



Education Reform: Making Education Work for All Children

Shlomo Swirski | Noga Dagan-Buzaglo

A u g u s t 2 0 1 1

מרכז אדפה מרכז אדוה
Adva Center
Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel



P.O. Box 36529, Tel Aviv 61364
 Telephone: 03-5608871
 Fax: 03-5602205
 www.adva.org
 advainfo@bezeqint.net

Board of Directors

Dr. Yossi Dahan, Chair
 Gilberte Finkel (M.A.), Treasurer
 Professor Ismael Abu-Saad
 Dr. Nitza Berkovitz
 Professor Yossi Yona
 Professor Oren Yiftachel
 Professor Hubert Law-Yone
 Professor Rivka Savaia
 Dr. Yitzhak Saporta
 Professor Dani Filc
 Professor Rachel Kallus
 Professor Uri Ram

Audit Committee

Attorney Ovadia Golestany

Staff

Executive Director: Barbara Swirski
 Academic Director: Shlomo Swirski
 Research Coordinator: Ety Konor-Attias
 Economist: Safa Agbaria
 Researcher: Attorney Noga Dagan-Buzaglo
 Researcher and Co-coordinator Women's Budget Forum: Yael Hasson
 Co-coordinator Women's Budget Forum: Maysoun Badawi
 Advocacy Expert, Women's Budget Forum: Valeria Seigelshifer
 Popular Education Coordinator: Yaron Dishon
 Office Manager: Mira Oppenheim



This publication has been produced in partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
The School System: A Weak Link in Israeli Society	7
The Main Tenets of the Proposed Reform	13
The Elementary Schools	18
The Curriculum	24
The Framework of Studies	31
The Students	35
The Teachers	37
The Parents	46
The High Schools	48
Budget Issues	51
Potential Pitfalls in Implementing the Reform	53
Bibliography	55

Introduction

We have written this paper with the goal of changing the public discourse about education in Israel, as the prelude for reform of Israel's education policies.

Our point of departure is that the current functioning of the school system perpetuates inequality and poor achievements among most schoolchildren, and that this has been happening generation after generation. At the same time, we believe wholeheartedly that all Israeli schoolchildren are capable of attaining the highest normative achievements, and that the school system can be changed to enable them to do so.

While most Israelis who participate in discussions about education focus on the issues of organization and management, some Israeli schools already in operation are proving on a daily basis that all students can attain and even exceed normative proficiency, and that Israel already has the expertise and experience needed to transform the school system in the right direction.

The two authors of this paper were active in the founding of the Kedma School in Jerusalem, located in the heart of the low-income Pat-Katamonim neighborhood, whose purpose was to give the children a high-quality education. Ever since Kedma opened its doors in 1994, it has produced class after class of students, most of whom passed their matriculation exams with the requisite qualifications for study in a university or academic college. Kedma graduates are to be found at various levels of academic studies; some are already pursuing advanced degrees. The school accomplishes all this in a warm, homey atmosphere that conveys social

solidarity and pride. We are grateful to Clara Yona-Meshumar and the teaching staff at this school for the inspiration they provided for the writing of this paper.

Kedma is not the only school of its kind. The Branco-Weiss Institute currently operates eleven schools for dropouts, accepting students who lost their way in the regular system. These schools, which offer individualized instruction, flexible curriculum, and systemic support, have succeeded in raising most of their students to a normative level, i.e., successful matriculation. We would like to thank Niva Hasson, general manager of this network, for her extensive assistance.

The “democratic schools”¹ also aspire to break out of the pattern of alienation prevalent in the official school system, through programs such as Dialogue and the Morning Hour, which foster positive social interaction among the students and between the students and the teachers. Although these are schools in which the students are carefully selected, the model is amenable to general application.

This paper also draws upon the experience of other countries. The international student assessment tests have evoked considerable political interest, spawning comparisons of the various school systems, focusing on those with the highest achievements. We are skeptical of the possibility of transferring educational models from one country to another for a variety of reasons, including complex factors that affect what happens in the classroom. Moreover, international comparisons have demonstrated that proficiency in international exams can be attained in more than one way. In any case, school systems are largely shaped by macro-political policies, and in this area there is much that can be learned from other countries. For example, the policy of detracking schools – ceasing to separate students by their achieve-

This document is the third in a series of Adva Center publications on Israel’s education system. The previous two:

- *Separation, Inequality and Faltering Leadership: Education in Israel* by Shlomo Swirski and Noga Dagan-Buzaglo. Tel Aviv: December 2009.
- *Privatization in the Israeli School System* by Noga Dagan-Buzaglo. Tel Aviv: November 2010.

All three publications appear on the Adva website: <http://adva.org/default.asp?pageid=5>.

1 This is a loose network of schools that adapt similar agendas.

ment level – is above all a policy based on the values of democracy, equality, and social solidarity. These values are universal, and are certainly applicable in every country.

We believe that what is needed today is not new expertise regarding “how to go about it,” but rather the political will to do so. We hope that strengthening the belief that this can be accomplished will help generate the will to make the needed change.

The School System: A Weak Link in Israeli Society

In recent years, the realization has grown that Israel's education system is one of its weakest links, on a level with the problems of economic inequality and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This awareness is based primarily on the low scores earned by Israeli students in the international examinations that compare scholastic achievements. Israel's membership in the OECD heightened awareness of the problem because now it is not just Israeli researchers making the claim, but a respectable international body, one that Israel worked hard to join.

The poor results of Israeli students should surprise no one. Those engaged in research about education, including the authors of this paper, have for decades sought to draw attention to the weaknesses of the Israeli school system: the inadequate scholastic achievements of a large proportion of the students; the deep social divisions in the system by social class, ethnicity, nationality, and religion; the disparities between schools with regard to the resources available to them; the steady decline in the status of teaching as a profession; the disparities between municipalities in their ability to support the local school system; diminishing budgetary allocations for the Ministry of Education over the past three decades.²

2 Among these researchers are Khaled Abu Asba, Ismael Abu-Saad, Majid Al-Haj, Nimrod Aloni, Nachum Blass, Haggith Gor Ziv, Yossi Dahan, Orit Ichilov, Dan Inbar, Yitzhak Kashti, Nir Michaeli, Avraham Yogev, and Yossi Yona.

Moreover, the subject of low – and very low – scholastic achievements of a significant number of Israeli schoolchildren has been discussed by educators since the 1950s, when research by Moshe Smilansky demonstrated the negligible number of Mizrahim among high school students. In the 1970s, Professor Joseph Bashi and his colleagues found an average gap of two years in math and language skills between students in elementary schools with mostly Ashkenazi children and students in schools with mostly Mizrahi or Arab students (Bashi, Cahan, and Davis, 1981: 458, 464). Since the 1990s, when the Ministry of Education began to publish the matriculation exam results by locality, the media have annually reported the large achievement gaps between affluent communities, development towns, and Arab localities, based on interpretations of the data made by the Adva Center (Konor-Attias and Abu Khala, 2010).

In some senses, the situation today is incomparably better than during the first decades of the state: Today almost all young people of elementary and secondary school age are in some educational framework. Nevertheless, the large gaps between schools in the level of teaching and curricula largely persist. Fewer than half of those in the cohort of high school seniors pass the matriculation exams, and eight years later just over a quarter of that cohort have enrolled in Israeli colleges or universities. What's more, it turns out that the 1980s findings by Prof. Bashi et al. about the two-year disparity between children in various elementary schools have not evaporated, but now appear in the results of the international comparative tests (see Swirski and Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009).

This paper sets forth a practical program to address these disturbing findings, primarily by upgrading the functioning of those schools in which approximately two-thirds of Israeli students do not achieve normative grades according to the Israeli Ministry of Education and the international comparative exams. The upgrading of these schools will improve the entire system. The paper recommends a series of practical goals, along with the steps that need to be taken in order to achieve them, with the emphasis on measures to be taken within the school and within the classroom.

The Corporate Emphasis that Dominates Public Discourse

Although educators have for years been aware of the weakness of the school system, others came to this conclusion only in the course of the last decade, partially due to the extensive media coverage given to the international student assessment tests. Among those now coming to this realization are prominent figures in the world of business and economics.

In the past, it was primarily intellectuals, educators, and academic researchers who concerned themselves with learning and education. These groups perceived education as an important component in the process of nation building and creating an enlightened society based on the western European and North American model. The new discussants – businesspeople and economists – brought with them new perspectives: From their point of view, education is above all an economic asset, as reflected in the concept “human capital.” In the past, discussions focused on teaching methods, curricula, and classroom or school dynamics, while today businesspeople and economists focus on aspects that might be termed corporate – organization, management, finances, productivity and efficiency.

The involvement of businesspeople and economists reached a new height with the establishment of the Dovrat Commission, called the “National Task Force for the Advancement of Education in Israel.” This was a public committee appointed in September 2003 by the Israeli government with the aim of “conducting a comprehensive examination of the education system in Israel and recommending a plan for thorough reform – pedagogical, structural, and organizational – and outlining a way to implement this plan.” The Dovrat Commission prepared the most comprehensive and incisive analysis of education policy in decades, and its recommendations reflected the new emphasis: The focus was primarily on the organizational aspects of the school system, treating it like a large corporation whose business performance was defective, and demanding fundamental changes in its management. The committee’s recommendations, although accepted and ratified by the government, were never implemented (with the exception of certain aspects of them), primarily because the government was unwilling to allocate the required funding.

In the wake of the Dovrat Commission’s failure, businessman Dov Lautman established the “Movement for the Advancement of Education in Israel” in 2008, in which Shlomo Dovrat was also a member. Many messages of this movement are

inspired by the Dovrat Commission recommendations.

In 2007, a report was issued by McKinsey & Company, a global management consulting firm to corporations and governments. The report was based on a study of the education system in 25 countries. Although Israel was not among the countries studied, the McKinsey recommendations have had a great impact on policy-makers in this country. This is evident primarily in the variety of methods used to attract better candidates to the teaching profession, in keeping with McKinsey's main recommendation. At the same time, however, the corporate and economic bodies ignored the other important conclusion reached by the McKinsey research team, namely that systemic reforms of organization and management have never improved the achievement level of students (McKinsey, 2007, 10-11). The report emphasizes that what determines the quality of the education is what takes place within the classroom – the quality of the teachers and the quality of the learning process.

In 2008, the "Israel 2028" paper was submitted to the government, written by a committee headed by two other businessmen, Eli Hurvitz and David Brodet. This document sets goals for Israel in various fields, including education. These goals were also adopted by the government, but again not implemented as practical policies.

Israel's membership in the OECD intensified the economic-corporatist discourse about education, because the OECD is fundamentally an economic body, as evident in its name – the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

In light of the makeup of the aforementioned committees, it is not surprising to find the logic of corporate management in their recommendations. Striking examples of this are the recommendations to manage schools as if they were firms independently run by the principals, with the entire system subject to systematic and precise evaluations of teacher productivity, based on the achievements of the pupils. As in the corporate world, the school principals would receive a high salary and have the authority to hire teachers at differential wages and dismiss them summarily if desired, bypassing the teachers' unions. The entire system is perceived as a kind of free market enterprise with parental choice of schools.

As noted, the Dovrat Commission recommendations were never fully implemented. And yet many measures taken by the Ministry of Education in the past decade

are imbued with the spirit of those recommendations, particularly measures that do not require significant additional funding. Among these: partial implementation of the policy of school self-management and increased autonomy of school principals; the establishment of an institute for training principals, which also provides training in management with a business orientation; allowing schools to hire teachers on an hourly basis or by personal contract through municipal companies or nonprofits; opening registration zones for secondary schools and recently also for elementary schools; moving to a system of evaluating schools based on the achievements of its pupils in comparative exams; establishment of the National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation (RAMA); instituting new standards for discipline and punishment, and greater enforcement of them. On the other hand, Commission recommendations that would have directly affected what happens inside the classroom and the school, but would have cost additional funds to implement – budgeting schools differentially based on the socio-economic profile of the students, reducing class size, and easing infrastructure disparities – were never implemented.

So far, the above organizational changes have not led to significant reform in the functioning of the school system. On the contrary, it could be claimed that they have contributed to increased separation and inequality in education. In this context, it is useful to recall the observation of OECD researchers: “Many of the reforms we studied failed to deliver improvement because they had little effect on what happened inside the classroom” (McKinsey, 2007: 32).

The spirit of some of the McKinsey and Dovrat recommendations are also evident in the wage agreements struck with teachers in recent years – the “New Horizons” agreement from 2007 with elementary school teachers and the “Courage to Change” agreement from 2011 with secondary school teachers. These agreements meet the long standing need to transform teaching into a profession that provides a decent income, with the understanding that the job of a teacher does not end when the students go home. Implementation of these wage agreements has also increased the education budget – the first increases since the major cutbacks made during the Second Intifada. Raising salaries and extending the school day do not, however, grapple with the key problem of the Israeli education system: the deep, pervasive inequality. Both New Horizons and Courage to Change are wage agreements, not educational reforms that change how students learn or teachers teach inside the classroom.

This Document

In this document, it is our aim to refocus public discourse on the classroom and on social and pedagogical issues. We believe that both the problem and its solution are to be found in these domains, and not in management of the system of education.

Our first assumption, and the point of departure for the discussion, is that the main problem of the Israeli school system is the profound inequality that permeates it. The most apparent manifestation of this inequality can be found in finances and budgets, which lend themselves to an economic analysis. The authors of this paper have also dealt at length with this inequality (see Swirski and Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009), but the primary inequality in the system of education is in the quality of learning, not in the budgets – the fact that students from different sectors and social strata are pigeon-holed into specific learning tracks, which mandate that they study curricula that differ in content and quality, and reach different end points. The main institutional expression of this inequality is tracking – the placement of students into separate tracks based on judgments about their learning ability.

Our second basic assumption is that educational inequality is the key to any national effort to resolve the problems of the education system. This means operationally that a national effort to upgrade the school system must focus on upgrading subsystems that hold the view that most of their students are not capable of meeting the normative requirements of the official curriculum. These students comprise, as noted, roughly two-thirds of all Israeli schoolchildren.

We believe that the Israeli school system already possesses the expertise and experience needed to carry out the required changes. Over the years, many experiments have been conducted here and globally on teaching methods that succeeded in advancing students who had been officially defined as underachievers.

Thus, the reform needed does not require new expertise but rather a determined decision on the part of the political leadership to work toward raising the scholastic achievements of Israeli schoolchildren to a level that until now was reserved only for a privileged minority.

The Main Tenets of the Proposed Reform

- 1.** The first goal: To increase equality in the education system by focusing efforts on upgrading sub-normative elementary and secondary schools. Thus, this is a pedagogical reform that adopts a universalistic approach, rejecting separate tracks for students from different ethnic or socioeconomic groups.
- 2.** The second goal: To support the public school system entirely from public funds. This means eliminating non-public sources of funds, which are common today in affluent communities, particularly parental payments, fundraising by nonprofits affiliated with the school, commercial school operations, and corporate support of formal and informal curricula – as all these channels deepen inequality between schools. Instead, public funding must be sufficient to provide every school with the pedagogical opportunities that are today available only to schools that enjoy external, non-public funding.
- 3.** The third goal: To base the entire public school education on a single core curriculum composed of the study of languages (Hebrew, Arabic, English), and math – the main subjects on which students are tested for the matriculation exam and which determine entry to academic institutions. Beyond the core curriculum, schools can choose subjects or versions of subjects appropriate to their values. The teaching of the core curriculum will be a

condition for obtaining recognition as an institution of public education and thereby eligible for public funding, including partial public funding now given to “recognized but unofficial” (mostly ultra-Orthodox Jewish) schools.

4. The first quantifiable goal: To raise the proportion of those who pass the matriculation exams, which afford entry to higher education, from approximately 40-45% of the age cohort today to at least 80% within twenty years.
5. The second quantifiable goal: To raise the proportion of those who enter universities and colleges from approximately 30% of the age cohort today to at least 60% within twenty-five years.
6. Following this, and as of the fifth year of the reform, to gradually expand the public system of higher education so that it can absorb all the new high school graduates who pass the matriculation exam and meet academic entrance requirements.

This expansion must give equal treatment to all the universities and academic colleges, and not, as recommended by Brodet and Hurvitz in their “Israel 2028” paper, by creating a hierarchical system of prestigious, less prestigious, and non-prestigious institutions.

7. The overall goal: To increase the proportion of those who pass the matriculation exam from 40% to 80% and of those who attend university or college from 30% to 60%, which translates into the following interim goals – a 2% annual increase in the proportion of those passing the matriculation exam, as of the first year of the reform, and a 1.5% increase in the proportion of those who enroll in higher education, as of the fifth year of the reform.

The Main Elements of the Reform

1. Classes in all public schools will be heterogeneous, without separation into ability groupings or tracks.
2. All schools will provide support systems for students needing assistance.
3. Schools will not suspend or expel students in any way – not to another school, nor to special education frameworks, nor to lower level groupings.
4. All schools will teach the core curriculum in its entirety.

5. All schools will bring the students to normative levels of achievement in the core subjects.
6. All schools will make an effort to draw connections between the school world and the daily world of the student's community by fostering a school environment that is open to the historical and cultural narrative of the local community, its language and music, the work world of the parents, the religious patterns of the community, and the norms and mores of its interpersonal and social behavior.
7. The underlying basis for language training must be openness toward the spoken language of the community, with a gradual transition over the years to the normative language.
8. An important part of classroom activity must be dialogue that is not necessarily dictated by the official curriculum. This activity should seek to create and maintain an ongoing sense of connection between the student in his or her environment and the school.
9. History and literature courses should be revised so that all students can identify themselves, their families, and their communities on the map of Israel – present, past, and future.
10. In the schools at the heart of this reform, the number of students per class must not exceed 25.
11. In the schools at the heart of this reform, Hebrew, Arabic, English, and math lessons will be conducted by two teachers, one of them free to help students requiring assistance.
12. Every 10-15 students in the same age cohort will have a social mentor who remains with the group for three years, taking responsibility for the students' functioning within the school and forging links between the school and the family as well as the school and the neighborhood.
13. The parents will participate in the process of raising expectations of their children and of the school.
14. The proposed program will be conducted with the existing teaching staff. Rather than adopting the policies recommended by McKinsey and the Israel Ministry of Education to recruit a "premium" teaching staff, the professional

skills of the existing teaching staff will be upgraded.

15. The new school must become the arena of a coalesced teaching team in which all the teachers work in partnership to accomplish the vital national mission of raising students' achievements to a normative level. Rather than a cold, alienating workplace with the sword of failure constantly hanging over the teachers' heads, the school must create a work environment in which the teachers enjoy collective encouragement, mutual support, and ongoing in-service training as part of their work.
16. The entire reform must be carried out in cooperation with the teachers' unions.
17. All the above measures together should lead to a rebranding of the teaching profession so that it will resemble, to the extent possible, the career track of professions such as medicine or law. To that end, the existing range of functions should be augmented by support staff for students requiring assistance, training and supervision of new teachers, training in other schools, adapting Internet enrichment programs to the school curriculum, responsibility for liaising with the parents and community, and more.
18. In order to realize many of the above proposals, the current school facility must be upgraded so that teachers have quiet corners for work and individualized instruction.
19. All high school students will learn one and only one core curriculum – the one currently in place in academic secondary schools, which includes Hebrew, Arabic, math, and English. Beyond this, schools will offer elective courses, including technology courses. The distribution of courses must be egalitarian and lead to a matriculation certificate. This will replace the concentration of innovative courses in schools located in wealthy areas and of vocational courses that do not lead to matriculation in schools located in development towns, Arab localities, or disadvantaged neighborhoods.
20. The Council for Higher Education (CHE) must become part of the process of upgrading education in Israel. Defining this role would require a separate paper, but it is important to note here that the CHE must assume an open approach on all matters related to the future of the Israeli education system, and adopt the principles of equality, democracy, and universality. The current

CHE approach of “our job is to provide frameworks for those eligible” must be transformed into “our job is to broaden the circle of those eligible.”

Implementation

1. The general and interim goals of this program must be anchored in legislation similar in standing to legislation that sets the fiscal goals of the economy.
2. This legislation will also set the required growth rate per annum in the budgets of the Ministry of Education and the Council for Higher Education. This document does not propose a budgetary framework. It should be noted, however, that together with the new expenditures, there are also areas of savings, e.g., eliminating separate learning tracks.
3. The reform will be led jointly by a team of ministers to include the prime minister, Minister of Education, and Minister of Finance, with the prime minister at its head and shouldering most of the responsibility.
4. The practical implementation of the reform will be the responsibility of a national task force directly accountable to the team of ministers headed by the prime minister. The task force will operate under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, but will be exempt from the ongoing work of the Ministry.³
5. The main task of the political leadership is to create and sustain national consensus around the concept that a public school system must raise every student to normative levels, while ending all forms of separation that rely on parental payments, and giving full scholastic help to students needing assistance, rather than providing help from outside the framework.⁴
6. The interim goals will be accompanied by appropriate budget allocations to be set by the Ministry of Education and the Council for Higher Education after translating the required resources into budgetary terms – expanding the teaching staff, additional payments to social mentors, preparing the school buildings for the new mission, etc.

3 In the Canadian province of Ontario, a provincial education reform designed to raise the level of achievement of all the students in language and math was instituted by a task force of 100 educators who met in the provincial capital, but operated autonomously out of the provincial Ministry of Education (OECD, 2010).

4 OECD researchers attribute the success of the Finnish public school system to political consensus. Regarding Japan, the researchers assign importance to the social consensus around the ability of all students to attain high scholastic achievements (OECD, 2010).

The Elementary Schools

At the heart of the plan of action proposed here are the low-expectation elementary schools. In the bureaucratic language of the school system, these are referred to as “under-achieving” schools because of the low scores of their pupils in comparative tests, both Israeli and international. We prefer to call them “low-expectation schools” because this is how they are perceived – by the leadership of the school system, the local community, the parents, the teachers, and the students themselves. Poor achievements are the product of an entire system that functions with a low level of expectations.

We focus on low-expectation elementary schools because this is where the large gaps evolve. By the time these students near the end of elementary school, a gap of up to two years already exists between them and those who complete normative elementary schools.

Although several schools have been successful at engendering significant change, such as Kedma or the Branco-Weiss schools, they operate at the middle and high school levels, by which time intense and prolonged investment is required, as these students have already fallen far behind the norm and developed low self esteem.

A school system that is democratic and egalitarian and instills social solidarity needs to begin in elementary school.

A. Normative Schools

Not all parts of the school system require upgrading. About a third of the students in Israeli elementary schools function at a reasonable or a high level, judging by scores their scores in an international test conducted in some, but not all, elementary schools – the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006).⁵ The same children also score high in the Effectiveness and Growth Measures Scale (EGMS) given in fifth grade in science and technology, math, and English (see Swirski and Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009, pp. 21-23).

Those who do not attain reasonable scores are primarily Jewish children from middle and low socioeconomic strata – residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods and development towns, new immigrants (primarily from Ethiopia and the Asian republics of the former Soviet Union), and Arab students. Ultra-Orthodox children should also be included in this group, although they take no part at all in the international comparative tests or the Israeli EGMS.

The official curriculum primarily addresses the third of the student population who do meet normative standards. These students attend schools that, for years, have served as the main pool for the future leadership in the state, society, and economy – the leaders, commanders, scientists, and managers. These schools are almost certainly the only ones in which the full official curriculum – and more – is taught.

In fact, these schools serve as a model for the Ministry of Education in developing the official curriculum. Their students provide the curriculum writers with the image of the “heroes” of the hegemonic narrative – from the graphic representation of the “pupil” or “youth” through the heroes of literature taught in the curriculum and the graphics that illustrate math and physics problems. Furthermore, these students generally serve as a standard for assessing the applicability of the curriculum – its interest value, the absorption limits of the material, and even study methods. In general these students are the guinea pigs for testing systemic innovations and changes in the curriculum.

As noted, normative schools attain normative achievements – even when not the highest – in both international and national comparative tests. Although these schools ostensibly do not need upgrading, the reform proposed here needs to

5 The tests are conducted in state secular and state religious schools only.

apply to them as well, for two main reasons:

1. The schools that serve children from the more affluent social strata have been leaders of the privatization movement of the school system. These schools were the first to institute “tuition,” i.e., parental payments in addition to the mandatory fees; they were the first to establish “friends associations” to raise money for the school; and they were the first to institute enrichment programs funded by commercial firms. Above all, these schools screen out children from “unsuitable” backgrounds in terms of income or ethnicity. These are the schools that created – upon the platform of normal Ministry of Education funding – a separatist, semi-private system, which provides a rich and unique curriculum funded by money from parents, along with donations.

Reform of the school system must return these schools to the fold of public education, and a sharp distinction must be made between private and public schools, as follows:

A. Private schools must be funded entirely by private money. We believe that Israel should have no private schools whatsoever, but since these are not prohibited by law (although they are obliged to obtain a state license), it should be of utmost public interest to ensure that they receive no public funding whatsoever, as they are separatist institutions that serve only people of wealth.

B. Public schools must be funded entirely by public money, including those services currently funded by parental payments.⁶ This means the prohibition of independent fundraising, whether done directly or through nonprofits that now operate in the schools. Schools that fundraise independently should be penalized by budget cuts from the Ministry of Education, or having their official recognition withdrawn, which would eliminate state funding altogether.

Notwithstanding this, the innovations introduced into these schools over the past twenty years should be examined and those found worthy adopted to serve the entire student population.

In practice, the education budget should be revised so that every school in Israel is granted an allocation, which – in addition to ongoing support – will enable it to

6 See the bill proposed by MK Zevulun Orlev to institute a “Basket of Services to the Student” funded by the state as a replacement for parental payments.

develop its own distinctive programs, provided that the school does not condition admission on selective exams and that the programs funded by supplementary budgets are open to all the students. The education system should be guided by the principle that every school in Israel must be able to offer quality, enriched curricula, and every student must have access to these – both students who enjoyed them in the past and those now able to benefit from them. This will help to create a sense of working together and will foster broad based support for public education.

2. The second reason for including normative schools in the proposed reform is the practice that emerged in these schools of having most students rely on private lessons, particularly in the final years of high school. Private lessons, which are expensive, are another factor contributing to the education gaps between students from different backgrounds.

It could be argued, of course, that this is a private decision of the students' parents, and that no one outside the family has the right or authority to interfere in it. It could also be assumed that private lessons are often just the expression of an artificially created "need" that does not afford their recipients a significant advantage over others.

Nonetheless, the Israeli public school system should be meeting all the students' education needs **within the school framework**. In some countries, including Finland and Korea, support programs for students requiring assistance are an integral part of school activity – and this is funded by the state. In Israel, too, some schools are already running scholastic support programs (paid for by the parents, philanthropy, or municipal funds), in the belief that the system must take full responsibility for its students' achievements, rather than passing on that responsibility to the parents.

B. Low-Expectation Schools

Close to two-thirds of Israeli students attain low scores on international scholastic achievement tests; some attain the very lowest scores.

This assertion is based on the results of the 2009 PISA examinations (Program for International Student Assessment) conducted by the OECD among eighth grade students. Based on their test scores, the organization divides the students into

six proficiency levels, and then presents the data in three groups: high scores (levels 1 and 2); intermediate scores (levels 3 and 4); and low scores (levels 5 and 6). In the math exam, 62% of the Israeli students scored in the low groups (39% in level 6); in science, 53% of the Israelis were in the low groups (33% in level 6); and in reading, 50% were in the low groups (19% in level 6).

Arab-Israeli students scored the lowest: 81% were at levels 5 and 6 in the reading exam and 91% in the math exam.

Today there is widespread agreement that this is the core problem of the school system. Researcher Nachum Blass called it, “the main millstone around the neck of the [Israeli] system of education...the size of the group of students with particularly low achievements. This group is larger than the average in the OECD, and the achievements of weak students [in Israel] are much lower than the achievements of weak students in the OECD.”⁷

The Problems

- Low and very low achievements compared to the norm;
- Learning in *hakbatzot* – ability groupings;
- A small proportion of students learning in high ability groupings;
- A small proportion of students who move from a low to a high ability grouping (especially in middle schools);
- A low proportion of students who ultimately enter a high school track that leads to a matriculation certificate enabling admission to an institution of higher learning;
- A low proportion of students who ultimately enroll in academic studies.

7 Nachum Blass, “Have the achievements of the education system deteriorated in recent years?” Taub Center, February 2011, p. 20.

The Reasons

- Lack of connection between the community experience and the experience embodied by the curriculum;
- Placement into ability groupings or tracks, and as a result, only some of the curriculum is studied;
- A tradition of failure;
- Low image of the students and their parents in the eyes of the teachers;
- Teachers having low expectations of the students;
- Low self-esteem of the teachers;
- Low expectations of the principal and the teacher supervisors regarding the teachers, and the teachers' low expectations of themselves;
- Little or no access to programs that assist students having difficulty;
- Low parental involvement;
- Minimal resources from the Ministry of Education and the local authority;
- Minimal resources beyond the budget provided by the Ministry of Education and the local authority.

The Goals

- To create and strengthen the connection between the school world and the daily life of the student's community;
- To establish a tradition of success;
- To follow the curriculum in its entirety;
- To foster fellowship, partnership, and esprit de corps among the teaching staff;
- To create a support system for students requiring assistance rather than expelling them from the system;
- To raise parents' expectations of the students;
- To reach a level of funding equal to that of the normative schools (i.e., the budget from the Ministry of Education and the local authority plus parental payments, donations, and corporate support);
- To raise all students to a normative level of functioning in the school environment.

The Curriculum

In Israel, as in most countries with a state public school system, the official curriculum is composed of the key components that define the national project: the national historical narrative, the hegemonic language, works written in that language, the civilizational sense of belonging (e.g., “western”), the civilizational other (e.g., “eastern” or “Islam”), the national symbols (flag and anthem, constitution, heroes), the national system of institutions (institutions of state, for example), the primary collective missions (in Israel in the past – settlement and fighting; today – growth, high tech, financial services), the more prestigious and less prestigious occupations within the national project (e.g., pilots versus security guards at the entrance to public institutions). In this sense, the official curriculum is designed to serve as a training ground for integrating young people into the cause of realizing the national project.

In many countries including Israel, getting all the students to buy into such a curriculum is neither simple nor obvious. This might be the case, for example, with respect to the Palestinian citizens, Jewish ultra-Orthodox citizens who do not identify with the Zionist project, or children of those who emigrated from Arab or Muslim countries.

Most of the two-thirds of Israeli youth with low scholastic achievements belong to one or more of these groups. At some point, these young people will experience a sense of foreignness in their studies: the language of the curriculum; the music played at events or in class; the religion or rituals; the careers that serve

as models; family patterns; the patterns of childhood or adolescence that serve as models; the occupations that serve as models; the family formats in recent generations that serve as models; the accepted norms of interpersonal or public behavior; the residential area – the neighborhood, type of housing; and patterns of leisure. To all these should be added the fact that the teachers themselves are often “foreigners” – they live outside the neighborhood, use fancy words, and represent a class different from the parents of the students. Together these constitute an entire way of doing things that the leading group would like to pass on to its children and at least to most members of the national entity.

For all these reasons, when children and young people from the group or groups leading the national project come to school, they feel as if they have arrived at an organic extension of their family and neighborhood. The school serves as a kind of boot camp, training them to function as adults on behalf of the national project. Their early, intimate acquaintance with the key elements of the official curriculum is a major component of their success in school, as scholastic success is not solely dependent upon the individual’s ability to cope with cognitive material, but also the ability to navigate easily within the topography of codes that compose the curriculum – words, expressions, stories, music, figures, heroes, and clothing.

For these very same considerations, when children and youth who are outside the leading group come to school, they feel as if they have arrived in new and often foreign territory. The fact that the official curriculum does not include them fosters a sense of alienation and foreignness, which impedes normative integration into the curriculum. The failure does not stem from inferior intellect, but from the fact that to advance in the normative track, they must assimilate new and different codes than those learned in the family or neighborhood, as if they were learning a foreign language. For many of these students, scholastic success means identifying with new role models and setting new personal goals, i.e., repressing old patterns and assimilating new ones.

In Israel, the official and hegemonic curriculum is the one that developed in the secular, European, Zionist framework. A slightly different version is that of European, religious Zionism.

For some population groups in Israel, the official curriculum means wading into foreign territory:

This is most obviously true for Arab citizens of Israel. Although Arab children study

in Arabic in separate schools and with Arab teachers, the obligatory curriculum is the official one, i.e., the same curriculum as for the Jewish-secular group that takes the lead in the national Israeli project.

Less apparent today, but still evident and very striking in the past, is the Jewish group that came to Israel from Arab countries, particularly during the first decades of the state. Some of these founded a new ultra-Orthodox school stream in the 1980s – Ma’ayan HaTorah Education.

Other groups could be added, particularly immigrants from the former Soviet Union in the 1990s and from Ethiopia in the 1980s and 1990s.

More generally, it can be said that students who have a hard time connecting to the official curriculum live in neighborhoods “on the wrong side of the tracks” in Israel’s large cities, or in low-income localities, whether Arab villages or Jewish development towns.

The Proposed Change

The change required must take place on two levels – **the school atmosphere and the official school curriculum.**

The School Atmosphere

Schools that serve population groups outside the hegemonic national project must create a school atmosphere that is open to the historical narrative of the local community, its language and music, the work world of the parents, the community's religious customs, and the community norms of interpersonal and public behavior. All these must find expression in the relations between the teachers and students, the school décor, the music played there daily or on special occasions, the receptive attitude of the teachers to the languages of the students and how they express themselves, the “heroes” in the curriculum, leisure and enrichment activities, the informal activities of teachers and students, the graphic images used to clarify terms or concepts in the curriculum, and the recommended books or films.

The Official Curriculum

A. Language

Some of the curriculum must also undergo gradual change, particularly in the fields of language and history. Language learning is probably the most important subject in the schools. It is intended to inculcate tools of expression and conceptualization for purposes of acquiring and various areas of knowledge, not only in school, but outside it as well, in the areas of activity and creativity of the adult world. Language skills are the individual's most important calling card.⁸

The magnetic strip on the calling card of most Israeli students does not open the door to the official school curriculum. This curriculum is based on the underlying

8 This is particularly true for Arab students in Israel, whose native tongue and the language spoken at home is Arabic, while most encounter normative Hebrew for the first time at school. Although the situation is similar for Jewish children who are new immigrants, this usually passes within one generation. For most Jewish students, English is the first real foreign language learned in school; for Arab students, English is the third language they acquire. Or it could be considered the fourth, because the literary Arabic taught at school is different from the Arabic spoken at home or in the neighborhood.

– and often overt – assumption that there can be only one language in the school world, the normative one. The result is a pattern of contact between the teacher and the student that, in the best of circumstances, can be characterized as infantilization of the students, who are required to “relearn” their own language, or, in the worst case, confrontational and persistent correction of the student’s language use. School becomes a process of relearning that is accompanied by rejection, punishment, and labeling of the student as a natural and ongoing failure.

Therefore, learning must above all be based on a large degree of openness to the various languages, even if they are all versions of the one language. Use of the normative language within the school must be a gradual process that evolves over many years, until high school. We note that beyond language learning, this also holds true for using language that is clear to the students as they study math or other subjects.

B. History

The study of history is much more than learning about the major events that occurred over the past 3,000 years. In studying history, students learn the narrative of the hegemonic project, the hegemonic categorization of the “good guys” (e.g., the Jews) and “the bad guys” (e.g., the Arabs), the division of the world into civilizations to which the national project wants to belong (e.g., the west) and civilizations with which it clashes (e.g., Islam). In studying history, students learn the galleries of heroes and villains, what is considered worthy and unworthy historical behavior. Between the lines, the students also learn which narratives are not respected or considered sufficiently worthy to be included in the official school curriculum. In other words, if language studies provide students with rules of dealing with areas of knowledge, history studies provide them with a map of identity and location within the human mosaic, particularly within that sector of humanity that lives in Israel and its geographic neighborhood. Above all, the study of history is intended to provide students with the ability to place themselves, their parents, and their surrounding community on the historical scale between the beginning of the story, the present point in time, and the open future. The result is the individual’s ability to define and locate him- or herself in the present and future.

The official history curriculum provides the most powerful telling of the Zionist national narrative, leaving out many communities from where most of today’s Israeli

students' heritage. While emphasizing the classic narrative of eastern European Zionism, it gives short shrift to Islam and the Arab peoples, the Jews who lived in Arab countries, and the Jews who came from the former Soviet Union countries and Ethiopia. Even among western Jewish communities, the United States dominates the narrative, with little attention given to other large communities – Argentina, Brazil, France, and England, for example.

History classes must change so that all students can locate themselves, their families, and their communities on the official map of Israel in the past, the present, and the future.

The best way for this to happen is, of course, to write texts that include all the communities in Israel, but there are also other ways of doing this, including the use of historical sources in the community such as the stories of parents or grandparents, books by community members, documentary and feature films, Internet materials, museum visits, the exhibit of pictures or art in empty spaces in the school, etc.⁹

C. Core Curriculum

All public elementary schools in Israel must teach a common core curriculum. This will allow all Israeli students an equal opportunity to progress along the main route of the school system, a route that leads from elementary school to high school, and from high school to university or an academic college, and from there into a job that requires employees with academic credentials.

We believe that for purposes of progressing along the main route of the education system, it is sufficient to have a “narrow core curriculum” (on the distinction between a “broad” and a “narrow” core curriculum, see Markman-Sternberg, 2009), which includes language study (Hebrew and English, and Arabic), math, and sciences. Beyond this, the schools would be free to offer other subjects.

The “core curriculum” is the central issue in discussions about the education system in Israel. This is due primarily to the growing differences between the curriculum studied in the Jewish secular and national religious schools, and that studied

9 The importance of language and history studies in shaping the path and categorization of school-children can be learned from the policies in Sweden, where immigrant children can choose to have instruction in their native tongue, which includes learning about the culture and history of their country of origin. The children of immigrants are also entitled to extra help in their studies in Swedish. The scholastic achievements of immigrant children in the Swedish school system are high compared with immigrant children in other countries. Unfortunately, as the flow of immigrants to Sweden increases, pressure has risen to reduce the level of support.

in ultra-Orthodox institutions. From the perspective of this paper, the issue of a core curriculum is secondary to the issue of the quality of the instruction and the studies: As noted above, two schools operating with an identical curriculum, whether secular, national-religious, or ultra-Orthodox, one in a neighborhood on the right side of the tracks and the other in a neighborhood on the wrong side, could lead students to different end points because of differences in the quality of the instruction and learning.

Nevertheless, the core curriculum also relates to the quality of the student's progress along the main route of the school system. Students who study no foreign language, no math, and no science – such as those in the ultra-Orthodox system – can never advance along the main route. Students who study fewer hours of math, English, or science – such as many in the vocational high schools (see Resh and Benavot, 2004, Table 2) – cannot attain the same achievement level as those in an academic track.

Concerning the elective subjects beyond the core curriculum, we believe that both the school and the students should have the right to choose, at least in the higher grades.

Based on this format, the study of history, which we examined above, would be an elective, and every school presumably will choose to emphasize what is distinctive to it. Nevertheless, all students should be exposed to the rich human diversity of Israeli society.

The Framework of Studies

Studies will take place in heterogeneous classes, without tracking or ability groupings.

The normative operation of school combines the transmission of knowledge from teachers to students, grading, and the ongoing categorization of each student according to his or her absorption of the material. The curriculum is composed of chapters of knowledge studied at set time intervals; at the conclusion of every chapter or time interval, the teachers test their students, score them, and pigeon-hole them, whether formally or informally, into categories – “quality groups,” in the blunt language of the Israel Defense Forces.

In principle, the ever-present test can be used to examine the readiness of the students to move on to the next chapter of knowledge. In practice, however, the test often serves as a way to screen students for placement into learning tracks according to their abilities, as judged by the teachers. The school system is not a level playing field on which all students advance together, side by side – it is a field separated into tracks: Grouping A, B, and C in elementary school education; academic and vocational tracks in secondary schools; matriculation track and MABAR (an acronym for “Regular Matriculation Track,” – a less demanding track); and matriculation exams of 3, 4 or 5 units in senior high school. These tracks differ in the curriculum covered, the depth of the material studied, the quality of the teaching, and ultimately the level of achievement. From the moment tracking is instituted, many teachers adjust their work in accordance with the tracking.

Tracking is not necessary or “natural,” as many believe. Like most of the school system, it is a political-social policy rooted in historical measures: Ability grouping was instituted in the early 1960s in Israel in the context of the failure of schools located in the communities of Mizrahi Jews – Jewish immigrants from Arab countries – and the fear at the time that this failure would alienate the immigrants from the state leadership. Rather than invest in upgrading those schools, the state chose the easier solution – dividing the students into three levels, a division that allowed for the nurturing of the select minority within Ability Group A. At long last in the late 1980s, the Ministry of Education realized the damage of ability groupings and recommended their dismantling. Similarly, a decision was made in the 1960s to expand the vocational track in order to provide Mizrahi students with a less demanding track in high school – rather than upgrading the elementary schools so that all their graduates could enter an academic track. These measures, initially thought to be temporary, became permanent solutions, and they condemned generations of Mizrahi students and children of new immigrants from third world countries to study in tracks that do not lead to high scholastic achievements.

Israel is no exception: Many countries engage in tracking. But today there is increasing consensus that the policy of tracking not only harms many students, but is one of the primary factors in low achievement levels of state school systems. The OECD cites this in all its reports: For example, in an OECD paper prepared for the United States, whose students scored low in the PISA, the OECD researchers noted that countries with no tracking system score higher on international tests. They singled out Canada, in which the political-public expectation is that all students succeed; and Finland, in which there is political consensus that all students should learn together, including those in need of special education; and Japan, in which the basic assumption is that all or almost all the students can attain high scholastic achievements. “...the more schools group students by ability across all subjects, and the more frequently schools transfer students to other schools because of students’ low academic achievement, behavioral problems or special learning needs, the lower the school systems’ overall performance...” (OECD 2010: 47).

Therefore, it is our recommendation that the entire structure of groupings and tracks be dismantled, and that the school system be based on classes in which all the students advance together – with ongoing support for those who require assistance to meet the norm.

This is consistent with the recommendations of various government and non-state bodies. The Israeli Ministry of Education today prohibits the division of students into ability groupings until middle school level (seventh grade), and then only in the second half of the school year. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Education does not enforce this directive.¹⁰

The OECD recommends limiting divisions into ability groupings as much as possible. In a policy statement issued in 2009, it points to the fact that the school systems that excel in quality and equality adopted heterogeneous teaching systems (classes with students at various levels of proficiency). The OECD also notes that countries that use tracking from the early grades have a high degree of inequality among schools, and a high correlation between socioeconomic status and scholastic achievement (OECD: 2009, 78).

Furthermore, in some countries that head the list of scholastic achievement in international comparative terms, particularly Finland and Japan, schoolchildren are not separated into ability groupings (OECD, 2010). In Finland every school has at least one teacher who specializes in working with students needing assistance or having learning disabilities, and they provide ongoing help to these students without separating them from their classmates. One byproduct is financial savings as a result of not maintaining separate frameworks for these students. In Japan, students who excel are encouraged to give individual help to students having difficulty. The dominant principle is that all students are capable of achieving the highest levels of learning. In Korea, regular teachers support students needing assistance, while they maintain a framework that unites the entire class.

Throughout this paper, we have referred to at least three ways to avoid having to divide the class into ability groupings: one way is to have the core subjects – Hebrew, Arabic, math, and English – taught by a pair of teachers, with one pro-

¹⁰ Ministry of Education, Director-General Directive, 54/8 dated 3 March 1994. This directive allows ability groupings only as of the second half of grade 7. It calls for the allocation of more school hours for students in middle and low groupings, and the creation of a system for advancing these students. The directive also calls for testing at least twice a year to enable students to move into a higher ability grouping.

viding individual help during the course of the lesson. A second way is to reduce the number of students per class, to enable a personal connection between the teacher and the students. And a third way is to create the position of “social mentor,” who can help students cope with the range of problems that cause some to find it difficult to grapple with schoolwork.

Considerable expertise has accumulated in Israel about how to handle separate frameworks for students for whom expectations are low. This expertise should be conveyed to teachers in each and every school, to help cope with the needs of these students **within the class**, without separating them into ability groupings or separate tracks and without sending them to special education classes (with the exception of severe cases). The experience of various schools, including Kedma in Jerusalem and the Branco-Weiss programs, suggests that it is better for the teaching to be done by regular teachers who received extra training in the art of coping with special needs, because the training of special education teachers generally presumes the need for separate studies.

It should also be noted that the investment of resources in advancing all students from within the regular classroom and school will reduce the national outlay for education, because some out-of-school expenditures, such as private lessons, will become superfluous.

The Students

The most important task of the schools participating in the proposed reform is to construct a social climate that is supportive, encouraging, and conducive to social solidarity, in order to transform the school from a “foreign territory” to the home turf of each and every student.

The school needs to foster new and better self-expectations from every student. The new self-image should be of a person who is an integral and legitimate member of the circle of citizens from whom society draws its leaders, managers, and commanders. And this circle will be an expansion of what has been termed “the leading groups.” The addition of low-expectation students to the circle will democratize the entire society.

In other words, the reform proposed here will become the cornerstone of a more democratic and egalitarian social system. This society will no longer have a “thin layer of leadership,” but most of its members will have the necessary knowledge and training to participate in society’s main activities – its matters of state, economics, social action, and culture.

To enable construction of the new school experience, change must take place in the existing social structure of the school – currently composed of large classes in which a student can drift in virtual anonymity, with no significant connection to teachers or schoolmates.

We list here several major components of a very different school experience:

1. An important part of school must be the creation of dialogue, which is not necessarily dictated by the official curriculum. The purpose of this dialogue is to create and maintain a sense of connection between the student and his or her environment, and between the school and the “foreign” culture of the student. This is not an undefined, diffuse activity, but one that needs to be structured and very carefully prepared. It includes the placement of subjects under study into their social, cultural, historical, or current-events/geographical context in which students can locate themselves.
2. The normative class at the heart of this reform must be no larger than 25 students all told.
3. Every 10-15 students in the same age cohort will have a social mentor who remains with the group for three years. This mentor will be discussed more fully below.
4. Another way to enhance the intimacy and sense of belonging is to schedule classes so that teachers remain in the same classroom for many of their teaching hours, rather than have a constant turnover of teachers. This idea is currently being advanced in the Branco-Weiss schools.
5. Another idea that can help create an atmosphere of familiarity and warmth is also currently implemented in the Branco-Weiss schools. The school is divided into small clusters called “homes”: There is a home of grades 7 and 8, a home of grades 9 and 10, etc., with each home having a principal, coordinators, and counselors. This helps break down the huge school structure into smaller units in which every student can have a sense of belonging.
6. Students will become active partners in the school. They study about the rights and obligations of students; they are involved in social action; they give support to each other.

Note: We believe that a more meaningful connection between the official school world and the day-to-day life of the student, combined with a corrective experience and enhanced educational interest, will together cope successfully with a problem of major concern to many teachers and parents, that of violence.

The Teachers

Many of those trying to grapple with the problem of the poor scholastic achievements of Israeli students in the international comparative tests tend to focus on one recommendation – replacing the existing teaching staff, or a large part of it, with better teachers.

This is also one of the main recommendations of the McKinsey consulting firm in its 2007 report on educational quality in 25 different countries (not including Israel). The report noted that the common denominator of all the school systems with high scholastic achievements was the teaching staff, selected from individuals with the highest formal achievements (McKinsey: 2007: 17). The heads of Israel's education system were impressed by the McKinsey recommendation, initiating several projects following their lead.

One obvious question, however, is what is meant by those who are pinning their hopes on a “better” teaching staff? There are several possibilities:

“Better” might mean a teaching staff *with a higher level of formal education*. For example, one common explanation of the education gaps that developed in the first decades after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 between the schools for the children of veterans and the schools for immigrant children was that most of the teachers in the schools for immigrant children lacked teaching credentials; later, these teachers were graduates of teachers' seminaries, not universities. Today, almost all teachers are certified to teach and almost all have at least a bachelor's degree.

“Better” could also be translated into *a more experienced* teaching staff. Thus, another common explanation for the gaps that prevailed in Israel in the past was that the teachers in poor neighborhoods, development towns, and Arab localities lacked experience.

“Better” might be construed as a teaching staff *with more formal achievements*. This might mean, for example, that their matriculation scores after high school were among the highest 5, 10, or 25 percentiles. Given the current conditions in Israel (and in most other countries), this would mean that the teaching staff would come from the upper class – those whose parents have the highest income levels, who get the best education and therefore attain the highest formal achievements.

Today there are countries like Canada and Germany that recruit students for teaching seminaries from among the top third of high school graduates; other countries, including Finland and Japan, also recruit excellent students by various measures, including high salaries that make teaching an attractive profession: In Finland in 2007, there were ten candidates for every teaching position, and seven in Japan; in Germany, teachers’ salaries are among the highest in the OECD (OECD, 2010).

Finally, “better” might mean people *who have proven ability in other areas of activity*. Lately, for example, programs have targeted workers in high tech, the most appealing branch of the Israeli economy over the past two decades, seeking to recruit them as teachers.

How can one replace the teaching staff, or a significant part of it? Here, too, there are several possibilities:

One possibility is to make the entrance requirements to teaching seminaries and schools of education in the colleges and universities more stringent. As noted, this was a McKinsey recommendation.

A second possibility is to hold recruitment campaigns for teachers in groups or sectors defined as “high quality,” such as students of the exact sciences or engineering, high tech workers, or employees of financial institutions. Both the United States and Israel have introduced programs to recruit teachers from those with potential or demonstrated ability in various fields, primarily in the corporate and academic worlds, such as “Teach for America” in the United States, “Teach for All” in England, and “Teach for Israel” in Israel.

A *third* possibility is to expedite the dismissal of current teachers, which would entail circumventing the teachers' unions, in the hope that after a wave of dismissals, some of these would be replaced by "better" teachers. The McKinsey report found that school systems with the highest scholastic achievements find ways to dismiss teachers with poor performance (i.e., teachers whose students scored poorly; McKinsey, 2007: 20). Note that the New Horizons program, approved by the Israel Finance Ministry and the teachers' unions, did institute new dismissal procedures: Now the school principal, not the supervisor representing the Ministry of Education, decides on the dismissal; the process was shortened, and the procedures which had previously protected the teachers were eliminated or abridged.¹¹

The idea of changing the entire teaching staff or a significant part of it raises two problems, one practical and the other ethical. On the practical level, if there is a serious desire to upgrade the entire school system, tens of thousands of teachers will have to be recruited who are "better" than the current lot. For the sake of argument, let us assume that a third of the existing teaching staff would have to be replaced, i.e., 40,000 people. This would mean recruiting young people from a relatively limited pool of "quality" candidates who are already being courted – for high-tech, the financial services, research institutes, senior positions with the civil service, upper echelons of the IDF, etc.

The authors of this paper agree with the claim that the school system should top the order of national priorities, and therefore become competitive. However, we also believe that any attempt to replace the existing teachers with "better" staff is problematic socially and morally. It would mean defining tens of thousands of people as "less good" and separating them out from those considered "more worthy." Indeed, this approach replicates for the teachers the same pattern that has been used for years for pupils – categorizing and tracking them so that only a small number meet the demands of the official curriculum and attain normative scholastic achievements. As argued above, the way to reduce gaps and raise the general level of achievement is to invest massively in low-expectation schools, based on the assumption that these students can also – through the changes proposed in this paper – reach the highest level of achievement, including matriculation and an academic degree. If this is true of the students, it is also true of

11 Dan Grossman, "The Director-General's Directive on 'Flexible Hiring' – Hiring or Privatizing?", Jerusalem: Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation, Research Group on Regulation in Education chaired by Professor Yossi Yona.

the teachers. Asserting that “only the very best” are suitable for teaching perpetuates the pattern currently in use throughout the school system, a pattern based on tracking, exclusion, and separating the “excellent” from the others. In other words, ethically one cannot base educational policies affirming that “all students are worthy” upon an approach that presumes most teachers are “unworthy.”

None of this is meant to imply that teaching performance is identical for each and every teacher or that there are no people who should not be teachers. Teaching is an occupation that requires, first of all, personal qualities such as interpersonal communication skills, patience, and composure. These characteristics, however, are not exclusive to any specific sector – not to those with advanced degrees, high-tech employees, or members of any particular ethnic, religious, or national group. Indeed, these characteristics can be found among teachers in schools with normative achievements as well as in low-expectation schools. Thus, the current project of retraining academics to work as teachers might make a specific contribution to one or another school, but it cannot form the basis for an overall policy of improving the level of students in low-expectation schools.

In this context, we identify with the approach taken by the educators in Ontario, Canada: Instead of trying to recruit select teaching personnel, they chose to work with and upgrade the existing corps of teachers. They thereby spurned the approach drawn from McKinsey and others that corporate considerations inspired by a free market economy should be introduced into education (OECD, 2010: 74).

It is reasonable to assume that the main factor determining the quality of a teacher’s functioning is society’s level of expectations (and the school’s) of the various students. Teachers in normative schools “know” that their students are expected to – and will – attend an academic high school and then continue their studies in college or university. Thus, their attitude to them will be based on high-standard expectations. Teachers in low-expectation schools, on the other hand, “know” at present that the future of most of their students lies in a vocational high school, a school for dropouts, or outside the system. This “knowledge” spawns low expectations, which tend to be self-fulfilling by giving up on a significant number of students who “will amount to nothing,” and concentrating on the few they believe will meet the criteria of the normative model.

Furthermore, teachers in low-expectation schools are aware of the limited resources at their disposal to advance their students, as well as the lack of systemic

support for this mission. Were the situation different, the results would be different: The Branco-Weiss schools for dropouts, for example, manage to steer their students to success in the matriculation exams, thanks in part to their focus on the individual and the strong support these schools provide for their students.

More importantly, this “knowing” fosters low self-esteem and adaptation to a low level of functioning. These teachers tend to spend less effort on independently expanding their knowledge, are less likely to participate in on-the-job training courses (unless it is a precondition for a salary raise), and cooperate less with other teachers on improving the level of instruction.

These teachers are in need of the same thing as their students – fostering new and higher self-expectations together with fostering higher expectations of their students. This is particularly important in light of the fact that teachers in low-expectation schools are themselves often the product of similar schools.

Teaching as Teamwork

The new school must become an arena for teachers to act in solidarity, where all the teachers share in the collective mission of upgrading students to a normative level. Rather than being a cold, alienating workplace where the sword of failure constantly hovers over their heads, the school must create an environment in which teachers benefit from encouragement, mutual support, and ongoing learning.

Several measures can lead to such change:

1. A school staff that is a candidate for the change proposed in this document will undergo a period of training. The training will take place twice a week during the school year in three-hour, afternoon sessions, and in several multi-day sessions during the school vacation. The training will be led by the school principal and conducted by teachers with experience in defined fields, such as mentoring. The teachers will receive remuneration for the training beyond their regular salary.

The training will not follow the regular format of in-service training, but the format of learning new teaching methods or new teaching goals; they will also work together to create the school's new work plan.

2. The study of new teaching methods should include:

- Teaching methods for heterogeneous classes;
- Teaching (the core curriculum) in pairs;
- Teaching methods for one-on-one teaching;
- Studying the task of mentoring.

The teaching will be done by experts from the universities and teachers' colleges as well as experienced teachers and/or experts in one or more of the above fields.

3. Creating the work plan together is designed to heighten awareness that this is a group effort. The work plan will focus primarily on activities outside the official curriculum – how to draft a declaration of the rights and responsibilities of the student and a declaration of the rights and responsibilities of the teacher; how to involve the parents; creating an annual plan for the home-room teacher; school trips, etc.

4. The school will provide ongoing, routine training for its staff, whether by mutual teaching or the training of new teachers by experienced ones. Staff meetings will regularly address teaching issues. This is already taking place in some countries, notably Japan (OECD, 2010). The McKinsey report also recommended turning the classroom into the primary training ground for teachers (McKinsey, 2007, 27).

5. The “corporate revolution” in the schools, to some extent inspired by the Dovrat Commission recommendations and other corporate conceptions now prevalent, has transformed the school principal, once the senior and most experienced teacher, into a manager in the narrow sense of the word – in charge of fundraising and administration. The reform proposed here believes that the principal must, first and foremost, be the leader of a teaching team, one who is capable of guiding and instructing the young teachers, and in general one who can transform the school from a place of learning not just of students, but also of teachers. For the principal to be able to carry out these tasks, she must be free of corporate duties. To that end, the school should have, in addition to the principal, an organizational and financial manager, as is the practice in some schools that have more resources.

6. The school will have a center for the preparation of teaching material, which will collect and prepare material that is drawn, inter alia, from the Internet, videos, photographs, etc. The center coordinator will maintain contact with other schools to diversify and enrich the sources.
7. Members of the staff will participate in continuing education programs in areas for which they are responsible. They may choose from a diverse range – academic programs, courses in research institutes or civil society organizations, or work with teachers who specialize in defined areas.
8. Implementation of the proposed plan must be done with the cooperation of the teachers' unions. We note that the Dovrat Commission, which submitted the most comprehensive document in decades in the field of education policy, did not include teachers or teachers' unions in its deliberations. In fact, ever since the opposition of the Teachers' Union in 1960 to the reform that established middle schools in Israel, education policies have been made without the cooperation of teachers. We believe that any educational reform instituted without the cooperation of the teachers is doomed to failure.

In this context, it is good to learn from the experience of Ontario, Canada, where the reform included a collective agreement with four teachers' unions. The agreement included, inter alia, a reduction in the number of students per class, which created thousands of new teaching jobs, and 3.5 extra weekly hours for elementary school teachers to prepare their lessons (OECD, 2010).

9. All the above measures together should lead to a rebranding of the teaching profession so that it will resemble, to the extent possible, the career track of professions such as medicine or law. To that end, the existing range of functions should be augmented by support staff for students requiring assistance, training and supervision of new teachers, training in other schools, adapting Internet enrichment programs to the school curriculum, responsibility for liaising with the parents and community, and more.
10. A condition for implementing many of the above suggestions is upgrading of the school facility so that teachers have quiet corners for independent work or one-on-one instruction of students.

The Social Mentor

For most Israeli students, the school is largely “foreign territory.” Many of the proposals in this paper are designed to address this problem. One particularly useful way is to train some teachers to perform an educational-social function as a “social mentor” responsible for counseling, monitoring, and strengthening a small group of students. Several models already exist in Israel for this role. Many “democratic schools” developed a model of “teacher-mentor”; some schools introduced a Morning Hour Program to start every school day, in which the teacher-mentor has an informal conversation with a group of some 15 students. Another more comprehensive model was developed at Kedma. The following describes the “social mentor” model at the Jerusalem Kedma school:

The social mentor is a regular teacher who, in addition to teaching a class, accompanies a small group of 12-13 students. Her job is to ensure the optimal functioning of every student by a holistic concern for his or her needs – academic, social, and personal. Each student who enters Kedma is taken under the wing of a social mentor, who takes responsibility for this student until completion of his or her studies in the school.

The social mentor meets one-on-one with each student at least once a week to monitor the student’s progress and help the student cope with problems in his or her studies or on a personal or social level.

A social mentor must be aware of and knowledgeable about the personal life of the student and his or her home context, offering to listen and, if necessary, to engage more directly. A social mentor monitors the social adjustment of each student.

The social mentor is responsible for identifying special needs such as learning disabilities, economic distress, or any other obstacle to success in school. The social mentor also meets with the students' teachers and follows their progress in their studies.

When necessary, the social mentor helps students vis-à-vis other professionals such as social workers, teachers of children with learning disabilities, diagnosticians, and psychologists. She takes responsibility for treatment and follow up, helping the students navigate the system.

In addition to one-on-one meetings, the social mentor holds two-hour group sessions. These provide an opportunity for the students to listen to each other and work together on an issue or project that is important to them as a group, such as taking social responsibility, gender relations, leadership, teamwork, and activities related to social matters in the class.

The social mentor ensures that the student's parents are informed and involved on an ongoing basis about what happens in the school by speaking with them regularly and making home visits.

“The role of the social mentor is to serve as a bridge between the world of failure known-in-advance, from which many students arrive, and the world of opportunity and choice to which they want to belong” (Bailey-Ben Ishai, 1999).

The Parents

Parents are key partners in the process of upgrading low-expectation schools.

We can reasonably assume that parents who send their children to these schools are suspicious of them, even more than their children are, for the school represents their own failure and unrealized opportunity. If the school is “foreign territory” for a large number of students, it is certainly “foreign territory” for a large number of their parents.

In affluent neighborhoods, where the school acts as an organic bridge between the home and typical middle and upper class careers, the parents have very clear expectations about how the school should function. Based on their own success in the school system, these parents feel secure about negotiating with the school, a sense of “we have defined expectations and your job is to meet them.” These parents also know how to take advantage of the parents’ committees for significant involvement in the life of the school.

For many parents in poor neighborhoods, however, the school is the first venue outside the family where they experience exclusion and failure. Like the parents in prosperous neighborhoods, they also have high aspirations for their children, but they do not have the personal or group confidence to demand that the school meet these expectations.

The low-expectation schools in which ability groupings and tracking take place know how to erect walls between the school and the parents, framed as “profes-

sional decisions,” which the parents have a hard time challenging. “The actual encounter between the parents and the school system that decides the fate of their children...places the parents in an inferior position and disempowers them. Tracking is generally backed up by professional opinions, assessments, diagnoses, and the deliberations of pedagogical councils. The parents are absent from all these, as most in any case belong to disadvantaged groups. The discourse – often conducted in professional jargon incomprehensible to the parents, using foreign words like ‘motivation,’ ‘interaction,’ ‘manipulation,’ ‘dyslexia,’ ‘ADHD,’ ‘didactic assessments,’ ‘EGMS (Effectiveness and Growth Measures Scale),’ and the like – intimidate and often silence the parents.”¹²

Hence the great importance attached to the school’s ability to break down the walls of foreignness and incorporate the parents into the general effort of upgrading the functioning of the school. A school that wishes to function with a high level of expectations for its students will have a hard time getting there without simultaneously raising the parents’ level of expectations. The school will need perseverance to move the parents from suspiciousness and skepticism to cooperation. From the moment the parents adopt an attitude of cooperation with the school, it also becomes easier to nourish the children’s belief in the school. Persuading the parents that the school is now different may be an extended process.

The door to the school must be open to the parents at all times. Furthermore, breaking down the barrier of skepticism is connected to reaching agreement about the functions of the home and the functions of the school. It is also bound up with the active engagement of the parents in diverse ways: organizing school events; representing the school to the authorities; or holding evening school or parental activities on the school grounds.

A number of schools are already taking this direction – Kedma in Jerusalem and the “democratic schools.” And some preschools operate what is called “Parent Participation Programs.”

12 Haggith Gor Ziv and Galia Zalmanson, “Parent-School Relations: A Critical Perspective”, *Education and What’s around It*, Tel Aviv: 2005; see <http://www.criticalpedagogy.org.il>.

The High Schools

The action plan proposed here for low-expectation elementary schools is also suitable for low-expectation secondary schools. This is particularly true today, when these schools take in the graduates of low-expectation elementary schools. However even after children have completed elementary schools that participated in the reform proposed here and begin to enter middle schools and high schools, the need will persist for several years, at least, for high schools to provide the same extended support that was proposed for the low-expectation elementary schools.

It should be noted that the model proposed here is based on the experience of high schools such as Kedma and Branco-Weiss. To the best of our knowledge, no elementary schools in Israel currently function according to this model.

The principles proposed above to reform low-expectation elementary schools also apply to the reform of high schools, as follows:

1. Eliminating separate tracks. Today the secondary school system is riddled with tracks of all sorts: ability groupings in the middle schools, separation between the vocational and academic tracks in high schools, division into groups based on the number of units studied for each matriculation exam in the last years of high school.

With regard to the separation between the academic and vocational tracks, note that even countries like Finland, which has no groupings at the elementary school

level, have a vocational track. Furthermore, this separation has been practiced in Western Europe since the nineteenth century, so it largely rests on the class lines of that period. However, there is a significant difference between the vocational tracking used there and the one used in Israel: The vocational track in Israel is a kind of residual category for those considered unsuitable for the academic track; in Western Europe, on the other hand, the vocational track is a respectable program with a demanding curriculum that leads to certification in a profession respected by all parties in the economy, and also leaves open the option of professional academic studies.

The question of whether the vocational track in Israel can be transformed from a residual category into a well respected framework is an interesting one. One way or another, when only 16% of Israel's wage-earners are employed in industry (CBS, 2010 Yearbook: Table 12.12), there is little justification for 40% of the students in the final grades of high school to be in vocational tracks (CBS, 2010 Yearbook: Table 8.17). In Europe, too, despite the more respectable nature of the vocational track, questions are being raised about the social and moral justification for having a track based on traditional, class-based perceptions of the division of labor.

We propose that all secondary and elementary school children study a uniform curriculum that includes the study of languages (Hebrew, English, and Arabic), math, and the sciences. Beyond this, schools can offer elective courses, including a vocational course. This would be acceptable as long as all the schools offer similar, diverse electives, and the vocational courses are offered in all high schools and are not restricted to schools in development towns, Arab localities, or working-class neighborhoods.

We also believe that both the school and the students should have the right to choose.

2. Providing an intimate, supportive environment. After several graduating classes, it is hoped that students who enter middle schools will have a higher level of achievements, and therefore several of the suggestions raised here, such as having two teachers in the class, will perhaps no longer be necessary. Nevertheless, we suggest continuing with social mentors, an institution that is more emotional and interpersonal than study oriented. Although it is possible to achieve improvement in the level of scholastic achievement within a decade, ten years are prob-

ably not sufficient for erasing the community sense of failure, missed opportunity, and lack of confidence. Therefore, social mentors should continue.

We further propose that high schools adopt all the support frameworks recommended here for elementary schools, such as training at least some of the teachers in special education methods, to ensure that the class advances together, without leaving behind any students who require assistance.

Budget Issues

We have chosen not to provide a budget framework for the plan of action proposed here.

Clearly this program would require an increased allocation for education. Teaching math, Hebrew, Arabic and English in pairs means adding more personnel. Employing social mentors requires the addition of between a quarter and a third of a position for some teachers. Upgrading the physical facilities also requires a budget supplement. The ongoing training of teachers has budget implications, as well as the purchase of computers, projectors, and library books.

A significant financial grant to every school so that it can introduce diverse enrichment programs, such as those currently available only in schools where parents pay extra fees, would also require a significant increase in the education budget. To illustrate, a six-year secondary school with three classes per grade and 25 students per class (CBS, 2010, Table 8.17) in which the parents are required to pay NIS 1,500 a month per pupil over ten months a year would enjoy an additional income of NIS 3.4 million. These sums are not available to schools that serve low-income populations. If a similar amount were given to each of the 1,200 secondary schools in the system, it would mean an annual budget increase of some NIS 4 billion. However, this outlay can be reduced if initially, over the course of several years, the supplement is given differentially to schools that do not enjoy parental payments beyond the minimum required by law. It should be noted that the idea of differential budgeting is not new –

the Dovrat Commission suggested it back in 2005.

In 2007, the Israeli government began a gradual process of increasing the education budget, following wage agreements signed with the teachers' unions for elementary and secondary school education. These agreements were a big step in the right direction, but they were still wage agreements and not educational reforms. For wage agreements to be followed by improvement in the functioning of schools throughout Israel, they should be accompanied by reform in the internal functioning of the school.

Nevertheless, the plan proposed here has not only budget increases, but also elements that enable budget savings – eliminating ability groupings in elementary and middle schools, canceling the tracking to a vocational education, and primarily ending the massive referrals to separate classes and institutions for special education.

Beyond all these, the proposed program promises a long-term economic advantage whose value cannot be estimated – upgrading the potential of the Israeli economy together with raising the standard of living of most Israelis.

Potential Pitfalls in Implementing the Reform

The plan proposed here challenges several deeply rooted patterns of action in the system of education. Since the early 1960s, this system has operated in a way that involves separating, tracking, and undemocratic practices. For most of those years, tracking had an ethnic and national character. In the past twenty years, with the introduction of parental payments to the schools, the tracking has also had a clear socio-economic character.

The plan proposed here aspires to equality, democracy, and universalism. We believe that it can be implemented, based on the fact that its various components have already been successfully introduced into some schools.

Nevertheless, we are aware of the obstacles that stand in the way of the proposed program:

1. The political leadership of Israel will have to grapple with the anticipated opposition of affluent, urban Israelis, who are used to the fact that for an additional fee, they can arrange for their children to have a matchless, quasi-private education.
2. The leadership of the school system will have to grapple with the thick maze of preferences and biases that have become institutionalized over the years. Some examples: a particularly high allocation of teaching hours to state religious schools; special education frameworks, which could lose out from

instituting heterogeneous classes and educating weak students within the regular classroom; networks such as ORT, AMAL, and AMIT, which have specialized in vocational schooling for years; boarding schools for students with various difficulties, including thousands of children of Ethiopian origin.

3. For years, the Council for Higher Education has been driven by an elitist philosophy: it advocated a selective admissions policy, for example, and even opposed the establishment of colleges for many years; and when colleges were established, the CHE refused to recognize them as research institutions equal in status to the universities. Implementation of the proposed reform would obligate the CHE to abandon its approach of “our job is to provide frameworks only for those currently defined as eligible,” and to replace it with “our job is to take part in expanding the circle of those eligible.”
4. The political stratum in Israel must change its suspicious and exclusionary approach toward the Palestinian-Israeli minority and provide equal and quality education.
5. The leadership of Israel is occupied predominantly with the conflict with the Palestinians. The proposed plan will compete for attention with the danger of further armed confrontations or the need to evacuate 50-60,000 settlers as part of a political settlement. It calls for rising above the dissension between the large political camps around the Palestinian issue in order to forge political consensus around the reform proposed here.
6. The funding required for the proposed reform can be taken from the defense budget or by raising taxes or based on future income from gas deposits. The likelihood of the first two has, until recent events, been considered highly unlikely, in view of the ideology of the leadership of the major political parties in Israel; however the middle-class protest movement that erupted in the summer of 2011 demonstrates that change is the order of the day and that the citizenry is aware that these two sources are among the main ones that can be used for implementing its demands.

Bibliography

- Bailey-Ben Ishay, Ariela. 1998. *Teacher Burnout and Consciousness-Complexity: An Analysis of the Mentors at Kedma (An Alternative Israeli High School)*. Ph. D. Thesis, Harvard Graduate School of Education of Harvard University
- McKinsey & Company. 2007. *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come out on Top*.
- OECD. 2009. *Education Today: The OECD Perspective*.
- OECD. 2010. *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education: Lessons from PISA for the United States*.

In Hebrew:

- באשי, יוסף, סורל קאהן ודניאל דיוויס. 1981. ההישגים הלימודיים של בית-הספר היסודי הערבי בישראל. ירושלים: בית-הספר לחינוך של האוניברסיטה העברית.
www.kedma-school.org.il/ בית הספר קדמה.
- בלס, נחום. 2011. האם הישגי מערכת החינוך בישראל הורעו בשנים האחרונות? ירושלים: מרכז טאוב.
- גורסמן, דן. "חוזר מנכ"ל 'העסקה גמישה' - העסקה או הפרטה?"; ירושלים, מכון ון ליר, קבוצת מחקר בנושא "רגולציה בחינוך" בהדרכתו של פרופ' יוסי יונה).
- הורוביץ, אלי ודוד ברודט. 2008. ישראל 2028. חזון ואסטרטגיה כלכלית בעולם גלובלי. חיפה: מוסד שמואל נאמן למחקר מתקדם במדע וטכנולוגיה.
www.hakoled.org.il/ הכל חינוך - התנועה לקידום החינוך בישראל.
- הלשכה המרכזית לסטטיסטיקה (הלמ"ס). 2010. שנתון סטטיסטי לישראל, 2010. ירושלים.
<http://www.democratic.co.il/school/> המכון לחינוך דמוקרטי ובתי הספר הדמוקרטיים.
- כוח המשימה הלאומי לקידום החינוך בישראל (ועדת דברת). 2005. התכנית הלאומית לחינוך. ירושלים. ינואר.
www.branco weiss.org.il/ מכון ברוקו-וייס.
- מרקמן-שטרנברג, נלי. 2008. ליבה חינוכית במחלוקת: שינויים ותמורות בהיות קולקטיביות בישראל. באר שבע: המחלקה לחינוך, אוניברסיטת בן גוריון בנגב.
- סבירסקי, שלמה ונוגה דגן-בחגלו. 2009. בידול, אי שוויון ושליטה מתרופפת: תמונת מצב של החינוך בישראל. תל אביב: מרכז אדוה.
 סמילנסקי, 1958
- קונור-אטיאס והאלה אבו חלא. 2010. זכאות לתעודת בגרות לפי יישוב. תל אביב: מרכז אדוה.
- רש, נורה, ואהרן בן-אבון. 2004. "מה מלמדים בבית הספר למעשה? שונות ואחידות ביישום תכנית הלימודים הרשמית בחטיבות הביניים בישראל". מגמות, 43 (1).

Interviews:

- Niva Hasson, general manager of the Branco-Weiss School Network, July 15, 2010.
- Klara Yona, past principal of the Kedma School in Jerusalem, February 1, 2011.
- Moshe Lerner, principal of the Givol Democratic School, Givat Olga, February 6, 2011.
- Ganit Weinstein and Hesssie Ran, the Department of Experiments and Initiatives, Ministry of Education, February 6, 2011.
- Leah Zelik-Bachar, past director of the Individual Education Program in Bat Yam, February 8, 2011.
- Elan Rupin, manager of the Schools for At-Risk Students, Branco-Weiss School Network, March 2, 2011.
- Michael Ben-Shitrit, principal of the Reut School for At-Risk Students, Branco-Weiss School Network, March 2, 2011.

מרכז אדפה מרכז אדפה
Adva Center
Information on Equality and Social Justice in Israel

Design:  Studio Noam Tamari