

STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Developing a statement of education is a daunting process. There are countless variables, each with its own nuances, which determine the components of a philosophy of education. Complicating this process is the task of appropriately transmitting our Jewish heritage while considering community differences. For our purposes, the core of my Jewish education philosophy is attaining **Jewish literacy**. Jewish literacy includes the capacity to be a part of the Jewish conversation.

Albert Einstein once said to a group of school children in 1934: "My dear children: I rejoice to see you before me today, happy youth of a sunny and fortunate land. Bear in mind that the wonderful things that you learn in your schools are the work of many generations, produced by enthusiastic effort and infinite labor in every country of the world. All this is put into your hands as your inheritance in order that you may receive it, honor it, and add to it, and one day faithfully hand it on to your children. Thus do we mortals achieve immortality in the permanent things, which we create in common. If you always keep that in mind you will find meaning in life and work and acquire the right attitude towards other nations and ages."

Hebrew is the cornerstone of the Jewish conversation, which enables one to discuss texts in their original language and appreciate deeper levels of meaning, participate in praying and not just "say" prayers, be aware of our history, of how we were influenced and influenced others, and to achieve fluency in speaking Hebrew. . Jewish literacy is a gateway for Jewish identity, increased spirituality, relevancy, camaraderie, and is a conduit for societal participation and character development. Jewish literacy provides a portal into personal growth; students should feel comfortable questioning facts and concepts.

To manifest these ideals, we constantly review and refine our **curriculum**. To be truly successful, stakeholders must also contribute their opinions and suggestions. Playing a vital role in the process are not just the teachers, principals, and education experts, but community members and parents as well.

My philosophy of education incorporates encouraging *middot*, **individual thought, love of learning, risk taking, and creativity**. I believe that it is crucial for students to receive an education that does not center solely on a particular program of study; rather, students should learn skills and gain knowledge that will enable them to continuously challenge themselves to reach more meaningful levels of achievement throughout their academic careers.

The function of the educator is to steer the students to expand their process of rational thinking and to develop life skills in a **nurturing** and supportive milieu. Good teaching creates activities that guide the student through problem solving while demonstrating **relevancy**. I believe the function of an educator is to conduct students -- at their own pace -- towards developing advanced critical thinking skills. Our educators strive to create realistic activities that guide each student through various levels of challenges, while integrating individual relevancy for each student to be meaningful to his or her life. The learning modalities consist of **group work, problem-based learning, discussions** and **varied, differentiated instruction**. The fundamental basis of my educational statement is the conviction that every learner is **exceptional** and **unique** with unlimited **potential**, because each student was created in the image of Hashem. Our students are jewels, and it is our **holy task** and **responsibility** to polish them by providing the environment and tools to enable them to shine.