OPENING SESSION: INTRODUCTION AND PROGRESS REPORT

Introducing the agenda and presenting the background and discussion questions

NOVEMBER 12, 2018, 08:30-09:00, DJANOGLY HALL, MISHKENOT SHA'ANANIM

Now, as the number of five-unit graduates in mathematics in Israel has doubled, the Trump Foundation is digging deeper to build two pillars: creating professional infrastructure for high quality teaching at scale, and strengthening the foundations of mathematics and science in middle schools. These two cornerstones rely on the previous achievement and momentum, and they aim to ensure continuity, stability and sustainability in the system and the public.

However, although this is a natural progress, these two steps are a challenge of a very different character and magnitude. After a thorough process of learning, we now understand that if we operate on an 'automatic pilot', it will be very hard to succeed. The formula that we have used in halting the decline and changing the course of the five unit trend, will not fit the tasks of infrastructure and middle school.

Creating intermediary organizations requires formal and institutional partnerships with government, local authorities and academia, and taking a step backwards from direct grant-making. In middle schools, there is a need to address issues that will be new to us, such as the goal of learning, content, motivation, measurement and organization. The threshold question is if it is appropriate and feasible for the foundation to take such tasks upon itself?

1. Is the path of collaboration with government to create umbrella organizations, the right direction? What are the pros and cons, and how should we operate to optimize the positive consequences and minimize the negative?
2. Is the goal for middle schools to bring Israel to the top 15 excelling countries in mathematics, a worthy target? How should the foundation position itself and what partnerships does it need to develop?
3. Do you believe that the Theory of Change and directions of activity that we propose are convincing, are based on sufficient evidence and hold a good prospect to lead to success? What is missing and what are the alternatives?
4. What are meaningful differences between the way we operated until now, and what is required now on? What capabilities are needed, and what should we do to develop them?

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

A. Working Paper for Consultation with Partners: Choosing Excellence in Middle School Mathematics and Science Studies – Philanthropic Roadmap 2019-2024 (B&W printable version)

B. Advisory Council Insights and Recommendations 2016

C. Middle Schools in Israel – Background Data 2017/2018 – Keren Dvir

D. The Trump Foundation from the Perspective of its Partners – Feedback from GPR 2018