[אימג' של אותו הים בשתי השפות, לוגו סוכנות+ המכון (אנגלית) ומשרד החינוך+ תרבות יהודית ישראלית

Participants Biographies

Anat Gal, Principal, Shenkar School

Avivit Gershon, Principal, Psagot Haim Gouri School

Avivit did her BA in Special Education, and her MA in Education Systems Administration. She is serving in her third year as Elementary school principal, and believes in investing in the foundations of early childhood education in influecing children's character, studies, and worldviews.

Bar Maoz, Principal, Dekel-Vilnai School

I have been a middle school principal for four years now, and before that I worked in high schools and before that in the Hi Tech sector. I also worked on computing in the Foreign Ministry with embassies across the world. The Dekel Vilnai Middle School is named about Dekel Vilnai (of blessed memory), a researcher and big lover of the land. He coined the phase "And you shall love your land as yourself." In light of these connections and the growth process, from the root to the very tree tops of the \*dekel\*, the palm tree, we educate our students to reach for the top and succeed. My school has over 650 students, with advanced and regular classes, classes for special needs students and for autistic students. Everyone is there together reaching for the top.

Bat Sheva Hineman School principal, Ort-Amirim

My name is Bat Sheva Heinman and I am the principal at the Tzmuda B'Ort Middle School in Beit She'an, with over 600 students in six grades, and 67 staff and personnel sharing in the workload. I taught 7th-12th grade classes, and grew into my administrative position. Along with my administrative sraff run the school with a goal of expanding to a twelve-grade school, at the same time that we preserve the unique nature of our school, one that prides itself on respect for all; has excelled over the years, teaching a love of Israel; and of mutual responsiblity. Our curriculae are all anchored in and incorporate these values, including social educational projects outside the class. The school stresses reaching for excellence and in finding the hidden strengths in each student. This allows each student to develop socially and personally. We believe and invest a great deal in preparing our students for the real world, through life-preparation classes, acceptance, personal stimulation and more. It is important that we expose the students to different content so as to expand their knowledge. It is important to us that the students encounter the center of the country, not only the social peripheries. We have already achieved new heights in test performance, in climate studies, computers, robotics, chemistry, and physics amongs our students. We are preparing our students for the future, at the same time that we are presenting them with relevant content in a changing world, and preparing them for the 21st century.

David SCHMIDT, Principal, Nof Harim School

My name is David and I am a multidisciplinary administrator who believe in communal education, with rich experience in work with children, teens, and young adults. I completed my MA in rehabilative psychology and another MA in Education Systems Administration. Over the last decaude I have served as the principal at the Multicultural School. Before that I served as a community emissary in New Zealand, and as the pedagogical administrator of the educational NGO L'Psagot.

Dorit Cohen, Principal, Aliza Begin School

My name is Dorit Cohen, principal of Aliza Begin School in Migdal Haemek. I have a master's degree in educational systems management and a bachelor's degree in Mathematics teaching. I have been teaching in Aliza Begin school for 28 years and for the past 8 years managing it with great love. At our school we lead a unique program under the name "Excellence is the Name of Game". We believe that each and every one of us can excel in something and in constant improvement. Also we combine game pedagogy to create a fun and meaningful learning experience.

Edna Ben Basat, School principal, Jewish-Israeli culture regional coordinator, Jerusalem

**Edna Ben Basat** earned two degrees at Bar-Ilan University: one in Jewish literature and philosophy and the other in contemporary Judaism. She began her career as an educator by teaching in a high school in Or Yehuda, which was then a development town. She presently **teaches literature and methodology at Orot College,** and has been working in the field of Israeli and Jewish culture as the **Jerusalem District Coordinator** for the past ten years.

Hadas Kimmel, Principal, Tal School

My name is Hadas Kimmel; I’m married and the mother of three. I live in Sha’are Tikva, Israel.  
I have been in education for 33 years. I have a Master’s degree in Education Systems Management and have been the principal of Tal School for seven years. Tal applies the principle of personal education and sees growing the future as the only path to a value-focused society.

Tal is a community school that operates transparently and cooperatively with the students’ parents and with the Authority.

Ilana Yehuda, Jewish-Israeli culture regional pedagogy instructor, Jerusalem

I live in Neve Ilan and have four daughters, two grandchildren, and a granddaughter. I have a Master’s degree in Jewish Studies and have been teaching for more than thirty years. I teach at Jabotinsky School in Bet Shemesh, combining teaching of Jewish-Israeli culture and environmental studies with away-from-class studies, For twelve years I have been an instructor in Jewish-Israeli culture at the Jerusalem District and have been a national-level instructor in professional development and content for the past two years.

Java Trajtenberg, Principal, Psagot Yir'on School

I was born in Argentina and immigrated to Israel in 1991. I have a Bachelor’s degree in Special Education and a Master’s in education management. I play a musical instrument and I sing. Psagot is a school that goes on outings, sings, and makes music. I have been a principal for eleven years.

Liat Levi, School Principal, Nili

I have five years’ seniority as a principal. Today I’m principal of an eight-year school in Nili, a small community settlement. My school strongly emphasizes community relations and cooperation and promotes health and social causes along with optimal pedagogy as part of the Shavit pedagogical leaders’ program.

Maayan Cohen, Principal, Afikei Yarden School

I was born, raised, and educated at Kibbutz Afikim, a settlement in the Jordan Valley where I’ve been living to the present day.

I’m married to Itzik and we have three children: Raz, 30 years old; Shahar, 28, and Shira, 23.

In the Army, I served as a soldier-teacher and as an education officer who dealt with teacher training.

I have a Bachelor’s degree in Bible and Jewish History from the Hebrew University and a Master’s degree in Bible from the University of Haifa.

My teaching certificate is from Kerem Institute, an institute for Jewish humanistic education.

Over the years, I have studied mediation and conflict resolution, group facilitation, training of school principals, and pedagogical guidance and facilitation.

In my years in the education system, I’ve gone the whole course—from a subject teacher in Bible, to a homeroom teacher, up to assistant principal, principal, and pedagogical coordinator at Bet Yerah Regional High School.

In the past five years, I’ve been principal of Afikei Yarden Elementary School at Kibbutz Afikim. I also advise teachers of Bible for the Ministry of education.

Merav Peleg, Principal, Yitzhak Navon School

I have Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Education and Musicology. This is my third year as a principal. In our school, we believe that every child can, under our responsibility, put into practice their competences and capabilities in a range of fields, be it in teaching subject matter in personal and differential ways or via musical arts, sports, and physical labor.

Merav Elbaz, Principal, ORT-Amirim School, Beit She'an

I’m married to Oren, an educator, and the mother of Ron and Tamir.

I was born and still live in Beit She’an; I’ve been in the education system for 28 years.

I have Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Literature and Bible, I was principal of an elementary school for five years, and today I’m principal of the 7–12 ORT-Amirim school in Beit She’an, a comprehensive school that has an enrollment of 600 students, encourages twelve years of continual study, and nurtures graduates with outstanding personal abilities and belief in themselves and their abilities, with focus on the community.

Michal AXELROD COHEN, Principal, Nofim School

My name is Michal; I’m married and I have four fantastic children. I live and work in Rosh Ha’Ayin. I have a Bachelor’s degree in English and Political Science and a Master’s degree in English from Bar-Ilan University. I have been the principal of Nofim School in Rosh Ha’Ayin for ten years. Before that, I had spent nineteen years working in middle school.

Mihal Cohen, Principal, Alumot School

I was born in Kiryat Haim, Haifa, and belong to the eighth generation in this country. I was raised in a traditional Zionist home and was trained in the most important values: love your fellow as you would yourself, hospitality, charity, equality, and patriotism. My parents were role models: they built this country, worked from a very early age, and spent their evenings studying all their lives. I have two daughters, three grandchildren, and a wonderful partner.

I was raised in Kiryat Haim and after high school I went on to work in physical education. In the Army, I was a sports officer. After my discharge, I continue to study the care of persons with disabilities at Wingate Institute and worked at Bet Halohem.

I have a Bachelor’s degree in behavioral science and a Master’s degree in Education and Exclusion [Counseling?] ["הדרה" צריך להיות "הדרכה"?] I am certified in educational counseling, organizational counseling (a member of the PAI organization), and coaching (the Technion), and I completed a principals’ course. I took advanced training at the TALI Foundation and Halali and was principal of a TALI Democratic school. I have been a principal for eighteen years. I believe in relevant, progressive, dynamic, and innovative education. Alumim School believes in values of respect, creativity, innovation, and learning in different kinds of surroundings and interrelates with the near and distant environment (ecosystem). The school is a home of the community.

Miri Nitsani, Principal, Shimon Peres School

I’m 52, married to Ronni and mother of three.  
I’ve been the principal of Shimon Peres School in Rosh Ha’Ayin since the school was founded six years ago.  
I have a Bachelor’s degree in Education and Literature from the University of Haifa and a Master’s degree in Jewish and Gender Studies from Schechter Institute in Jerusalem.  
I’ve been in the Israeli education system for 25 years. In the past, I was principal of a primary school in Bat Yam.

Miri Reuven, Principal, The Hebrew Gymnasium

I’m principal of the middle school at the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jerusalem, a public school that has existed for 113 years. My managerial duties include homeroom teacher, pedagogical coordinator, and, for the past twenty years, principal. In the past, I did a tutorial at the School of Education of the Hebrew University.

Noga Ben-Yaacov, Principal, Amakim-Tavor School

I am in my fourth year as a middle-school principal. I have a Bachelor’s degree in Creative Art and a Master’s degree in Art History. Until I became principal, I was coordinator of the school’s art program. In this capacity, I signed up for a pioneering evaluation project and wrote an alternative curriculum for matriculation in art. I also coordinated the school’s trips to Poland for seven years. Amakim-Tavor School is a regional secondary school that belongs to the Jezreel Valley Regional Council. At our school, we strongly emphasize education in social values, aspiring to create value-focused, caring, contributing graduates who think self-critically without compromising on personal and scholastic excellence.

Orne Darmon, Principal, Manor-Cabri School

I am 47 years old and live in Kiryat Tivon. I am married to Lilach and father of Shahar, Ronni, Rotem, and Assaf. I began my educational career in informal education, coordinating the alumni movement of the HaNo’ar HaLomed VeHaOved youth movement (Dror Israel) and another series of roles in the youth movement. I also directed the Youth Department of Misgav Regional Council. From there, I went into formal education, holding a series of positions as principal: eight years as principal of the senior-high division at Misgav Regional Council School and principal of ORT in Shelomi. In the past two years, I have been principal of Manor-Cabri School at Kibbutz Cabri, a unique school for teaching of art, science, and the humanities in the Western Galilee. The school is unique in its teaching methods and its development of several innovative fields of teaching in science and the arts. I am also proud of having guided youth and adult missions to Poland for the past twenty-five years.

Perah Bar Cohen, Principal, Yahalom School

I live in Gan-Ner, a community settlement on Mt. Gilboa. I am happily married to Ilan and mother of Rotem, Noam, and Uri. I engage in, study, and breathe education. I have a Master’s degree in Education System Management and Organization and completed the Avney Rosha Institute’s principal-training program. I believe that education builds a community—and that a community builds education. It was my great privilege to establish a thriving and developing school alongside the Jezreel neighborhood community in Afula.  
For the past seven years, I have been principal of Yahalom School for A.D.M. and environment. A stands for *adam* (person), D for dialogue, and M for meaning.  
As a place for creative endeavor that enables the community to share, imagine, explore, and contemplate inwardly and outwardly, every individual grows his or her personal voice in their social context.  
We believe in regarding students, teaching faculty and parents as partners in self-education and value-centric action that strives for continual improvement and, by their means, a commitment to building an educational community.

Ravit Kazes Tiram, Principal, Beit Hinuch Rona Ramon School

I’m Ravit; I live with my partner, Gilad, and am the mother of Shaked. This is my fifth year as principal and my twenty-eighth year in the education system. The guideposts of our educational outlook are holistic: seeing the individual in their completeness, relating to diversity and difference among students, regarding learning as the product of involvement and curiosity, and reinforcing the sense of self-capacity, personal responsibility, autonomy and choice, dialogue, and cooperative endeavor.

Ruth ROSENTHAL Principal, Rimon School

I’ve got thirty-one years of seniority and teaching and eleven as a principal—mostly at the post-primary level. I’m into my second year at a public elementary school in Karne Shomron. I have a Master’s degree in Educational Management and have completed a leadership course.  
I’m connected with the profession, am aware of its importance, and study it personally.

Sara Koch, Jewish-Israeli culture regional coordinator, Tel Aviv

I grew up in Tel Aviv, attended Tel Aviv University, and did Master’s studies in Educational Counseling. For twelve years, I was principal of the School for Environment, Nature, and Society in Tel Aviv, a unique school in terms of its innovative teaching methods, composed of primary and middle-school divisions. For two years, I directed the Preschool Department for the Municipality of Tel Aviv. Today, I’m in charge of admission to the teaching profession and serve as the Jewish-Israeli culture expert for Tel Aviv District.

Sarah Oved, Principal, ORT-Psagot School

Sarah Oved, married, three daughters, one grandaughter.  
B.A. English Lg. and literature, Arabic Lg. and literature.   
M.A. TOEFL.  
A Phd. student in Education.  
12 years school principal, out of which, three in elementary school.  
My school: 1400 students, 155 teachers, in Karmiel in the Galilee.  
Issues of identity are at the heart of our educational program due to the heterogeneous nature of school. Our school leadership believes that without nurturing one's identity, the individual cannot reach and realize their potential.

Sharon Michaeli- Ramon, Principal, Kulna-Yahad School

I’m an educator and counselor, an expert in humanitarian aid in Israel and abroad, and the developer of resilience programs and emergency teams.  
I am a lieutenant-colonel in the army reserves, Home-Front Command, Greater Tel Aviv District headquarters.

I have been principal of Kulna-Yahad School, a humanistic Arabic-Hebrew school in Jaffa, for the past three years, after serving as homeroom teacher at Gavriel School in Tel Aviv.   
I have a Bachelor’s degree in Special Education and sociology, a Master’s degree in Geography of Disaster Areas, and a Master’s degree in Anthropology—including a thesis on land disputes between the Druze and the state, management of nature, and land conflicts.  
I am a behavioral analyst, specializing in ASD and behavioral disorders.   
I author a blog and a podcast— flexible education, both dealing with inserting reality into learning in the classroom, and am the author of the TOGI blog— development of social and learning-by-movement skills.

Shirit Aharoni, Principal, Lapid MH School

I have a Master’s degree in Education System Management. I live in Kefar Oranim, am married, and have three children. I have been a principal for nine years, including seven as principal of Lapid MH School. The school is a community institution that specializes in providing students with differential responses.

Shlomit Kroviarski Jewish-Israeli culture regional coordinator, North

**Shlomit Kroviarsky** is the **District Coordinator for Civil Education, Shared Life and Israeli Jewish Culture for the Northern District,** where she leads an education program aimed at promoting multiculturalism and civics in the district schools. An educator since 1992, she produces events such as seminars, conferences, and training sessions, and organizes meetings between Arab and Jewish residents where the participants study topics such as the arts, English, and agriculture. She also volunteers with people with special needs and leads humanitarian missions in Africa.

Shoshana Ben Zur, Principal, Beit Hinuch Nofarim School

I have twenty-seven years of teaching experience, a Bachelor’s degree in Educational Psychology, and a Master’s degree in Educational Management. I directed numerous programs as a member of a management team and, among the many coordination positions that I have held, for two years I ran the HILA Center in Petah Tikva, a center for at-risk youth.  
At the present writing, I am into my third year as principal of a growing school in Rosh Ha’Ayin— a challenging period by all accounts.

The uniqueness of the school lies in its infrastructure, based on values such as responsibility, respect, acceptance of the other, mutual responsibility, and so on. These values are integrated into learning / teaching / evaluation and the uniqueness of the school finds expression through them. The school emphasizes difference among students and the need to adjust the framework of the school to each of them.  
Our school promotes, in various ways, the cause of education for sustainability and the promotion of health among its students.

Last year, we won the First Star award.

Sigal Rosh, Principal, Neve Dahlia School

I’m into my fifth year as a principal after four years as assistant principal. I have a Bachelor’s degree in Art and a Master’s degree in Art Education; I also facilitate groups of parents and children. My school promotes emotional and social health, integrates game-playing into learning, and emphasizes education in Jewish culture outside the religious context.

Simi Perez, Principal, Nitzanim School

I have a Bachelor’s degree in Education and a Master’s degree in Migration Studies and Social Integration. I advise parents and mentor those in the 20–30 age group.  
I established Nitzanim School in Tel Mond twenty years ago and have been its principal ever since, with a two-year break when I ran the Education Department in Even Yehuda.  
I took a mentors’ course at the Ministry of Education and mentored young principals. Afterwards, I led “action communities” composed of principals who were interested in bringing about change in their schools.   
The school that I run is an integrative one that emphasizes growth, empowerment, and development of personal and social responsibility among everyone who comes through its doors—students, staff members, and involved parents.  
I strongly believe in investing in human capital, encouraging creativity, promoting enterprise, and establishing broad community relations—leading to the formation of a community that evolves continually in accordance with changing reality.

Tamar Stern, Principal, Kesem School

I’m the principal of an elementary school that belongs to the “open” educational program – an environmental dialogue-oriented school. I came to the principal’s role from the field of educational counseling (a Bachelor’s degree and approximately. ten years of work with at-risk youth) and a Master’s degree in Art Therapy. I have been the principal of the current school for eight years. During this time, I have inculcated values of choice and multi-ageism, learning in various away-from-class spaces and in the forest, and the flagship program: writing a multidisciplinary, multivalent, and multi-annual curricular program that we have been implementing in around 50% of daily classroom hours for the past three years.

Uri Perry, Principal, Tavnit Hachinuch Hamuzhav School

I’m 38 years old, and married, and have two children; I live in Ma’ale Tzviya.  
For the past three years, I have been principal of Tavnit Hachinuch Hamuzhav, a unique school that emphasizes the natural genius of each and every child and the possibility of bringing it to fruition for the betterment of society and humankind.  
I have a Bachelor’s degree in Communication and a Master’s degree, *cum laude,* in multidisciplinary teaching of the humanities.

Yonit Leizerovich, Jewish-Israeli Culture- Communities

I’m a Jewish-Israeli culture expert for the Settlement Education Administration, which includes supporting the development of entrepreneurship and special programs in Jewish-Israeli culture at some 200 large middle schools and high schools in Israel. In addition to studies in teaching Jewish-Israeli culture and Bible, I have a Master’s degree in Social Psychology from Bar-Ilan University at a Bachelor’s degree in Behavioral Science from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.  
I did career service in the Education Corps of the Israel Defense Forces, serving in social and educational roles—reintegrating at-risk soldiers into military and civilian life, including acquiring occupations and high-school equivalency. I also taught Jewish-Israeli culture and Bible at Hativat HaRishonim in Hod Hasharon and have been working at a theater for children and youth.

Zsipi Shabi Jewish-Israeli culture regional coordinator, Center

Tsipi Shabi is currently the Director of the Jewish-Israeli Culture unit in the Central District of the Ministry of Education. She has over 29 years’ experience working in elementary school education. Her professional career spans various positions in the Ministry of Education including class educator, deputy principal and pedagogical coordinator. Tsipi was the manager of the Heritage program of the city of Modi’in and also an instructor of the Tali Foundation for eight years. She holds a M.Ed in Jewish Education and Gender and was a cofounder of the Reform school in Modi’in. Tsipi believes in the Jewish saying, based on a passage from the Midrash, that proper ethical behavior precedes the Torah and has educated a generation of students to act accordingly. She resides in Reu’t, married with three grown up children.

Ayala Deckel, Group Facilitator and Director of Content Development, Bina

I am the content-development director for the Bina program and the head of in-service activities for school faculty. I am a lecturer and facilitator in the fields of Jewish studies, identity, and gender. I have a Master’s degree in Education, completed a program in facilitation of groups of parents offered by Adler Institute, and am attending a program for Israeli rabbinate of the Hartman Institute and Oranim Academy.

Yuval Shapiro Group facilitator, Machon Shitim

Yuval Shapiro is both the coordinator and guide of the group of school principals. He lives on Kibbutz Na'aran in the Jordan Valley and works for Machon Ha'Chagim, whose mission is to preserve, strengthen and stimulate Jewish and Zionist identity and culture through a humanistic prism. Yuval leads educational programs for school principals and teachers on Jewish Israeli culture, aimed at creating and strengthening participants' affiliation to Jewish tradition and culture through innovation and creativity. Besides this, Yuval leads groups of adults and teenagers to Poland in order to study the history of World War II and the Holocaust.

Osnat Fox, Director of Makom’s Institute for Global Jewish Voices

Osnat spearheads Makom’s work to connect young Israelis with global Jewry and peoplehood. Past roles include Senior Shlichah (Israeli emissary) at JEWISHColorado, Psychology and math teacher, regional manager at Mindlab, teaching thinking skills through games and co-initiator-leader of Ya’ala, a community engagement program at Hillel Jerusalem. Osnat holds a BA in Psychology, an MA in Education Policy and Management, and a teaching certificate in Psychology. She is married to Shalom and the proud mother of Shahar, Sagi and Yogev.

Joe Schwartz

Director of Makom and Educational Innovation for the Jewish Agency for Israel

Joe assumed the role of Director of Makom in 2021. Prior to joining Makom, he launched his own venture, IDRA, which seeks to strengthen ties between Israelis and world Jewry by leveraging the vital Jewish culture both in Israel and abroad. He served as Rabbi of the Conservative Synagogue of Fifth Avenue, has written curricula and taught for diverse audiences. Before becoming a rabbi, Joe practiced law in New York City. He holds degrees from Columbia University and the NYU School of Law, and received his rabbinic ordination from the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. In August 2020, Joe made aliya with his family. He is married to Avigail and kvelling father to Zev and Paz. They live in Tel Aviv.