe, who escorts a number of programs in addition to ours. We feel that our educators receive a much-needed response to their personal problems and dilemmas relating to the education of the students. In addition to this, our staff receives important tools that will only contribute to their work in education, their personal connection with the students, and their ability to accompany the group and guide them. The instructors also have periodic training sessions in Beit Avichai with the instructors of all the Mechina programs.

To conclude, the Mechina manages to achieve its goals and fulfill the vision of the Mechina. Therefore, we will be continuing in a similar program next year with changes made according to experience and lessons we have taken from this year.
Provisional guidelines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

We are investing great effort in continuing the activity of the Mechina with the help of various donations and different workdays the students participate in, in order to provide the students with the best possible learning environment. We put a strong emphasis on the external appearance of the buildings, caring for the lawn and the surrounding gardens, and creating an environment that is pleasant to learn in and experience. In preparation for the upcoming year, and throughout the year itself, we plan to renovate the rooms, add more air conditioners, and continue the general improvement of the rooms, classrooms, and kitchens.

In terms of the educational program, we are planning to expand the group, to add or switch lecturers and class subjects according to experience, and redesign the yearly program with the help of lessons we have learned this past year.

In the regional area, we are in close contact with the Lachish Regional Council. We participate in activities for all the children and schools under the council and volunteer with the nearby population according to the community’s needs, for example children whose families are considered on a low socioeconomic level or elders in need of support.

We continue our efforts to move to our permanent location in Eliav and hope we will find appropriate resources to carry out the transfer of the structures, placing them and re-equipping them.