



American Jewish
Joint Distribution
Committee



Revadim

School Empowerment and Renewal Network



Position Paper
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1. Introduction

During the past few years, the Rashi Foundation and the JDC Israel have been conducting comprehensive interventions in elementary schools with the aim of transforming them into educational centers whose principals and educational staff consider themselves responsible for providing comprehensive care to students and their families.

The activities are carried out with partners, particularly with Jewish federations which are extremely interested in the models that have been developed such as the Full School and Merhav programs and are prepared to invest their resources in developing the model and promoting the topic.

The activity has gained the backing and full cooperation of the Ministry of Education's management and professional bodies. This backing and cooperation is expressed in numerous examples such as implementation of the Full School Program model funded by the Ministry of Education within the budgetary framework of the Milat program; the promotion of school programs like Merhav; and the joint Ministry of Education, Rashi Foundation and JDC "Spearheading Change Schools" program, which was accompanied by an evaluation study conducted by the Israeli National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation in Education (RAMA) and has shown great success to date.

Currently JDC and the Rashi Foundation are involved in interventions taking place in over 100 schools in the framework of various programs (Tafnit, Merhav, Spearheading Change-Full School and Milat).

As aforementioned, the various measures implemented indicate an extremely positive impact of the programs on changes in the way the schools are run and the school staff and students' satisfaction in these changes. In some of the programs, there is also evidence of substantial improvement in the academic achievements.

The accumulated experience and successful partnership with the Ministry of Education has led JDC and the Rashi Foundation to initiate a move with potential partners to establish a dynamic network of schools alongside the public education system.

JDC and Rashi Foundation are striving to create a broad coalition of funds and federations in order to establish a stable entity alongside the schools for many years. Through this network, the funds are interested in focusing on schools that are undergoing crises, function on a relatively low level and are geographically and culturally located in the periphery of Israel and bringing about renewal and growth in these schools and leading the changes anticipated in the education system.

The schools will receive professional and budgetary assistance which will allow them to achieve maximal functioning within three years. After three intensive years, the support will be reduced substantially, but will not be stopped.

The partners must strive to bring about the pooling of resources and programs so that one intervention entity will face the schools while arranging the matter with the school and other intervention entities by utilizing the relative advantage and expertise of the various intervention entities.

The incremental budget which shall be given to a new school joining the network will average NIS 200,000 per annum for three years. Afterwards, as aforementioned, the intensity of the support will be reduced.

In the short term, we are interested in launching a three-year pilot in 20-25 schools.

In the long term, we strive to establish a network that will include approximately 150 schools (new and continuing).

2. Vision and objectives

The program's partners would like to develop a substantial support network for schools. This network will stand alongside and will operate in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and according to its provisions. In the long term, we strive to establish a system which will be able to support 150 schools (new and continuing).

The schools which will be included in the network will receive comprehensive support from the professional and organizational aspects with the purpose of bringing about a high level of functioning and independence within a time period of three to four years, which will ensure change in the school lifestyle connected to the educational staff's conduct and the level of the educational-welfare service the students and parents receive. **The school administration will be obligated to perform an outcome process which will examine and assess all of the program's implementation stages.** The schools will receive incentives based on proven success.

The school network will be dynamic with effective communication with the educational institution and between all the schools operating in the program with the purpose of developing mutual learning and productive processes.

Vision: The schools will operate multi-systematically as organizations that place challenging objectives and aspirations before their students and according to the pedagogic assumption that everybody can succeed at school.

All the students in all classes (first to sixth grades) will master the required skills and contents defined in the Ministry of Education's curriculum in the core subjects to be selected and the at the end of the school year shall fully succeed in meeting the measure which reflects the standard in these subjects.

All students studying at the school will develop their "strong points" (not necessarily cognitive) and express them in schooling and other activities.

The program activities will be carried out at school in physically and technologically (infrastructurally) updated, diverse and proper environments and learning spaces while providing complete solutions to the basic, emotional and other development needs in a proper learning atmosphere which negates violence of any kind.

The multi-systematic improvement of the school will occur by strengthening the teachers, developing and applying pedagogic tools, and outcome measurement methods which constitute a tool and stage for measuring the effectiveness of the processes, their improvements and reaching them.

Objectives on the school, local council and network level (the schooling objectives are detailed further on)

	School	Local council	School network
Organizational/administrative	Improvement on the organizational and schooling management level (a defined management backbone), existence of a work plan and staff working according to this plan.	The municipal education department managing a control and support system in the council's schools in order to bring about improvement in the organization and management levels of every school.	100 schools a year working according to approved work programs.
Pedagogy	Improvement in the students' academic knowledge and achievements.	Improvement in the academic achievements in the local council's schools.	Improvement in the academic achievements of every school in the network.
Discipline and violence	Creation of an optimal school climate where the teachers and students respect each other and the lessons are taught optimally.	An optimal climate in all the local council's schools and creation of appropriate behavior patterns also outside the schools – in school transportation, informal education frameworks, parks, etc.	Optimal climate in all the schools in the network.
Strong points	Identification and strengthening of the students' strong points so that all students feel they are contributing and being contributed to while at school.	Identification and strengthening of youngsters in the town with the desire and ability to volunteer and lead.	Identification and strengthening of the teachers and principals who can lead and advance.
Educational welfare	Identification and treatment of every child in school who requires learning disability or paramedical assistance.	Identification and treatment of all the children in the council requiring paramedical assistance with learning disabilities or paramedical assistance.	Provision of tools to identify and treat learning disabilities and paramedical needs in all the network schools.

Objectives:

2.a. To improve the academic knowledge and achievements (draft: the intermediate objectives defined below still need to be examined and improved).

- An improvement of 5 points (percentage) minimum (compared to the previous year) in the average *Meizav* (GEMS) achievements in fifth grade so that within three years the school average improves by minimum ten percentage points (we recommend adding another subject to the process every year).
- To reduce the educational gaps in a such a way that every year the gap in *Meizav* achievement levels among students from a high and low socio-economic backgrounds is at least 5 points lower so that the gap is erased within three years (currently, the average gap is about 10 percentage points).

- To strengthen the outstanding student group so that in each year the rate of students achieving more than 90 in the *Meizav* grows by 3-4 percentage points (compared to the previous year) so that within three years the outstanding student rate constitutes a minimum of 15% of the age group (currently, the outstanding students constitute an average of about 5%).
- 2.b. The schools should be safe and pleasant where the students respect the teachers and the teachers respect the students, the codes of discipline and behavior are met, and the lessons are taught optimally (draft: the intermediate objectives defined below must still be examined and improved).
- A drop of 5% minimum (compared to the previous year) in the *Meizav* index that summarizes involvement in violent incidents so that within three years the decrease is at least 15% (currently, the average is 17%).
 - An improvement of 5% minimum (compared to the previous year) in the *Meizav* index that examines the relationship and concern among teachers and among students.
 - A reduction of at least 5% per annum in tardiness and absenteeism as reported in the Manbas school administration system so that within up to three years the drop will be at least 15% in this matter.
- 2.c. To strengthen the students' strong points so that all students feel that they are contributing and being contributed to while at school (draft: the intermediate objectives defined below must still be examined and improved).
- Every student in the school will choose an area of involvement which will constitute the child's strong area (not necessarily cognitive) from a selection offered (an index must be built to check that every student chooses a suitable area).
 - An improvement in the students' skills and knowledge in the area chosen (an index must be built).
 - To build a quality learning product resulting from in-depth involvement and research in the subject taught (an index must be built).
- 2.d. To identify and treat every child in the school requiring with learning disability or para-medical assistance.
- 70% of the students in the school must undergo learning or para-medical disability detection procedures conducted by the teachers or other professional entities.

- 90% of the children detected must receive some treatment as shall be decided and as required.
- An improvement of one level minimum should be evident in at least 70% of the children being treated for the main problem they are treated for.

3. The program from a national viewpoint

The basic principle at the heart of the program is operating a national network alongside the Ministry of Education that supports schools which are under full supervision of the Ministry of Education. The condition for establishing the network is the Ministry of Education's active support in the move and signing a pact between the founders and the Ministry of Education.

The schools which will be included in the network will be chosen under direction of and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The same applies to the areas and method of intervention which will also be chosen under direction of and in full cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Moreover, the incremental resources both financial and professional will be in addition to and not instead of the governmental and local council budgets.

4. The program's principles

The belief that "everyone can" stands at the base of the program while focusing on three principles:

- The student treatment principle – "every student can".
- The educational institution principle – "every institution can".
- The local council principle – "every local council can".

The combined action under the three principles is designed to ensure implementing the program on the basis of the principles that the Rashi Foundation and JDC adopt in educational-welfare action throughout the years.

Operating the school network must take into consideration connecting all the program's components – the child, the school principal, the school staff and the education and welfare department managers.

The experience of the funds in this area is great and includes successful examples such as the intervention program in Bat Yam where the three principles were applied and the educational principle of continuity from preschool age to intensive activity with adolescents and youngsters was implemented. After four years, we may indicate with

satisfaction success in the city chiefly, since the educational institutions' activities are not dependent on the funds' intervention. Apart from the "everyone can" principle, another few principles have been added to the program:

- 4.a. The schools as well as the activities carried out in the schools will be chosen under direction of and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.
- 4.b. The programs and entities involved in the schools will be chosen and defined while striving to pool resources and programs.
- 4.c. The towns and schools that join the program must sign a pact which regulates their obligation to the work program as well as the process.
- 4.d. The schools join the program voluntarily, but are committed to the process and the work program which shall be defined together with them on the basis of mapping and identifying the schooling needs.
- 4.e. The program operated in the schools will be based as much as possible on the school human resources while attempting to improve and strengthen their professional ability. In any case, the local council will not employ staff.
- 4.f. The schools are obligated to invest, work hard and continually strive to meet the objectives.
- 4.g. Incentives will be given to schools based on to success.
- 4.h. The program will be operated in the schools with intensive support during three years minimum and thereafter, the school undertakes to continue the process with reduced support.

5. Profile of the schools participating in the program

The dozens of schools that will participate in the program will, as aforementioned, be new schools chosen in cooperation with the Ministry of Education according to the following principles:

- 5.a. Elementary schools.
- 5.b. Schools located in the country's geographical and/or cultural periphery.
- 5.c. Schools whose student population is identified according to objective indices as at-risk.
- 5.d. Schools whose principals and teaching staff are committed to the program by a pact that defines the program's principles and procedures.

- 5.e. Preference will be given to schools eligible for incremental resources (such as Ofek Hadash, extended school day, educational welfare resources, the national program for children and youth at risk, etc.).
- 5.f. Preference will be given to activities in schools in the same town.
- 5.g. The program will be operated in schools where the local council and Ministry of Education take responsibility and ensure appropriate physical conditions.
- 5.h. With regard to continuing schools (hereinafter schools where investments from JDC, the Rashi Foundation and its partners already exist) – all the above principles apply. During the program's trial run, a proposal will be formed for the professional, organizational and financial interfaces which will apply between the program and the group of continuing schools.

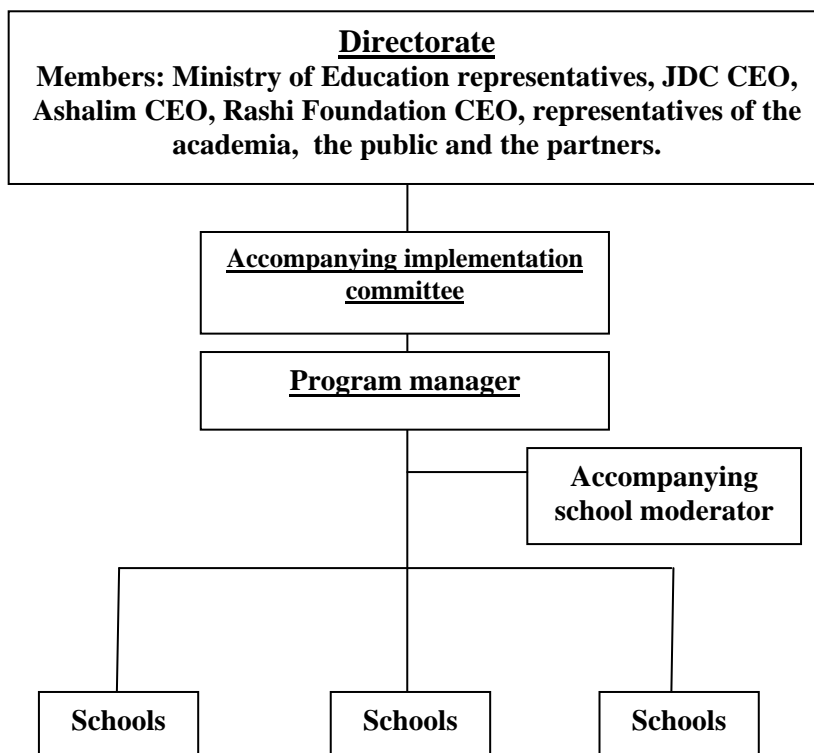
6. The program's components

The program formulated in cooperation and coordination with the Ministry of Education will be built around a multi-annual school work program (and defined for one year). The program will be examined frequently and changes made to it based on evaluation and control data. The program will have to provide three key solutions in the following areas:

- 6.a. The design of the change in the school lifestyle and management (principal-tutor; management staff development; development of strategy to promote learning; individual treatment, etc.)
- 6.b. Investment in infrastructures which serve the student and parent population (a network to reduce academic gaps; developing a comprehensive student treatment network; a program to enhance the schooling climate; educational programs for healthy a healthy lifestyle, etc.)
- 6.c. Building an education, welfare and treatment system on the town level which will support the schooling activities.

7. The network's organizational structure

As aforementioned, the school network will be guided by a legally independent organizational network (an association/company for the benefit of the public). The network will be controlled by a directorate whose members are the CEOs of the partner organizations. The network will be headed by a professional director elected in jointly by the partners' representatives. The director will be guided by a governing council whose members will be functionaries among the partners who are involved in comprehensive school interventions. Below is a diagram of the proposed organization structure:



8. Decision-making process

8.a. Directorate

- Shall be responsible for determining the program policy and defining its budget.
- Shall ensure the Ministry of Education's involvement in the program and arrange the support mechanisms and cooperation with the Ministry.
- Shall elect the program manager as well as the rest of the implementation committee members.
- Shall monitor the program's implementation and progress according to objectives which will be determined according to measurable criteria.
- Shall meet on a permanent basis once every three months.

8.b. Management Committee

- Shall determine the outline for implementing the program – selecting the schools participating in the project and approving the work program.
- Shall approve the school work programs.
- Shall guide the program manager and his/her staff in the decision-making processes and everything connected to operating the program in the local councils, including the professional and financial aspects.
- Shall meet once a month.

8.c. Program manager

- Responsible for managing the program and implementing the work program approved by the implementation committee.
- Shall operate an experienced professional team which will ensure maximal implementation of the program on the content, operations and budget level.

9. The founders and additional partners

At this stage of the program development, prior to receipt of approvals from the various administrations, there are four founding partners:

- 9.a. The Rashi Foundation.
- 9.b. JDC Israel.
- 9.c. The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit.
- 9.d. JCF San Francisco.

Background discussions have already taken place between the partners which may be summarized in that understanding and agreement exists that the program with its components is one that is highly essential, interesting and challenging.

The partners have shown great interest in the move and willingness to make efforts to support it by fund-raising which will ensure continuity in multi-annual activity.

Furthermore, fundamental agreement exists between the partners that the move will only be launched after agreement with the Ministry of Education management on the Education Minister or CEO level. This is in order to ensure that the plan to create a school network receives the Ministry of Education's blessing and support both on the top management level and the district level, and of course, the town leadership level in the town where it will operate.

Moreover, discussions are underway to add additional founders such as the Azrieli Foundation and the IDB Group.

The founding partners see great importance in adding partners in every stage of the project's operation. Although the enterprise sees itself committed to the general principles and their components, the opening exists to structure additional components which one or other partner may propose and which are in keeping with the comprehensive school intervention concept. A partner that sees itself as committed to the project multi-annually will be integrated in the program's guidance and supervision mechanism on all levels. The condition for joining is the willingness to guide a group of schools for at least five years.

10. Budgetary aspects from a multi-annual viewpoint – the pilot stage

The pilot stage will last for three years. Below are a few significant budgetary variables to establish the joint program:

- 10.a. The program will take place over 3-4 years in each school and will operate in 20-25 schools.
- 10.b. In the pilot stage, more schools will join the program based on the program's rate of progress and realization of its partner recruitment potential.
- 10.c. The program's funding will come from the Ministry of Education, JDC Israel, the Rashi Foundation, interested partners and local councils.
- 10.d. The average annual intervention cost in a new school is estimated at about NIS 200,000 thousand (including "umbrella" expenses).
- 10.e. At this stage, it has been decided that there is no budgetary connection between the program and the continuing (veteran) schools. These will continue to operate in an independent format and by separate funding of each of the partners. As aforesaid, in the stage of setting the program in motion, a proposal to integrate public schools in the program, including the budgetary aspect, will be formulated.

Costs (in NIS thousands) from a multi-annual aspect – pilot

	Year I cost	Year II cost	Year III cost	Total cost for 3 years (including the organizational umbrella)
General cost	200=4000X20	200=4000X20	200=4000X20	12,000
JDC participation	1,333	1,333	1,333	4,000
Rashi Foundation participation	1,333	1,333	1,333	4,000
Local council participation	1,333	1,333	1,333	4,000

Remarks:

1. An organizational umbrella which includes the manager and the moderator is included in the above calculation and will derive from the inclusive budgeted in the scope of approximately NIS 400 thousand per annum.
2. In this stage, a budgetary framework for continuing (veteran) JDC and Rashi Foundation schools does not exist and they will operate in an independent budgetary framework.
3. We have not included additional partners in the chart who are interested in the project and willing to join immediately after finalizing the agreement between JDC and the Rashi Foundation.

11. Breakdown of school level annual financial investments

11.a. Annual investment of approximately NIS 200,000.

11.b. Below is a breakdown of the annual investment by budget line items (in NIS).

Line item	Budget in NIS
Educational reinforcement and reducing academic gaps	50,000 – (25%)
Therapy network	50,000 – (25%)
Empowerment of teaching staff	20,000 – (10%)
Educational enrichment	20,000 – (10%)
Activity to enhance the school climate	20,000 – (10%)
Key expenses (organizational umbrella)	20,000 – (10%)
Activities with parents	10,000 – (5%)
Evaluation and measurement	10,000 – (5%)
TOTAL	200,000–(100%)

Schools and towns included in the network' pilot

As aforementioned, the Rashi Foundation and its partners would like to take advantage of the knowledge accumulated together and the separate experience in order to create a significant move in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

In order to reach substantial scope of operation during 3-4 years, we intend taking advantage of existing comprehensive school interventions and to make them part of the network's active infrastructure. In the pilot stage, the scope will reach 20 new schools. A joint professional committee of the two entities will formulate a proposal to integrate continuing schools in the program with the aspiration to operate them under one professional framework.

Therefore, the network should be expected to develop in the scopes described below:

Year	New schools	Continuing schools	Total	Remarks
Year A	20	40	60	40 continuing schools will be collected from the list of schools operating in the foundation's Merhav/Merhav Emergency program and Shocharei Shinui Full School program
Year B	20	40	60	
Year C	20	40	60	

It refers, of course, to a dynamic process whose final design will derive chiefly from the response of the local councils and additional schools interested in the network. With the program's progress and success, the partners will consider adding more schools to the program, subject to the potential of adding other partners to the program.

Appendix A: Manager profile

a. Qualifications and expertise

- Pedagogic leader with vision for the education and children areas.
- Endowed with initiatory thinking.
- Analytical skills to plan procedures and implement them according to long-term objectives.
- Knows how to see the big picture and deal with the finer details.
- Positive negotiation and communication skills, from the level of the subordinate team member to municipal and national management level, including with government offices, especially the Ministry of Education.
- Ability to develop comprehensive work programs and work programs suitable for individual frameworks.
- Proficient in developing dialogue with partners and fund-raising.

b. Professional background and education

- Minimum a Masters degree in Education and/or Welfare.
- Minimum 5-7 years experience in managing an educational / welfare institution.
- In-depth knowledge and experience working with schools.
- Available for extensive work hours and travelling.
- Excellent written and oral skills in Hebrew and English.

Appendix B – Work program of the Organizational Stage towards Operation

Operation	Date	Responsibility
JDC's agreement of the setting up document.	Sept. 7, 2009	
Meeting with the CEO of the Ministry of Education	Sept. 10, 2009	
Signing a legal document which defines the network's structure, including the financial obligations.	Sept. 15, 2009	
Advertising the tender for a manager	Sept. 15, 2009	
Selecting a manager.	Oct. 20, 2009	
Signing a contract with the local councils.	Oct. 20, 2009	
Start of activities in the schools.	Oct. 1, 2009	