**The Miri Richmond Program**

Schools generally steer outstanding students toward scientific tracks that focus on math, physics, and chemistry. Mediocre students on the other hand, are often directed toward sociology and behavioral sciences.

I believe there is a covert influence being wielded over the students, thus inhibiting their personal choices in terms of their pursuit of further education. As a result, mediocre students turn to academic studies in the social sciences departments.

During their first year, they encounter great difficulty and a large percentage of them find it hard to advance to their second year of studies.

The present program proposes to integrate outstanding students in academic studies while they are still in high school. They will learn one of the core courses of the profession together with social work students.

The program will expose them to the world of academia and the profession of social work. Likewise, it will help them improve their Hebrew and enhance their sense of personal capability. Their academic studies will be recognized as part of their matriculation units and they will be offered the opportunity to volunteer in social services departments, which will also be recognized as matriculation units.

Excellence in social work must begin at a young age. This program aims to recruit the best students into the profession and thus begin the process of brand cultivation for social work and changing the image of welfare services.

The Marie Curie model, which is already operational in Israel, can be used, beginning with a pilot of five students in one social work school.