# Project documentation form

Title:-

Integrating Democratic Education Content and Practices at the "Galil" School

Sub-Title:-

Creating and running committees led by 5th and 6th grade students for management of various areas of school life

**ביס" / גן:-**

**ביה"ס הדו-לשוני "גליל" – כיתות ה'-ו'**

**משתתפים ופרטי תקשורת:-**

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מחנכי כיתות ה'-ו'

## Relevant Educational Principles:-

Student responsibility for the learning process

Student responsibility for the learning environment

Increasing the use of dialogue at school

Creating an active, supportive school-based community.

## Keywords:-

Democratic education, progressive education, humanistic education, equitable pedagogy, dialogue, dialogic organizational development, school committees

## Rationale/Summary

The main educational and ideological processes taking place at the school are an extension of the principles of progressive education. In practice, the attempt to support an educational program in the spirit of equality and collaboration demands the use of advanced pedagogical practices that support the transfer of responsibility to the students for designing the learning process; the school's graduates will thus be capable of creative and critical thinking, strive for personal and group-based development, and be able to learn from a place of listening, observation, curiosity, and commitment to in-depth learning processes.

An array of six committees was constructed, and students from the 5th and 6th grades were appointed to the committees. The six committees were focused on various aspects of school life: Learning Processes; Road Safety; Improving Campus Appearance; Planning School Recesses; Yard and Sport Field Maintenance and Mediation. These committees were chosen following a student survey, which mapped out the students' needs and their dreams for the character and management style of the school.

In addition, content about democracy and citizenship was incorporated into the school’s language and culture classes so that the experience would include academic studies and not practical experience alone.

## Process:-

Each committee met once a week under the guidance of one of the homeroom teachers. They held practice sessions of conducting dialogue, doing research, democratic decision-making, and setting outcomes intentionally based on pre-planning. A schedule was constructed for the entire year, including an evening event where the outcomes will be presented to parents.

A study project was constructed (project-based learning) through which the students learned content and skills associated with citizenship and democracy (in the two languages): Separation of powers; majority rule; conducting a survey; writing a protocol, etc.

Over the course of the school year, the students visited other democratic schools, in order to gather impressions and observe how committees were run there.

## Needs:-

To assign a schedule and staff for the committees’ regular activities. Student access to the school's decision-making centers.

A modest budget to purchase equipment necessary for running the committees.

## Successes:-

Ongoing activity of the committees

Incorporating democratic-educational language into school life

Pilot projects planned by the committees (improvement of road safety, mediation processes, designing soccer fields)

## Challenges:-

Lack of internalization and cooperation by the rest of the teachers

Disparity between the performance levels of the various students

The challenge of seeing a new project through over the course of an entire year.

## Possible Next-Steps:

Expanding the number of classes that participate in the project

Expanding the number of committees and the range of their responsibilities

Writing a school constitution that will encompass the committees and their activities

Inviting the parents to become a part of the project.