



"OFEK RAHAV" – CULTURAL ENRICHMENT PROJECT
End-of-Year Report
2025–2026 Academic Year
Submitted to the MATANEL Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kedma for Equality in Education and Society in Israel is deeply grateful to the MATANEL Foundation for its continued partnership in supporting the "Ofek Rahav" (Wide Horizon) Cultural Enrichment Project for students at Kedma High School.

During the 2025–26 academic year, Kedma implemented 38 educational and enrichment activities spanning arts and culture, science, leadership, civic engagement, sports and community service. **Fourteen (14) of these activities were made possible through the support of the MATANEL Foundation, providing approximately 150 students in grades 7–12 with access to theatre, museums, heritage sites, educational films, lectures and music workshops.** (See Annex A for a detailed list of activities)

The program complemented classroom learning while exposing students to new cultural, historical and social perspectives. It also created opportunities to discuss identity, empathy, resilience, inclusion and social responsibility.

Implementation took place during another difficult year marked by war and continuing crisis. In this context, carrying out the program and securing strong student participation was an important achievement in itself. The activities provided educational continuity, meaningful experiences outside the classroom and opportunities for reflection during a prolonged period of uncertainty.

As anticipated in the original proposal, longer-term outcomes such as increased cultural capital, confidence and educational aspirations develop cumulatively through repeated exposure over several years. The 2025–26 program therefore represents an important contribution to this broader process.

ABOUT KEDMA

Kedma for Equality in Education and Society in Israel works to advance educational opportunity and social justice for young people from disadvantaged communities. Kedma High School, located in Jerusalem's Katamonim neighbourhood, serves approximately 150 students in grades 7–12, many of whom come from families facing longstanding socioeconomic challenges. The school combines academic learning with cultural enrichment, civic engagement and identity development.



Kedma's educational approach is based on the understanding that equal opportunity requires more than academic instruction. Students also need access to the cultural knowledge, experiences and institutions that support confidence, critical thinking, social participation and future educational mobility.

THE "OFEK RAHAV" CULTURAL ENRICHMENT PROJECT

The "Ofek Rahav" project was established to address unequal access to cultural and educational opportunities.

Visits to museums and heritage sites, theatre performances, educational tours, lectures and artistic workshops are part of the educational experience available to many young people. For a significant number of Kedma students, however, these opportunities are not readily accessible because of financial and social barriers.

The project therefore provides structured exposure to cultural institutions and experiential learning that complement the school curriculum and expand students' understanding of Israeli society, history, heritage and contemporary social issues.

The project aims to:

- broaden students' cultural horizons through exposure to arts, culture and heritage;
- strengthen cultural literacy and understanding of Israeli society;
- foster empathy, resilience, critical thinking and social responsibility;
- reinforce identity, confidence and a sense of belonging; and
- contribute to students' long-term educational and personal development.

IMPLEMENTATION DURING THE 2025–26 ACADEMIC YEAR

Kedma delivered 38 cultural, educational and experiential activities during the school year. Of these, **14 were funded by the MATANEL Foundation.**

The MATANEL-supported activities were integrated into the school's wider educational program rather than treated as isolated extracurricular events. Teachers accompanied students, connected activities to relevant educational themes and used them as a basis for discussion and reflection.

1. Theatre and Guided Discussion

Students attended four theatre performances addressing social and emotional issues relevant to adolescent life:

- the inclusion of a child with Down syndrome;
- bullying and social exclusion;
- coping with loss; and
- the consequences of war.



The performances provided accessible ways to engage with complex subjects through storytelling and drama. They supported discussions about accepting difference, empathy, grief, solidarity and personal responsibility.

2. Museums, Heritage and Israeli Society

Students participated in educational visits and programs connected to:

- the Western Wall;
- Yad Vashem;
- Rosh Hanikra;
- Mini Israel; and
- Yad Ben-Zvi.

These experiences supported learning about Jewish identity, the Holocaust, Jerusalem, Israeli geography, history and cultural heritage. They also enabled students to connect subjects studied in school with real places, historical sites and cultural institutions.

Older students participated in a project delivered by Gesher, introducing them to different groups and streams within Israeli society. The project encouraged familiarity with diverse identities and perspectives and supported respectful dialogue about pluralism and shared citizenship.

3. Film, Lectures and Life Skills

A Cinema City activity combined a film screening with an educational lecture intended to enrich general knowledge and strengthen life skills.

Additional sessions addressed:

- drug awareness and the biological effects of substance use;
- resilience and responsible decision-making; and
- women's economic independence and the experiences of women affected by violence.

These activities addressed issues directly relevant to students' personal development, well-being and understanding of wider social challenges.

4. Music Creation

Students in grades 7–12 participated in collaborative music-creation activities designed to expand their exposure to different forms of musical expression. The workshops encouraged creativity, participation and teamwork and offered students an opportunity to engage actively in the artistic process rather than only as spectators.

BROADER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

The Ofek Rahav activities formed part of a broader school-wide approach that combines academic learning with creativity, leadership, civic engagement, emotional support, and community participation. During the 2025–26 academic year, Kedma implemented several additional initiatives that reinforced the same educational values.



“Recipe for Learning,” a weekly class for students in grades 7–9, combined cooking and baking with guided discussion about friendship, self-confidence, family relationships, and emotional resilience. Students reflected on these themes in personal notebooks, and the year concluded with a booklet bringing together recipes, photographs, and discussion prompts.

Kedma also continued to develop student leadership and civic engagement. Through the Activism Squad, students in grades 8–10 learned about social responsibility, power, and community needs, and then applied this learning by renovating a neighborhood garden, improving public spaces, and meeting representatives of the Jerusalem Municipality. Fifteen students also led a community tour as part of the international Jane’s Walk Festival, presenting their school and neighborhood from their own perspective.

Additional highlights included the school’s eighth annual Race for Equality, held under the theme “Education as a Driver of Change”; community volunteering and agricultural work; experiential leadership programs involving surfing, cycling, outdoor challenges, and teamwork; and a joint “Tikkun Olam” program with Shaharit High School that brought students from different educational backgrounds together for dialogue, creative workshops, and community service.

Creative expression also remained central to school life. Theater students staged “Dizengoff 2000,” a contemporary adaptation inspired by *Lysistrata*, while visual arts students presented final projects exploring identity, family, childhood memories, and life in Jerusalem. These and other student projects were shared with families and the local community at the end-of-year “From Idea to Reality” exhibition.

The girls’ futsal team also won first place in the Jerusalem district tournament, an achievement that reflected persistence, teamwork, confidence, and female leadership. These activities were not funded through the MATANEL grant, but they provide important context for understanding the school environment in which Ofek Rahav operates. Together, they show how cultural enrichment is embedded in a wider educational model that encourages students to express themselves, take responsibility, engage with their community, and experience success in diverse settings.

RESULTS AND EDUCATIONAL VALUE

The MATANEL-funded activities provided students with access to artistic, historical, social and educational experiences beyond routine classroom instruction.

The program enabled students to:

- encounter cultural institutions and forms of artistic expression that were unfamiliar to many of them;



- connect classroom learning with direct experience;
- engage with historical, civic and social issues in accessible formats;
- discuss questions of identity, empathy, inclusion and responsibility; and
- participate in shared experiences that strengthened the school community.

Participation was consistently strong in the activities for which attendance was documented. This is especially significant given the difficult conditions under which the school operated.

The most immediate and clearly documented achievement was the successful delivery of the program itself and the broad participation of students. In a year marked by instability, the activities offered structure, educational continuity and opportunities for learning, reflection and positive shared experience.

The project's wider goals, including increased cultural capital, strengthened confidence, broader educational aspirations and enhanced civic engagement, cannot be fully assessed within a single school year. These outcomes develop gradually through continued exposure. The activities implemented in 2025–26 contributed to this long-term process by widening students' experiences and reinforcing the expectation that cultural and educational institutions are spaces in which they belong.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

The following feedback illustrates how Kedma students experienced the school's cultural, creative, and experiential learning. While some of the testimonials relate to Kedma's broader educational program, they reflect the same approach that guides the Ofek Rahav project: broadening students' horizons through meaningful experiences, reflection, and active participation.

Confidence and personal growth: "I have participated in the program since Grade 7, and I feel that it has changed me over the years. It strengthened my self-confidence, helped me open up to people, and encouraged me to take part in trips and activities that I used to avoid. For me, it is a safe place to talk, share, get to know myself, and gain tools for coping."

— Student participant about "Ofek Rahav" program

Theater and inclusion: "Watching the play about a child with Down syndrome really touched my heart. At first, it is easy to judge people or feel awkward around someone who seems different, but the play showed us how much we actually have in common. It made me realize that accepting others is not just about being polite—it is about opening your heart and making sure no one feels left out at our school."

— Grade 7 student, "In Front of Everyone"

Heritage and historical learning: "Visiting Yad Vashem as part of our history studies was a very powerful experience. Seeing the personal objects and photographs of people who lived through the Holocaust gave me a sense of connection and empathy that you cannot



gain from a textbook alone. It reminded me how important it is to remember where we came from and to stand against hatred in all its forms.”

— Grade 10 student, Yad Vashem visit

Israeli society and dialogue: “In the Gesher activity, we discussed complex issues and encountered perspectives from different groups and communities in Israeli society. Growing up, you mostly stay within your own circle, so listening to people who see life differently was eye-opening. It taught me that even when we disagree, we can still speak respectfully and find common ground as part of the same society.”

— Grade 11 student, Gesher program

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC VISIBILITY

During the 2025–26 academic year, Kedma significantly expanded its social media activity, using Facebook and Instagram to share student achievements, educational activities, creative projects, community initiatives and professional resources for educators. Photographs, short videos and accessible updates helped present a fuller picture of Kedma’s work and strengthen its connection with families, educators, partner organizations and the wider public.

Between September 2025 and July 2026, Kedma published 176 items on Facebook, including 147 posts and 29 videos, and 140 items on Instagram, including 110 posts and 30 videos. This regular organic content generated substantial exposure:

- Facebook content received more than 550,000 views, while the page gained 454 new followers, bringing the total number of followers to 6,676.
- Instagram content received approximately 158,000 views, with 99 new followers joining during the year and a total audience of 563 followers.

Social media also supported Kedma’s broader educational work. Nine collaborative posts were published with teachers and organizations working in education, including the Council for Hebrew State Education, the Gila Project and more. These collaborations helped Kedma reach new audiences. For example, in the collaboration with the Gila Project, 81% of the exposure came from people who did not already follow Kedma’s account.

CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATION

The 2025–26 academic year continued to be shaped by the ongoing war and an unstable security situation, which affected school operations, transportation, educational tours and the ability to implement activities as originally planned.

At the beginning of the school year, Kedma planned to implement more than 70 educational and enrichment activities. As the security situation evolved, the annual programme was continuously reviewed and adjusted to respond to changing conditions,



safety considerations and operational constraints. By the end of the year, 38 activities had been successfully implemented, 14 of which were supported by the MATANEL Foundation.

Rather than cancelling the programme, Kedma adopted a flexible approach—rescheduling activities where possible, adapting logistics and priorities, and ensuring that students continued to benefit from meaningful cultural and educational experiences throughout the year.

LOOKING AHEAD

Kedma remains committed to continuing the “Ofek Rahav” Cultural Enrichment Project during the 2026–27 academic year.

Continued support will allow the school to provide regular access to theatre, museums, heritage sites, music and educational programs that remain beyond the financial reach of many students and their families.

Sustained exposure is essential to achieving the project’s longer-term objectives. By continuing to encounter new cultural settings, ideas and forms of expression, students can gradually strengthen their cultural literacy, confidence, aspirations and sense of belonging.

APPRECIATION AND REQUEST FOR RENEWAL

The MATANEL Foundation’s support has enabled Kedma students to participate in cultural and educational experiences that significantly enrich their school years.

This partnership does more than finance individual activities. It helps reduce unequal access to culture and ensures that students from disadvantaged backgrounds can benefit from experiences that are an important part of a broad and meaningful education.

On behalf of Kedma’s students, staff and families, we extend our sincere appreciation to the MATANEL Foundation for its trust, generosity and continued partnership.

We respectfully submit this report as an account of the implementation of the 2025–26 program and as a request for renewal of MATANEL Foundation support for the 2026–27 academic year, subject to the Foundation’s procedures and Board approval.