**Program: **Mechina of the Northern Negev "Oz Shlomo"

**Year: **5778 (2017-2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Program</th>
<th>Mechina of the Northern Negev &quot;Oz Shlomo&quot;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of activity</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report writer name</td>
<td>Shay Wesblum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report writer function:</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mechima@mechina.org.il">mechima@mechina.org.il</a></td>
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<td>Phone</td>
<td>08-860-0024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization Website / Facebook address:</td>
<td>mechina.org.il</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of active participants in the program:</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>Estimated number of impacted participants:</td>
<td>250</td>
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**Students:** We started the year of 5778 (2017-2018), with about 50 students in the first year – The 16th class and 20 students in the second year – The 15th class. Most of the students come from the southern part of the country. Graduates of religious public high schools from developing towns and cities in the Negev. Moving from living at home to a preparatory residence is not simple, but most of them have adapted quickly to the change.

**Mechina Staff:** To our great satisfaction, most of the educational staff continued from the previous year, which means the educational staff is experienced and qualified. Only one staff member has been replaced - the MADRICH (social instructor). The new Madrich, Dvir Netanel, is a graduate of the Mechina program therefore he is also familiar with the educational program.

**The Educational Program:** The educational program, over the years, basically stayed the same. The emphasis is on the study at the Beit Hamidrash, daily shiurim with the RAMIM (Rabbis), Halacha, Faith and Torah studies. At the same time, there is an emphasis on Zionism studies, preparation for IDF service and community volunteering activities. This year we decided to participate in the "Jewish Peoplehood" project led by the Israeli Mechinot Joint Council. The program emphasizes the familiarity with Diaspora Jewry and the challenges of living outside of Israel. We met with new immigrants and with foreign students studying in Israel.

**The main achievements of last year activities:** The previous year passed with great success, the atmosphere of study at the Beit Hamidrash was good. One of the main indicators of success is the number of students continuing to the second year - this year we reached a record high of 30 continuing to the second year of the Mechina.
• During the course of the year, we held two Shabbatot in the homes of the RAMIM. During the Shabbat the students strengthen their ties with the educational staff and are exposed to various communities (in Lod, Shomria, Kiryat Malachi and Rehovot).

• We participated this year in an event organized by the JNF to mark the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration and World War I. The event took place in the Azriqam Forest.

• As in every year, the 2nd year students published (March) an Issue of articles for the weekly Torah portion. The 1st year students published (July) an Issue of articles; each student chose his own topic to relate to.

• This year we added a new volunteer activity at the rehabilitation plant in Even Shmuel. A group of 8-10, 2nd year students, assisted the workers of the rehabilitation plant twice a month.

• This year we also started with the construction project which includes the addition of MAMAD (bomb shelter rooms) renovating the entire dormitory.

Program Evaluation:

The Mechina is measured every year by the Mechina staff and by the Ministry of Defense according to the following criteria:

• Dropout rate of up to 14% - only 12.5% left

• Over 90% enlist to the IDF - 94% enlisted (two students continued to Yeshivat Hesder, one student was exempt from service).

Students Individual Progress:
During the course of the year, each of the RAMIM in the Mechina holds at least six personal conversations with all of his students. In the sessions, they analyze the achievements of each student, the issues which require reinforcement and the future goals and tasks to work on.

Staff Discussions:

• Each week there are 2.5 hour, staff meetings. Both general educational issues and individual student issues are discussed and deliberated.

• During the year there are three days of discussion in which an investigation is conducted for each quarter. In these sessions there is a general discussion and specific discussion about each student.

• The timetable for the Mechina program changes 3 times a year according to the educational team conclusions.
Economically Conduct:

- The Mechina operates as an independent association. The organization has a certificate of proper management for all its years of operation (there is an updated approval for 2019). The Mechina also has tax donations approval - Article 46. The Board of Directors of the association holds meetings as required.
- The Mechina completed year 2018 with a budgetary balance. These days, we are working on preparing the annual budget reports.

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

1. Following the tragedy in Tsafit valley (April 2018), emphasis was placed on adapting the entire outdoors activities program of the Mechina to the rules of the Ministry of Education. The entire staff underwent extensive training in planning and leading outdoors activities program of the Mechina including first aid and safety workshops.
2. This year, we decided for the first time to integrate more students in planning and leading the activities of the Mechina - so far with great success exceeding our expectations.
3. We expect to complete the construction project in the coming months which will allow our students to enjoy the new dormitory already this year.

We would like to thank you very much for your support. Please feel free to contact us for any more information.

Weisblum Shay  
Mechina CEO