

Teacher Training at the Institute

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Rabbi Hayyim Angel

We have been significantly increasing our Teacher Training programs as we spread our vision into the Day School system and communities throughout the country. Two major areas of expansion this past year have been with our new Sephardic Initiative and the Ben Porat Yosef Yeshiva Day School in Paramus, New Jersey.

Sephardic Initiative:

The history and culture of Sephardim, Middle Eastern and North African Jews are relatively unknown to large numbers of Jews. And when attempts are made to be inclusive, they generally relate to foods and music...and almost never to intellectual and spiritual contributions.

The Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals has launched a “Sephardic Initiative,” to promote a greater inclusiveness and “wholeness” in Jewish education.

We have sponsored two conferences for teachers in Jewish schools, from grades 7 through 12. In October 2017, 25 educators from nine schools in the New York City area participated. In March 2018, 15 educators from seven schools in the Los Angeles area participated. We are planning other conferences in cities throughout North America. These conferences provide practical information on how inclusiveness in Jewish education can be enhanced. Teachers engage in discussion and serious learning. Teachers are given publications to help them in their own study of Sephardic/pan-Sephardic civilization. Teachers write reports on how they have gone on to implement a Sephardic component in their classes, and these reports are circulated among the group so that they can learn from each other.

The Institute is planning a series of publications that will provide readily accessible material for educators, as well as for the general public. We have recently reprinted our pamphlet “Exploring Sephardic Customs and Traditions,” and are in the process of arranging for other publications. We also will develop an online presence to support this initiative.

For more information, and to contribute to this effort, please see our website, <https://www.jewishideas.org/article/our-institutes-sephardic-initiative>.

Tanakh Teacher Training:

Since joining the Institute in 2013, I have conducted a number of teacher trainings in Tanakh education. The goal is to work with current and future rabbis and educators to promote a fully traditional, scholarly, integrated approach that is both spiritually nourishing and intellectually sound. There is a great thirst for this type of education and we are at the vanguard of promoting these values.

This past year, I worked with the senior administration at Ben Porat Yosef Yeshiva Day School in Paramus, New Jersey on a revolutionary new Tanakh curriculum. They will be rolling out the first phase, for grades 1-3, this coming year. You can read the newspaper article by Rabbi Saul Zucker (the Head of School at Ben Porat Yosef) in the Jewish Link of New Jersey at <https://www.jewishlinknj.com/features/25472-fluency-and-mastery-beginning-with-foundations>

We will continue to build on that success at Ben Porat Yosef in the coming year.

Since joining the Institute, I also have run teacher trainings at Yeshiva University's Rabbinical School; The Graduate Program of Advanced Talmudic Study for Women (GPATS) of Yeshiva University; the Azrieli Graduate School for Jewish Education of Yeshiva University; Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School; Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto High School, Toronto, Canada; The Academy of Jewish Thought, Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa; Ramaz High School in New York City, and the Ida Crown Jewish Academy High School in Skokie, IL.

In addition to the teacher training programs, educators throughout the country see us as a critical address to discuss educational issues in the modern Jewish classroom.

It is a privilege to work with rabbis and educators to promote our Institute's vision, and it also provides a multiplier effect to promote our dearest core values at the Institute as we collaborate with so many others dedicated to an improved Jewish Educational landscape.

As always, thank you for all of your support, and we will continue to spread our vision to the broader Jewish community.

Rabbi Hayyim Angel

National Scholar

Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals