



ENGAGING THE MEDIA TO CREATE A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Reviewing the foundation's media strategy and discussing ways to mobilize a social movement around the excellence in teaching and learning of high school mathematics and science.

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In addition to its programs and grants, the Trump Foundation implements a media strategy designed to provide support and generate public momentum for a demand for excellence in teaching and learning mathematics and science. To do so, the foundation sounded the warning bell and pointed to the decline in students graduating with five-unit students and the alarming lack of teachers. In a second stage, it called on a young generations of teachers to rally around the goal of expanding the circle of excellence.

As a result of the recommendations issued by the Advisory Council in 2014, the foundation started to operate in different media channels to recruit parents and students and start acting. Today, media activities consist of articles and essays in the press, on TV, and on the radio, and extensive activity in social media. The Facebook community "Time for Education" (higiya zman hinuch) has more than 33,000 active members who exchange ideas and maintain a steady dialogue.

A digital magazine was established, based on the Facebook community. It quickly became the biggest, most widely disseminated educational periodical in Israel, with input from more than 150 members. Lately, the foundation embarked on some joint ventures with large media bodies to encourage students to opt for five-unit tracks in high school. This includes advertising campaigns, a large conference, and a children's series on TV. The activity has aroused a heated public debate with both supporters and detractors.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it possible to encourage a social movement to promote excellence that will continue to push this agenda in the schools and the public? How does such a movement behave, and what steps need to be taken to help it grow? Is such a move even possible given the criticism of it and the opposition to it?
2. Is it necessary to bridge the gap between the media's need for a soft, stirring message on reducing gaps, and the foundation's programs aimed at professional, pedagogic work, and how does one do so? It is possible to appeal both to the head and the heart at once, and if so – how?
3. How can the media propagate stories of professional achievement by accomplished institutions and well-trained personnel so that the public gets the sense that something good is happening? Is it possible to reach a tipping point in public awareness, when the public's impression of the school system is not always positive?

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

A. Documentation case: "[Time for Education: Cultivating a Social Movement through Digital Media](#)", Or Shemesh with Ma'ayan Alexander

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