

PEOPLEHOOD INFUSED SCHOOLS

2021-2022 pilot year

ENTER is proud to conclude the first year of its “Peoplehood Infused Schools” initiative, a collaboration with the Israeli Ministry of Education, Jewish federations, private donors, and the Jewish Agency. This novel program offers a certification for Israeli public schools that adopt an integrated set of values and programs designed to raise awareness about World Jewry.



The goals of the initiative are three-fold:

1. Raising awareness and promoting mutual responsibility
2. Strengthening Jewish peoplehood literacy
3. Engaging students, teachers, families and communities within a holistic framework

Modeled on Israel’s successful “Green Schools” campaign, ENTER is introducing a flexible framework that addresses a major gap, especially in the majority secular state-supported system (*Mamlachti*), where levels of Jewish peoplehood awareness are particularly low. The initiative is designed to complement more formal curriculum-based projects introduced in recent years by government ministries and national institutions.

Enter’s five-part eligibility framework (**STARS**):

1. **Studies** – integrating peoplehood with core studies and formal curriculum
2. **Training** – teacher training and professional development
3. **Atmosphere** – integrating a visual display or artistic element
4. **Ritual** – incorporating peoplehood into school gatherings and ceremonies
5. **School Society** – involving parents, families and community members

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Beginning in September 2021, a diverse group of ten schools from across Israel joined an inaugural pilot. Adoption and implementation were monitored by Dr. Noga Cohavi, national instructor of the heritage department at the Israeli Ministry of Education, who provided tailored content based on each school's unique local culture and values.

By the end of the school year, the following nine schools successfully completed the program:

Ofakim (2 schools), Ashdod, Har-Tuv (Beit Shemesh region), Yehud-Monoson, Nes Tziona, Modi'in, Ashkelon and Mevaseret Zion.



A measurement and evaluation study, led by Dr. Ezra Kopelowitz (ReST), included mid-term and final surveys. Dr. Kopelowitz also conducted individual interviews with school principals.

Main findings:

- Principals and school administrators already inclined toward a “Jewish peoplehood” orientation nonetheless relied on the program for its framework, tailored content and incentives.
- The stipend, in particular, was viewed as a valuable resource supporting professional development and implementation of new programs.
- School administrators placed the highest value on integrating “peoplehood” studies in a holistic manner, infusing it into the school experience and through interdisciplinary opportunities, in particular English studies.
- School administrators felt the program strengthened ties with peers and reinforced their professional network.

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Select school activities

Culinary Encounters

A program for elementary schools that explores Jewish diversity through the Jewish kitchen. Students explored the diverse religious and cultural traditions of Hannukah pastries (“sufganiyot”) in Jewish communities around the world. This learning experience, operated by the HaShalom school in Mevasseret Tzion, culminated in a virtual encounter with students in a Las Vegas day school, where the Israelis and Americans prepared donuts together online.



Israeli Kabbalat Shabbat

What are the different costumes regarding the Kabbalat Shabbat ritual? What songs do different communities sing? How is Shabbat celebrated in different communities around the world? This program was held at the Yovel school in Yehud, together with representatives from BINA, the Jewish movement for social change.

Showcasing heritage diversity

Teachers and students worked together on creating an exhibition in which various Jewish ethnic groups were showcased. The exhibits, which featured objects, data, and attire, took place at the Dekel school in Ashkelon. It was open to students, teachers, parents and the broader school’s community.



A Jewish Peoplehood Hall

A physical “Jewish Peoplehood Hall” was built, featuring a window for various Jewish communities around the world, with scannable QR codes on each window, offering more information about each community. The hall, created at the Amirim School in Ofakim, was open to students and their families, while educational teams from other schools in the city were invited to visit.

