

CITIES OF EXCELLENCE

A meeting with representatives of local authorities for a discussion on sustainability and continuity to promote and broaden excellence in mathematics and the sciences

NOVEMBER 12, 2018, 11:45-12:45, DJANOGLY HALL, MISHKENOT SHA'ANANIM,

Over the past several years, the foundation has created partnerships with 24 municipalities that have prioritized excellence in mathematics and science studies in their city. The ambitious goals, defined by the city Mayors, to achieve significant growth in the number of high school graduates having completed five-units of mathematics, lies at the basis of the programs the cities have formulated. The city pools national resources, invests from its own budget, and together with the foundation, focuses on strengthening teaching quality.

In order to improve the effectiveness of each city program and to encourage them to prepare for longer-term sustainability, we established four scaffolding structures:

1. **Learning network:** Two years ago we created a professional group for municipal education department directors and heads of the excellence program in each city. The network meets about five times annually for learning seminars and reciprocal visits.
2. **Training course:** At the request of the participants, a training course for the excellence program directors was initially held at Bar-Ilan University. The second cohort is hosted by the Local Authority Institute at Tel Aviv University.
3. **Consultants:** We recruited four advisors with educational experience in the local sphere (Yochanan Doron, Leah Dolev, Ronit Haimov, and Baha Zoubi) to assist in the cities in building work plans and releasing bottlenecks.
4. **Excellence Cities Forum:** We asked the Local Authority Institute at Tel Aviv University to establish a forum for Mayors and other senior officials, to serve as a professional club for learning and support.

Most of these scaffolding structures are managed directly by the foundation or in very close hands on involvement. Now we seek how to move the weight of responsibility to the professional community.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can local authorities continue to promote excellence in mathematics and science even after the foundation's grant period ends, when government priorities change, and the public discourse shifts to additional concerns?
2. How should the foundation transfer further responsibility to the professional community? Is it desirable to try and merge the four support frameworks under one umbrella? Would it make sense to house them at Tel Aviv University?
3. The professionals who lead the excellence programs are paid 50% by the municipality and 50% through the grant. How could the municipalities employ them after the end of the grant?

PARTICIPANTS

1. DRORI **GANIEL**, Deputy Executive Director; Head, Social Welfare, Education, and Community Services, Eilat Municipality
2. AVI **KAMINSKY**, Chair, Israel Union of Education Directors in Local Municipalities; Deputy Director, Education and Society, Hod HaSharon Municipality
3. SIVAN **LANDMAN**, Director, Cities of Excellence Forum, Local Authority Institute, Tel-Aviv University
4. MOISH **LEVY**, Deputy Mayor; Responsible, Education Portfolio, Modiin Municipality
5. MICHAL **MENKES**, Head, Education and Society Administration, Center for Local Government
6. HEFTSI **ZOHAR**, Deputy Mayor; Responsible, Education Portfolio, Beer Sheva Municipality