



AN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED TEACHING

Analyzing the need and prospects for an Israeli Institute for Advance Teaching.

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In its strategic outline of 2011, the foundation sketched out the idea of establishing an institute for advanced teaching. The idea was to create a professional body for mathematics and the sciences that would at the same time be a branch of the government where government policy could be implemented, an independent center of specialization, and the professional home of master teachers leading professional development in their field.

In terms of the foundation's strategy, the need for such an institute was twofold:

1. To integrate the various components of clinical teaching, which were developed independently, into a concentrated and coordinated discipline, i.e. establish professional communities of teachers, led by master teachers, assuming shared responsibility for the learning of the students of the participating teachers, focused on improving the response given to each and every student's learning. To do so, in communities they would be aided by diagnostic findings and video documentation of classroom teaching to analyze the links between teaching and learning.
2. To create a long-term professional infrastructure relying on the expertise of teachers and helping to develop the profession using practical knowledge and the professionals themselves. The foundation expressed its desire that, by establishing such an infrastructure, it could end its involvement and ensure the quality of ongoing processes after the foundation ceases to provide development grants to its various partners.

To make this happen, the foundation reached out to the education minister in 2013. In consultation with Prof. Lee Shulman, we also contacted Yad Hanadiv (the Rothschild Foundation) to join us. Together, we approached the Initiative for Applied Education Research at the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities to formulate recommendations for action. As a result of its recommendations, Yad Hanadiv and the director general of the Ministry of Education decided to cooperate without the involvement of the Trump Foundation and establish a joint initiative to establish generic professional school communities.

Since then, the foundation has maintained a dialogue with the education minister and his staff, the director general of the ministry, and those charged with the professional development of mathematics and science teachers. The discussions focus on questions such as: what will ensure continuity of the national program once the government is replaced and the foundation ends its role, and how can activity in the system of regional, discipline-specific professional communities be regulated?

To date, we have not yet reached a consensus on the need for, and interest in, the establishment of an institute for advanced teaching. If such agreement emerges, should such an institute deal with all teachers and stages of learning or be devoted entirely to mathematics and science? Ministry officials are worried that the establishment of a central institute would weaken its own activity and make university teacher centers redundant. Furthermore, they point to R&D needs beyond those of the teachers.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is the need for the establishment of an institute for advanced teaching sufficiently well-founded and convincing? What should be the major features and functions of such an institute?
2. Should the foundation strive to cooperate with the Ministry of Education in the establishment of this institute or act to establish an independent, objective body that would rely on the expertise of teachers and voluntary participation?
3. If an institute is considered unnecessary or impossible to establish, what alternatives would ensure the continuity of the national program and its underpinning of teacher expertise?

As **background** to the discussion, we recommend reading the following:

- A. [How is Quality Teaching Promoted around the World – Review](#)
- B. [Policy for Educating Teachers and the Establishment of an Institute for Advanced Teaching – Preliminary Working Paper](#)

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