



MATANEL FOUNDATION
ACTIVITY REPORT – The Hachmey Lev Educational Campus

Name of School:	Hachmey Lev Yeshiva High School
Name of Director:	Rabbi Bezalel Cohen
Academic Year:	2017 - 2018
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Summary

Hachmey Lev continues to be unique within Israel's educational landscape, providing Haredi boys from all backgrounds with a high-school education combining religious subjects with core curriculum, leading to full matriculation and the possibility of going on to higher education and a fulfilling and lucrative career. During 2017-2018, there were some 75 students in the school, in 9th-12th grades, of whom 35 were residential students from outside of Jerusalem. The year marked the school's second graduating class, with nearly all completing full matriculation. Teachers were mentored in dealing with differentiated classrooms and helping students improve their study and literacy skills, and students received individual or small-group tutoring when necessary. Hachmey Lev's staff is immensely dedicated, and available to students beyond school hours. The Ministry of Education requested that the school open a 7th and/or 8th grade preparatory program in the 2018-2019 year, and this has taken place.

Achievements

- 1) Throughout the years, students had some 48 hours per week of classes, half of which were core studies. There were also sports and voluntary activities, and field trips focusing on Israeli society. Additionally, older students were offered assistance in preparing for matriculation exams and counseling regarding future options – IDF, national service, and higher education. Individual educational reinforcement -- tutoring, proficiency groups, special classes on study and organizational skills – were provided where necessary. Some 15 hours of teacher training in managing differentiated classrooms and promoting writing skills also took place.
- 2) During the 2017-2018 year, ten students completed full matriculation and an eleventh is currently doing his last exams. Graduates have gone on to either serve in the IDF, to study at Machon Lev – Jerusalem College of Technology, or to continue religious studies at *Yeshiva Gedola* (two students). This is Hachmey Lev's second graduating class.
- 3) School discipline is much better compared with previous years. Students' learning and literacy skills have improved through study and practice.



- 4) Both teachers and students are exceedingly dedicated. Students study a very long school day, from 8:00 am until 7:00 pm, and during 2017-2018, the majority of students also studied on Friday mornings. Homeroom teachers are available to listen and to help students 24 hours a day. Often families are unable to provide the necessary support because they are unfamiliar with such a framework, so the homeroom teachers fulfill this need. Subject teachers work intensively to close gaps, far beyond what would be required of a regular high-school teacher.
- 5) The Ministry of Education requested that Hachmey Lev open a preparatory program for grades 7 and/or 8, with the hope that many of the educational gaps will be closed during these years, bringing the students up to an equal standard with their peers when beginning high school. This program has begun during the 2018-2019 year, with a combined 7th-8th grade class of 11 students.

Please find personal stories of two Hachmey Lev students attached as Appendix A.

Evaluation

Pedagogic meetings that include the entire school staff are held twice a year. During these meetings, each and every student's academic, social, emotional and spiritual progress is reviewed and evaluated. Meetings with parents are held shortly after each pedagogic meeting. The progression of a student's grades throughout the year is another measure of his academic progress and of the program's success, as are matriculation grades for graduating students. Weekly staff meetings are held throughout the year to discuss a variety of school issues, including students who require special attention.

In a new development, the previous and new homeroom teachers of each class meet with the yeshiva and high-school principals at the end of the year, in order to go over the students and prepare for those who need special attention in the coming year. This greatly facilitates ongoing monitoring of the students.

Evaluation/follow-up is also accomplished through meetings between SAE staff and teachers, and by the Zofnat Institute for Organizational Consulting, Development and Research.

Advancement of the Program

There are several important future developments to be reported:

- 1) As mentioned above, a new preparatory class has been opened, with the hope that it will help students close educational gaps before beginning high school.
- 2) Rabbi Bezalel Cohen, Founder and Head of the Yeshiva, is known for his controversial opinions in the ultra-orthodox community. On the one hand, this has enabled us to actualize the dream of changing the lives of these young Haredi boys by opening Hachmey Lev. However, on the other hand, he has aroused opposition, which may have been a factor in Haredi parents choosing a classic yeshiva for their sons. Rabbi Cohen has informed us that he will be stepping down from his position at the end of this school year (2018-19). We are searching for a replacement, looking at both internal and external candidates, to find the best educator to run the yeshiva and help it grow and reach its potential. In the current year, Rabbi Cohen is continuing to work towards building the reputation of Hachmey Lev and recruiting students through his contacts in the Haredi educational world. Additionally, administrative duties have been restructured, and homeroom teachers are taking on specific coordination roles (Torah studies



coordinator, cultural programming and social activities coordinator, marketing and recruitment coordinator, preparatory program coordinator, matriculation exams and general studies coordinator) from the 2018-2019 school year.

- 3) Hachmey Lev is still seeking to expand, and so the campaign to raise funds for the new building is one of SAE's priorities. The new building will enable the school to reach its goal of two classes for each grade level. Given the success of Hachmey Lev's graduates thus far, it is clear that this new framework is offering important increased options to a population sorely in need of them.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Matanel Foundation for its support of the Hachmey Lev Yeshiva High School. This generous donation enables us to offer both advanced religious studies and high-level secular academic studies to Haredi boys, thus providing them with a variety of future options leading to a fulfilling and lucrative career.

Financial Report

The Hachmey Lev Educational Campus – Rent Costs

Project Expense	Actual (in US\$)
Rent - Hapisga St.	\$ 219,178
Total Project Expenses	\$ 219,178
Project Income	
Ministry of Education	\$ 41,096
Jerusalem Municipality	\$ 41,096
SAE	\$ 116,986
Matanel Foundation	\$ 20,000
Total Project Income	\$ 219,178