

menachem
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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On behalf of all of the teachers and children in our reach,

THE MENACHEM EDUCATION FOUNDATION WOULD LIKE TO SAY

Thank You
TO OUR FAMILY OF SUPPORTERS.

TOGETHER, YOU DONATED \$474,000 TO ADVANCE JEWISH EDUCATION THIS YEAR.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As 2015 begins, the Menachem Education Foundation (MEF) enters its seventh year, and we are proud to present this annual report as a reflection of our impact on the world of Jewish education. Seven is a symbol of completeness, of coming full circle; there are seven days of the week, seven years in the Sabbatical cycle, and a saying, “*kol shvi'in chavivin* – all sevenths are beloved.” While our work is far from complete, we have definitely reached a milestone from which can continue to move forward with ever greater effectiveness and impact.

The goal of MEF is to raise the bar of professionalism in Jewish education for Charedi schools worldwide. In seven years, we have established systems and structures that can allow this to happen. We have set up a Teacher Induction Program, which has trained teachers who are bringing professional practices to scores of classrooms and hundreds of children. We have developed world class learning standards for Judaic Studies which are becoming a point of reference for schools around the world. We have run programs and events that have educated, supported, and inspired hundreds of educators. Our spread on pages 4-5 provides a snapshot of our current reach and impact.

None of this could have happened without our staunch supporters, who are not only friends of MEF, but in essence are friends and advocates for our community's children. I would like to sincerely thank each of our donors and our esteemed board of directors for your unflagging support. In particular, I would like to thank **Mr. Abe Pasternak**, who, apart from being a source of invaluable support and insight, is truly committed to the vibrant wellbeing of our community. Finally, I would like to thank my dear friend **Mr. Alan Zekelman**. Alan has stood behind our work, most significantly but not only the Zekelman Standards for Judaic Studies, and is a true example of an *ohev Yisroel* and a partner in Torah.

As much as this juncture gives cause for a heartfelt prayer of gratitude to Hashem and a blessing of *Shehechiyanu*, it galvanizes us to take full advantage of the groundwork that has been laid and effect widespread transformation in Jewish education. It is a privilege to be working in the space of Jewish education, and **I am so grateful to the MEF team, our supporters and our constituents for sharing this privilege.**

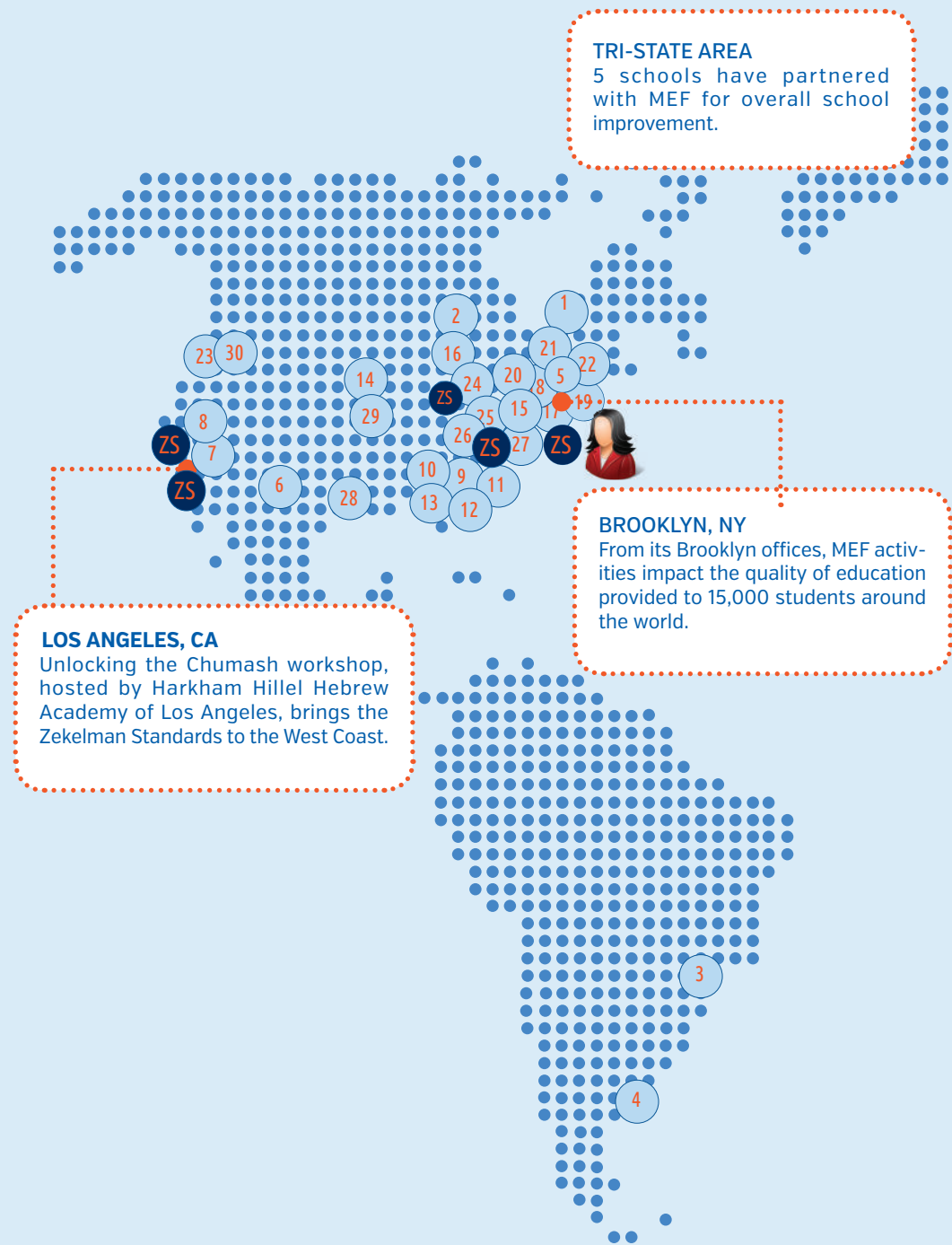
May Hashem bless our continued efforts on behalf of Jewish education with utmost success, and may all who are involved in quality education for our children be repaid in kind for their tireless devotion to the continued vitality of the Jewish people.

Rabbi Zalman Shneur
Executive Director

2014 AT A GLANCE

TIP ALUMNI WORKING IN SCHOOLS IN:

1. Montreal, Canada
2. Toronto, Canada
3. S. Paulo, Brazil
4. Buenos Aires, Argentina
5. Shluchim Online School [international]
6. Phoenix, AZ
7. Los Angeles, CA
8. Solano County, CA
9. Miami, FL
10. North Miami, FL
11. Miami Beach, FL
12. Margate, FL
13. Coral Springs, FL
14. Chicago, IL
15. Baltimore, MD
16. Detroit, MI
17. Morristown, NJ
18. Brooklyn, NY
19. Queens, NY
20. Buffalo, NY
21. Monsey, NY
22. Albany, NY
23. Portland, OR
24. Pittsburgh, PA
25. Philadelphia, PA
26. Kingston, PA
27. Myrtle Beach, SC
28. Tarrant County, TX
29. Milwaukee, WI
30. Seattle, WA



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

VA'AD HAMECHANCHIM

MS. LIZABETH GEWIRTZMAN, MA, Leadership Consultant

Distinguished Lecturer at Baruch College School of Public Affairs and nationally recognized "teacher of teachers," Ms. Gewirtzman has consulted for the NYC Board of Education, the Rochester City School System, the NYC Leadership Academy, and MEF's Inquiry Program and leadership training initiatives.

MS. GABRIELLE STEINHARDT, MA, Curriculum Specialist

A PhD student in developmental psychology at CUNY, Ms. Steinhardt has served as Director of National Initiatives at the NYC Leadership Academy, and consults for MEF on curriculum and program development and execution.

DR. SANDRA J. STEIN, PhD, Lead Consultant for the Inquiry Program

An internationally recognized expert in school leadership development, author of several books on school improvement, and former CEO and Academic Dean of the NYC Leadership Academy, Dr. Stein holds a PhD in Education Administration and Policy from Stanford University.

DR. CHANA SILBERSTEIN, PhD, Senior Advisor for Curriculum and Educational Programming

Educational director of Chabad of Ithaca and former dean of curriculum at the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI), Dr. Silberstein has over 25 years experience in education and curriculum development, and a PhD in experimental psychology from Cornell University.

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RABBI YOSEF ROSENBLUM, Yeshiva Schools of Pittsburgh, Principal

RABBI MENACHEM GREENBAUM, Cheder Menachem of LA, Principal

RABBI ZALMEN LEIB MARKOWITZ, Independent Educational Advisor

1➡8

GRADES FOR WHICH THE ZEKELMAN STANDARDS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

33

EDUCATORS GRADUATED FROM MEF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR BOTH NEW AND EXPERIENCED TEACHERS IN 2014.

1,500

APPROX # OF STUDENTS IN ZEKELMAN STANDARDS FLAGSHIP SCHOOLS WHO ENJOY STANDARDS BASED LEARNING AND DATA DRIVEN INSTRUCTION EVERY DAY.

WHO WE ARE

THE MEF TEAM

RABBI ZALMAN SHNEUR, *Founder and Executive Director*

A tireless activist on behalf of Jewish learning and professional education, Rabbi Shneur has an M.A. equivalent in Jewish Studies and Advanced Rabbinic Degree [Dayonut] from Central Lubavitz Yeshiva.

RABBI SHMUEL GOLDMAN, *Vice President and C.O.O.*

Co-founder and former C.O.O. of Intrasphere Technologies, Inc., Rabbi Goldman brings his business expertise as well as a long career of community service to improving MEF's infrastructure and operations.

MRS. CHANAH ROSE, *Director of Curriculum and Communications, Director of Teacher Induction for Women*

After nearly a decade as teacher and curriculum director, Mrs. Rose brings passion for education as well as meaningful communication to her work with teachers, schools and constituents at MEF.

MS. SHAINA SHAGALOW, *Administrative Manager*

A graduate of Beit Chana Teaching Seminary and a psychology major at Touro College, Ms. Shagalow comes from coordinating a staff of over thirty people at Yeled V'Yalda's ABA and Therapy Center to coordinate MEF's many activities.

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANTS

RABBI YOSEF ROSENBLUM, *Director, Zekelman Standards Project*

Widely esteemed educational consultant and principal of blue-ribbon winning Yeshiva Schools of Pittsburgh, Rabbi Rosenblum steers the content and development of the Zekelman Standards and acts as a senior advisor of MEF's educational initiatives.

RABBI MENACHEM GREENBAUM, *Leadership Consultant and member of the Zekelman Standards Development Team*

Principal of the high performing Cheder Menachem of Los Angeles, CA, and this year's recipient of the Milken Family Foundation's Jewish Educator Award, Rabbi Greenbaum contributes to the content and integrity of MEF's educational activities.

RABBI MEIR PERELSTEIN, *Zekelman Standards Development Team*

Curriculum Director and teacher at Yeshiva Darchai Menachem in Brooklyn, NY, Rabbi Perelstein combines educational expertise, a spirit of innovation and technological know-how to benefit the standards project.

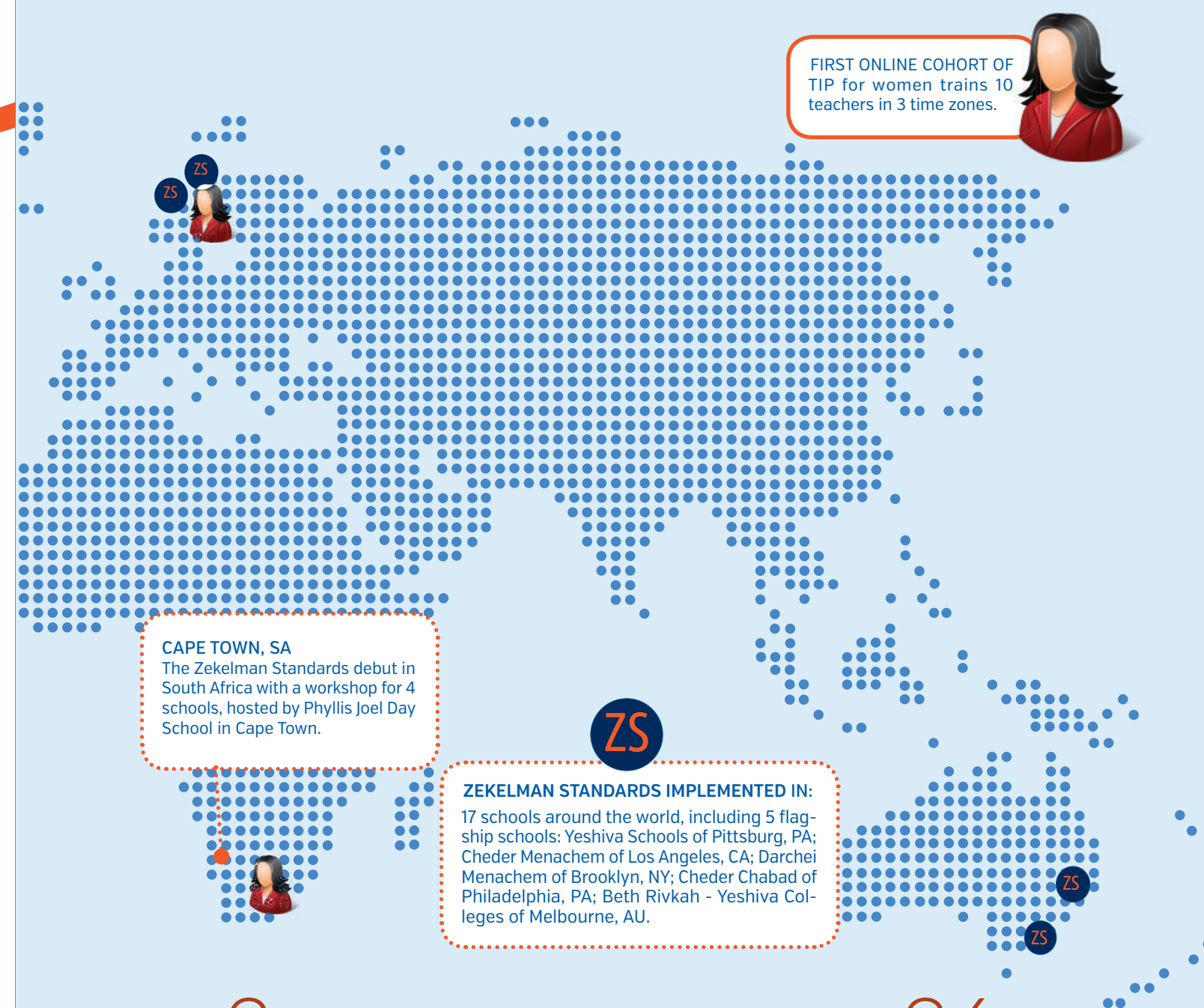
MRS. SARA ROSENFELD, *MA, Zekelman Standards Development Team*

Director of Curriculum in Yeshiva-Beth Rivkah Colleges in Melbourne, Australia, and author of numerous Judaic curricula and workbooks, Mrs. Rosenfeld holds an MA in Education from the University of Melbourne and is sought after as a presenter and educational and consultant around the world.

RABBI ZELIG SILBER, *MA, Director of Teacher Induction Program*

A master teacher of 5th grade in Cheder Chabad of Monsey, Rabbi Silber holds an MA in Education from Nova Southeastern University and is himself an alumnus of MEF's first TIP cohort and a JNTP trained teacher mentor.

PUTTING BETTER JEWISH EDUCATION ON THE MAP AROUND THE WORLD.



3
NEW SCHOOLS
DEPLOYING THE
ZEKELMAN STANDARDS,
BRINGING THE TOTAL
OF PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS TO
17

11
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS
FACILITATED FOR OVER
400
EDUCATORS FROM
AROUND THE WORLD.

26
NEW TEACHER FELLOWS
IN THIS YEAR'S TEACHER
INDUCTION PROGRAM,
BRINGING THE TOTAL
NUMBER OF PAST AND
PRESENT TRAINEES TO
125

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR JEWISH EDUCATION



“It’s these types of events that give us chizuk to continue!”

The Zekelman Standards for Jewish Education were conceived to develop Judaic studies standards that address what students are expected to know and be able to do in multiple Judaic subjects in grades 1-8. The concept was bold but simple. By introducing learning standards, schools can shift the focus from material covered to skills gained, from spotty progress to individual mastery, and from teachers teaching to students learning.

Early adopters like Cheder Menachem in Los Angeles and Yeshiva Schools in Pittsburgh helped pilot the program in its infancy and have since become flagship schools that attest to the program’s unique success. Rabbi Mendy Greenbaum, principal of Cheder Menachem and a key player in the development of the standards, introduced the standards to his school in 2010. With a significant investment in professional development and a willingness to take a chance on the promising new initiative, Rabbi Greenbaum managed to create buy-in from key players – teachers, parents, and students.

With guidance and support from MEF, the school implemented the

innovative standards in grades 1-4 and focused on getting the standards, standards implementation and assessments right.

“Standards are key to any learning community,” explains Rabbi Greenbaum. “Without distinct goals, lessons can become a blur of material to be covered instead of what they should be: teaching the skills needed for students to obtain mastery and become passionate, independent learners of Jewish text.”

Over the 4 years that the Zekelman Standards have been implemented at Cheder Menachem, the school has transformed their aspirations for all students to become self-sufficient text-based learners into action. The program

VISION FOR CHABAD SCHOOLS

Every graduate of a Chabad school will:

1. Possess the knowledge, values and strength of conviction to make and maintain a **LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO TORAH AND MITZVOS**.
2. Possess **BELIEF IN HASHEM** and cultivate feelings of love, awe and trust in Him, and an awareness of His detailed and loving involvement in our lives.
3. Strive to **REALIZE THE VISION OF THE REBBE AND OF CHABAD CHASSIDUS**, in their personal lives and in the world.
4. Be an **INDEPENDENT AND LITERARILY ASTUTE READER OF JUDAIC TEXTS** in their original language.
5. Have the **PERSONAL AND LIFE SKILLS** necessary to lead a self-sustaining life in today’s world.
6. Be an individual of **REFINED CHARACTER, SHOWING CONSIDERATION TO OTHERS** and extending both material and spiritual help.
7. Face his or her life with a sense of **JOY, CONFIDENCE, AND PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT**.

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VISION FOR CHABAD SCHOOLS

Dear Students,
As your teacher, I will strive each day to help you:

1. Grow in your **YIDDISHKEIT**.
2. Have **בטחון** and **אמונה** in 'ה.
3. Be a true **חסיד**.
4. Learn how to learn **תורה**.
5. Gain **SKILLS** for life.
6. Be a **MENTSCH** with **אהבת ישראל-ל**.
7. Be the **BEST YOU CAN BE**, in your own way.

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2010

Principal Training cohort identifies the need for uniform standards in Judaic studies.

2011

The Standards Project is launched under the leadership of Rabbi Y. Rosenblum.

2012

Mr. Alan Zekelman endows the Standards Project, and the Zekelman Standards for Chumash are developed and piloted in 3 schools for grades 1-4.

2013

The Zekelman Standards for Chumash are extended to include grades 1-6 and 6 standards areas, with 14 schools piloting the standards and providing real-time feedback.



INSPIRE

3RD ANNUAL "SALUTE TO MECHANCHIM"

How can educators be made to feel appreciated, needed, and reinvigorated with the importance of their chosen task? MEF's 3rd annual "Salute to Mechanchim" did just these things. A lavish brunch, teacher award, inspiring speaker, and video highlighting the impact that teachers have on children's lives together gave a message of thanks and encouragement to the 120 educators in the room. In the words of one third grade teacher,

THE EISENBERG AWARD

This year's "Salute to Mechanchim" was used once again as a venue to present one outstanding teacher with the \$1,000 Eisenberg Award. This year's winner was Rabbi Yehoshua Einbinder, 5th grade teacher at Yeshiva Darchai Menachem in Brooklyn, NY, who was recognized for his commitment to realizing MEF's Vision for Chabad Schools.

Dear Rabbi Einbinder,
I was speaking to "Dovid" about the concepts being taught in class, and I have to tell you that I was thoroughly impressed with the "derech halimud" and the fundamentals being taught to him. These are things that had not been taught to me when I was in Yeshiva, and the more I see it now, the more I see how essential it is for any student to learn in the future.
Please keep up the good work. I want you to know that he is picking up a tremendous amount of learning and he even seems to be enjoying the learning. We sincerely appreciate what you are teaching him, and even more than that, the patience that you display with him and the efforts that you put into him. You should know that it is paying off.
Yasher Koach and much Hatulocha.
"Dovid's" Grateful Parents

produced almost immediate positive results and has had a direct impact on student performance, says Rabbi Greenbaum. The Zekelman Standards enable a cycle of meaningful assessment, analysis and action – known as Data Driven Instruction – to take place, assuring the success of each student. Through DDI, the standards not only act as uniform, rigorous and age appropriate benchmarks to guide teaching, but ensure that actual learning is taking place.

"Utilizing this model of assessing skills, analyzing the data and then creating action plans for remediation has proven to be a tremendous benefit for our students," says Rabbi Greenbaum. "We are able to discover missing skills

and even special learning needs early on and are able to work with students right away." These early interventions and focus on each individual student's unique growth has greatly improved student learning outcomes. By continuing to demonstrate successful implementation of standards and DDI, building their teacher's capacity and investing in their student's success, Cheder Menachem has distinguished itself as a model of educational excellence.

It is these success stories that have encouraged others to invest in the program as well. When Mrs. Chani Okonov, principal of Mazel Day School in Brooklyn, decided to update her school's Chumash

Utilizing this model of assessing skills, analyzing the data and then creating action plans for remediation has proven to be a tremendous benefit for our students.

2014

The Zekelman Standards for Chumash are completed for grades 1-8 with 6 areas of Chumash mastery. 17 schools deploy the Zekelman Standards on 5 continents and the first standardized

assessment is piloted in June of 2014.

2015

Anticipated launch of www.ZekelmanStandards.org and new deployment program to bring standards for Judaic Studies to schools around the world. "Curriculum Bytes" will populate the standards

with a database of exercises for teachers to choose from. Standardized summative assessment to be administered online to participating schools for the first time.



Some of my teachers had assumptions about the students' skill level, but with concrete data we were able to see exactly where they were holding...It helped us identify skills that were missing across the class and students who were maybe falling through the cracks.

curriculum, she began to explore different available options.

"Unlike mainstream Orthodox schools," explains Mrs. Okonov, "our day school only has two hours every day for all our Judaic studies subjects. I realized that with so little time for learning, we needed to focus on skill-building to reach our goals and really teach our students how to learn."

When she came across the Zekelman Standards, they immediately appealed to her. "I had never seen anything like it. These standards break down Chumash study into actual textual study skills with proper scope and sequence for development." Rather than handing her teachers a set curriculum to plow through, the standards communicated the knowledge and skills students were expected to master in each grade and subject. The teachers could then create their own curriculum, instructional materials and assessments to drive effective instruction.

Before the 2014 academic year began, Okonov introduced

the standards to her staff during a professional development session. Teachers in grades 2-8 would simultaneously begin to teach Standard 4 [Comprehension] of the Chumash Standards and use the DDI program for support. Using baseline assessments provided by MEF, the teachers ascertained where students were holding and what to focus on.

"Some of my teachers had assumptions about the students' skill level, but with concrete data we were able to see exactly where they were holding," Mrs. Okonov says. "It helped us identify skills that were missing across the class and students who were falling through the cracks."

Though implementation has been challenging in the older grades, since they are missing key skills, Mrs. Okonov has seen an amazing transformation in grade 2-4. In just a few short months, the Zekelman Standards have helped teachers maximize Chumash learning.

Mrs. Okonov explains, "I walk into a Chumash lesson and the students understand the text. I used to see a lot of drilling and memorization and repeating after the teacher.



NETWORK

CHINUCH JOB FAIR

What do you get when you put over 100 educators in one room, with representatives of 26 schools interviewing dozens of candidates for teaching and leadership roles? The answer is one word: opportunity. At this year's 2nd annual Chinuch Job Fair, educators had the chance to meet one another and network, ahead of the upcoming school year. Participants were glad to note that "there are so many schools in and out of Crown Heights, and so many opportunities," and, on the flipside, that "so many young people are looking for a job in Chinuch." For a school leader, "It was a good opportunity to get visibility for our school.... The Job Fair made my job a bit easier."

KINUS HAMENAHALIM UMASHPIIM

High schools and post-secondary yeshivas have distinct challenges from those of elementary schools. For the first time, MEF gathered over 50 educators at the secondary and post-secondary levels, particularly those in positions that involve guidance and counseling, for a full day of professional development and collaboration. Presenters included psychologist Dr. David Pelcovitz and educators Rabbi Asher Farkash and Rabbi Mendy Shapiro, and round table discussions aired many of the sensitive issues that educators at this level face today. This event was arranged by a committee of educators and hosted/facilitated by MEF, and educators left empowered with tools to help teenagers navigate the emotional, psychological and religious turmoil that is often part of this stage of life.

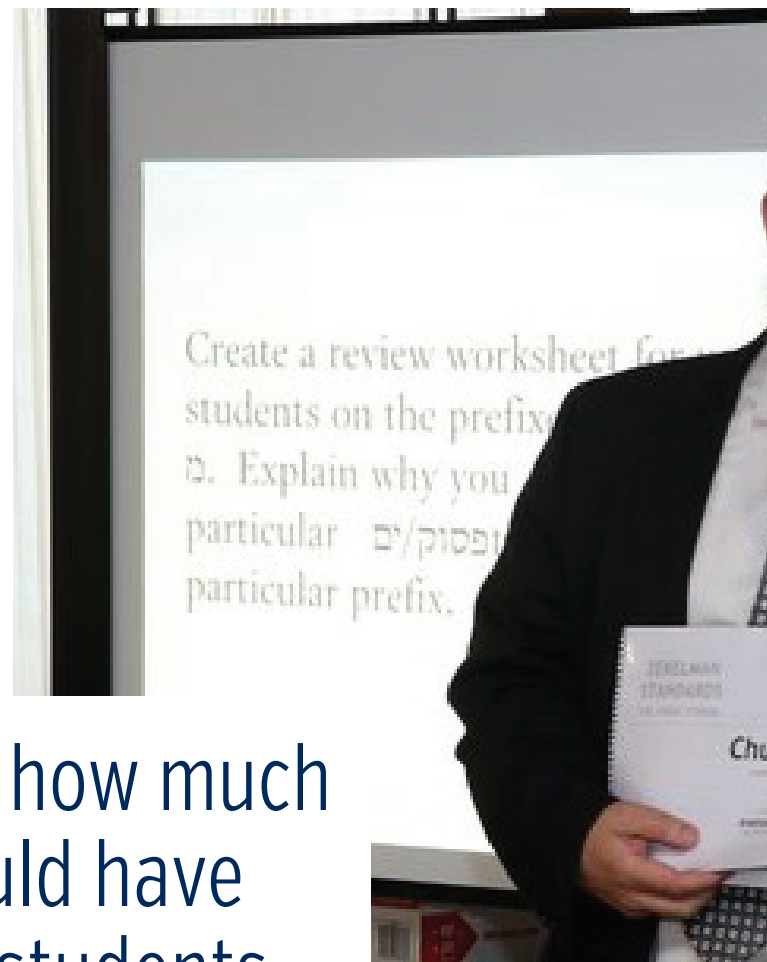
SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION

The primary decision makers that shape a school's culture is the board of directors. A healthy board makes a healthy school, yet they are the most little addressed segment of the educational community. To help serve boards in their efforts to steer schools towards professionalism and effectiveness, MEF launched a School Board Association and held inaugural sessions this fall. Board members representing five schools gathered from across the country, and were addressed by Rabbi Yehoshua Smukler, Head of School at Beth Rivkah-Yeshiva Colleges of Melbourne, Australia, and Mr. Mark Moscovitz of the NYC Leadership Academy. Topics addressed included "Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Excellence," as well as the role and expectations of school leadership.



EVENTS OF 2014

“I now realize how much more I could have taught my students.”



EDUCATE

“UNLOCKING THE CHUMASH”

Twice in Brooklyn and once in Los Angeles, “Unlocking the Chumash” brought a paradigm shift in teaching Chumash to over 150 educators this summer. Honing in on the vocabulary and language section of the Zekelman Standards for Chumash, the seminar demonstrated to school leaders and Chumash teachers alike how fluency with text is actually the key to independent learning. Attendees included school leaders as well as Chumash teachers from across the spectrum of Yeshiva education, who traveled from throughout the United States and Canada to attend.

TEACHER COACHING PROGRAM

Behind every great teacher, there needs to be a great coach. This summer, MEF convened a group of experienced teachers who would be in the position of mentoring other teachers during the school year, for two days of learning, discussion, role playing and collaboration about how to bring out the best in another teacher. With master teacher Mrs. Blumie Gorowitz facilitating, the teachers from five different schools emerged with new skill sets to not only advise but primarily enable emerging educators.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For continuing educators, schools and communities constantly seek to provide professional development to learn new skills and further sharpen old ones. To fill this need with meaningful sessions that are steered toward concrete take-aways that will benefit teachers and students alike, MEF has facilitated a variety of sessions both independently and within schools. In addition to sessions on standards based learning and data driven instruction, our expert facilitators have presented on textual comprehension, student engagement and more in a total of 11 sessions just this year. For educators wishing to grow and improve in a collaborative, stimulating environment, MEF is the new address.

Now students have the ability to look at text and understand how it works. They have the skills they need to know how quotes work, they understand the structure of the text and can look at a group of sentences and pull out the main idea.”

The program has helped teachers understand the steps involved in learning Chumash that they themselves perhaps never learned, such as the structure of the text, comparing and contrasting, noticing when there is an anomaly, etc. Teachers have found the skills applicable to any section of the Chumash and appreciate that they are relevant across the board. The students, in turn, feel empowered by the new Chumash learning system. It is no longer a burdensome subject filled with unintelligible memorization of Hebrew. With their newfound skill-set they can truly understand the text - figuring out the main idea in a passage even if they don't understand a word or two.

Mrs. Okonov says the rigorous standards are enabling students to succeed in acquiring academic and life skills and describes the standards

as a scalable system of Chumash literacy.

“Chumash skills are similar to other important skills, like language.

The skills transcend the subject matter - reading, analysis, synthesis of ideas - all of these are life skills that are useful outside the classroom.”

As she looks to next year, Mrs. Okonov hopes to expand the program, ensuring that classroom teachers understand all the aspects of the current standard area before moving on to others and providing the time, tools, and support to make the standards come alive in the classroom.

As educators across the nation navigate towards full and efficacious implementation of the Zekelman Standards, the initiative gets closer to fulfilling its promise for every Jewish child to find joy and success in their Judaic learning, giving them the keys to unlock their heritage.



The students, in turn, feel empowered by the new Chumash learning system. It is no longer a burdensome subject filled with unintelligible memorization of Hebrew.

TRAINING TEACHERS, BUILDING LEADERS

In the Charedi world, new teachers entering the field of education are often young Yeshiva graduates with little to no training in pedagogy and a nonexistent network of supportive role models. Without the knowledge of best practices or exposure to successful teaching models, these new teachers face enormous challenges managing their classrooms. Frustrated and disappointed, many quit within a few years. Others stick it out and struggle to find their bearings, compromising their students' access to a quality education.

To combat this problem, MEF created the Teacher Induction Program (TIP) to foster change in Charedi schools by advancing teacher effectiveness. Student achievement is at the heart of the program, which views teachers as the single most important school-based factor in a student's success. TIP trains new teachers in the pedagogical skills necessary to succeed in the classroom, through systemic implementation of core educational

concepts. It then provides a support system by pairing new teachers with carefully selected and well-trained mentors who work one-on-one with the new teachers throughout the year. The program has accelerated new teacher effectiveness, transforming good teachers into great teachers, and as a result has vastly improved student learning.

Rabbi Shimmy Gerlitzky had no prior teaching experience or any form of training when he faced a classroom full of rambunctious 5th grade boys in September of 2013. He recalls feeling overwhelmed and intimidated by the discipline issues that arose, and struggled to manage his class while creating a curriculum from scratch at the same time.

At the suggestion of his principal, he joined TIP, and was assigned a mentor who worked with him every week on key aspects of pedagogy such as classroom procedures, lesson planning, assessment, and differentiated instruction. The support and guiding presence of a

Every year, hundreds of new teachers enter the classroom, eager to make a difference in students' lives. Some succeed and embark on lifelong careers as effective educators. Others crash and burn. Studies have shown that the key factors differentiating those who succeed from those who do not are professional development and support.



15,000 STUDENTS, ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

ALL THE DIFFERENCE

WHO: Cheder Chabad was founded to service a small number of Chabad families in Philadelphia, PA.

WHAT THEY NEEDED: In 2012, the school had no building, no board, and was losing students.

HOW WE HELPED: With funding from the Kohelet Foundation, MEF engaged in an overall school improvement partnership that is still ongoing. With professional development, leadership consultation, and more, MEF helped the Cheder come into its own.

WHAT CHANGED: The Cheder now has legal status, a committed board, a trained principal, a distribution of leadership, strong literacy and numeracy instruction, outcomes based learning and teacher coaching. It is a model for any Chabad school of what education excellence – and determination to succeed – can look like.

FROM DREAM TO REALITY

WHO: The Chabad Girls Academy started out in Manhattan to service 7th and 8th graders who were not thriving in other schools, and then moved to the Crown Heights community of Brooklyn.

WHAT THEY NEEDED: CGA had enthusiasm, idealism, and vision. They reached out to MEF for guidance and support in turning those things into a viable, flourishing school.

HOW WE HELPED: MEF consultants assisted CGA with fundraising, governance and administration, connected them to an independent consultant, and built staff capacity through the Teacher Induction and Zekelman Standards Programs.

WHAT CHANGED: The school now has a viable infrastructure and grew its enrollment significantly since last year. MEF is proud to have helped this school fill a vital need in our community and guide CGA on the path to further growth and expansion.

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

WHO: Oholei Torah is the largest Chabad boys' school. Located down the block from Chabad headquarters in Brooklyn, NY, it draws a majority of the local community's boys as well as students from around the world.

WHAT THEY NEEDED: With nearly 2,000 students in Kindergarten through Yeshiva Gedola (post-high school Rabbinical studies), the school recently formed a new board to help tackle issues that seemed too big to handle.

HOW WE HELPED: Oholei Torah engaged MEF in intensive board consultation with our team of educational experts and specially contracted consultants.

WHAT CHANGED: Over the course of the year, the school board is adopting best practices in school governance and leadership, and has hired independent consultants as per MEF's recommendations to facilitate further work in school improvement.

2008

Teacher Training Program [TTP] founded as pilot summer program.

2009

TTP becomes a year-long certificate program in partnership with CUNY – Medgar Evers College.

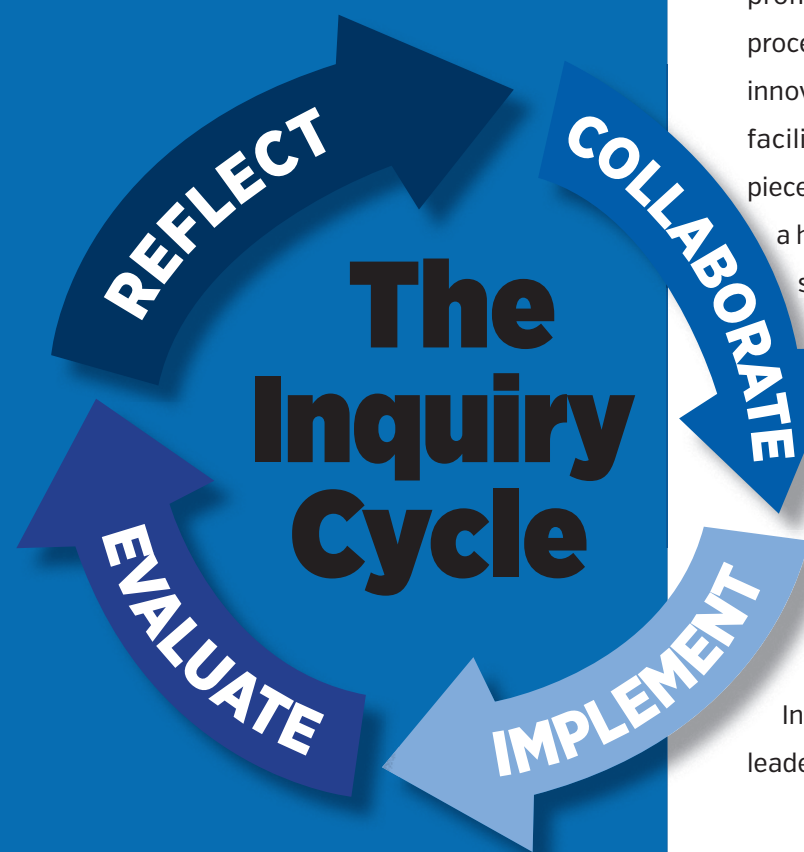
2010

DaniEl Kahalani Student Teaching Initiative introduces incorporates meetings with mentors and classroom observation into the TTP.

2011

TTP enters a partnership with the Jewish New Teachers Program [JNTP] to train mentors.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP



INQUIRY PROGRAM

Over the 2013-14 school year, the Inquiry Program gave schools the opportunity to partner with MEF to build staff capacity and distribution of leadership throughout their schools. In each school, an “Inquiry Team” of promising teachers formed to collaborate on the process of instructional decision making. Educational innovators Dr. Sandra Stein and Ms. Liz Gewirtzman facilitated the Inquiry Teams in putting particular pieces of teaching under a magnifying glass, building a habit of reflection and inquiry to build instructional strategy from the inside out.

11 teachers from 3 schools reached the finish line with new skills in setting an instructional baseline, lesson planning and learning progression, formative assessment and team learning. In Cheder Chabad of Philadelphia, the Inquiry Cycle is perpetuating under the leadership of a member of last year’s Inquiry Team, Mrs. Blumie Gorowitz. Other members of Inquiry Teams have been prepared for positions of leadership in their own or other schools.

seasoned teacher helped Rabbi Gerlitzky problem solve and improve his teaching. In his words, “Having someone on my team was so important in making it through that rough first year.” Sometimes just a simple solution and an outside perspective did the trick.

Practical solutions, like streamlined classroom procedures and an emphasis on skill building, have become a hallmark of TIP. Designed by educational experts, the program emphasizes impactful teaching methods for immediate use in the classroom. Teachers learn important concepts like classroom management, student rapport and engagement, lesson planning and differentiated instruction either in an intensive week-long summer course or in sessions throughout the year. These skills are then translated into hands-on application, actively improving each teacher’s instruction and thereby student learning.

Rabbi Levi Lipinski, a 5th grade teacher in Queens, says that his participation in TIP has had an effect “in

every area of my teaching.” Growing up in Argentina, he was very aware of the shortage of quality, trained educators and dreamed of an educational system where teachers would have the time and resources to be able to focus fully on their work in the classroom. By joining MEF he feels he is part of a changing demographic of teachers. “Though I am a first time teacher, I now have as much knowledge of pedagogy as many of my colleagues who have been in education for many years and am able to contribute to professional dialogue about education.”

That dialogue often centers around Lipinski’s newfound emphasis on building his student’s learning skills, and his focus on adding discipline and rigor to what they have already learned.

“At the end of my formal schooling, when I had to continue studying



Having someone on my team was so important in making it through that rough first year.

2012

TTP becomes the Teacher Induction Program (TIP), and existing structure of academies and forums is put into place.

2013

TIP for women is piloted in conjunction with Beis Rivkah Elementary School.

2014

TIP for women launches as an online program, with teachers from throughout the U.S. and abroad meeting in a live, interactive virtual classroom. The program is

awarded NCCRS accreditation through Maalot.



on my own, I found that I had not received the skills to do so and had to struggle to teach myself how to learn," he says. Not wanting his students to face the same struggles, Lipinski utilizes tools he picked up in MEF's academies and forums, regularly making sure his students have the skills needed to be independent learners. To this end, he relies on the proven success of MEF's Zekelman Standards and assessments.

Ms. Leah Brooks, a 2nd grade teacher from London, England, also relies on the Zekelman Standards which she was introduced to through TIP, calling them her "favorite part of the program." Ms. Brooks explains that standards based learning helps keep her focused and provides effective guidelines for student assessment. Having these

tools at the ready has "built my confidence," she says. "I can deal with challenging kids and keep the class under control. It makes classroom experience easier."

She also likes that she can apply what she learns right away and has already seen the benefits in her classroom. Whether it's changing the classroom layout so her students are happier or implementing a visual behavior chart, Ms. Brooks says the skills she's learned have made a world of a difference.

Having Ms. Brooks participate in the program all the way from the United Kingdom has been a successful new development piloted in 2014. For years, the TIP program was only available for men. In 2013, the MEF team started to lay the groundwork for a women's program to take place locally in Brooklyn, New York. The

team soon realized that simply replicating the successful men's program would prove difficult as it was much harder for many Orthodox women, with their many teaching and family obligations, to block out the time to attend long sessions and monthly forums. In the summer of 2014, the MEF team designed an alternative web-hosted program that integrated TIP's proven program with a more practical application for women.

The virtual solution proved effective in allowing local teachers to participate from the comfort of their own homes, and it had the added benefit of opening up participation to teachers in other cities and countries. To date, ten teachers – all in their first three years in the classroom – have joined the program from throughout the United States, as well as England and South

Africa. The live, interactive, online platform conveys the same skills and support that the in-person program delivers.

The success of the program can be seen not only in the growing numbers of participants and its increased reach, but in the way the program has become an admired and widely accepted component of the Chabad educational world. Multiple participants have stated that they joined the program because it was an expected requirement when applying for a position at a Chabad school. Principals have universally praised the program for its success in developing a pool of young, professional teaching talent. MEF hopes to continue this trend and develop even further into an invaluable resource creating the future generation of Jewish educators.

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ALUMNI AND

26
FELLOWS IN 2014
BRING THE TOTAL
NUMBER OF
TRAINEES TO

125
TEACHERS WITH AN

85%
RETENTION RATE,
TEACHING IN OVER

40
SCHOOLS AROUND
THE WORLD.