

**Chais
Teacher
Institute
Summer
2009
Training**



The Israel Center for Excellence through Education*

Jerusalem, Israel

***Formerly, The Society for Excellence through Education**

Chais Teacher Institute (C.T.I.)

Summer 2009

"The workshops contribute to my pedagogical development at the highest level,"
-Math Teacher from Nahariyah

Revitalize, Re-energize, Recharge

Nothing re-energizes Excellence 2000 teachers like our intensive summer training workshops. The 3-day seminar at the Israel Center for Excellence through Education is the highlight in a series of year-long teacher training seminars. As Dr. Avi Poleg, Director of the Chais Teacher Institute, explains, "Teachers don't 'graduate' out of the Chais teacher training program; rather, they return each season to acquire new skills, tools, and techniques for meeting the unique educational needs of highly talented and motivated students".

Welcome Teachers!

This year 390 teachers from more than 261 different schools arrived ready to refresh their teaching skills and to take them up a notch. This one-of-a-kind seminar kicked off with more than 95% of eligible teachers in attendance. The teachers represent the eclectic student body in Israel: there were religious and non-religious participants from urban and rural areas, as well as teachers from Jewish, Christian, Druze, Bedouin and Muslim backgrounds.

New and veteran teachers all have something to gain at Chais and there are at least 12 reasons why. The Chais Teacher Institute has developed 12 different training tracks to meet the needs of teachers of differing subjects, grades and experience levels. Each track meets for 3 days of seminars, lectures, hands-on activities, and idea-sharing.

The dedication and motivation of the teachers who come to our workshops is obvious in their year after year, morning, afternoon and evening attendance. Excellence 2000 teachers leave their families for 3 days –twice a year (veterans) and four times a year (new teachers)—throughout the year because the skills they take home with them last all year long and beyond.

Greetings from the Directors

Chais Teacher Institute participants were oriented to the program by its Director, Dr. Avi Poleg; by Mr. Moish Berdichev, Director of the Excellence 2000 Program and by Mr. Nir Hacoheh, Director of the Israel Center for Excellence through Education. The teachers were also given the opportunity to mingle with the regional coordinators with whom they will be working closely throughout the coming school year.

In his address to new teachers, Mr. Hacoheh stressed the need to motivate excellent students. "We want to answer the needs of excellent students and we believe the way to do that is to develop a school-wide infrastructure." He also stressed that the teachers must take a long-term view when

recommending students for the Excellence 2000 program. “A broader and long-lasting approach is to look at the students who are excellent, but to define excellence broadly; to include not only those students at the top of the class academically, but those who are excellent in their social and behavioral skills and in their potential,” stressed the Israel Center for Excellence through Education Director. “A student who is curious and motivated may be ideal for our program, even though he/she does not have the highest marks in the class.”

Experience Essential Enrichment

“The training is an absolutely wonderful experience and enriches all of us as teachers,” said a math teacher from Ashdod, a city in southern Israel. “It is well worth attending,” he continues. Top grades were also received from the country’s North. “The training is on a very high level, the materials are useful and the instruction is excellent,” said a math teacher from Nahariya, who boasts three years at Chais’ summer training workshops. “The Chais Teacher Institute chose the perfect instructors who know how to enrich my overall pedagogical skills, not just my math teaching skills.”



Go Easy, Go Green

The Chais Teacher Institute training seminars promote year-long enrichment and the preservation of our environment. The Institute distributes CD's that accompany all of the study units. These CD's contain all of the projection pages and student worksheets from the units to facilitate easier use and reproduction by the teachers.

Virtual Distance Learning

As an integral part of their training, new Chais teachers were introduced to the Israel Center's Virtual Distance Learning program. Spread out in 7 different locations, the teachers experienced a simulation of how schools from all over Israel can interact in real-time to compete on math and science quizzes. The activity is a no-fail method of revving up the teachers for next year: by the end of the session all of them are chatting about which of their students they'd like to sign up for our upcoming virtual activities.

Everything Old is New Again

Teachers received CDs on four new units this year. The two new math units are “Math Adventures II” and “In Pursuit of Algebra.” The two new science units are “Sorting Things Out,” which explores the principles of substance separation and “A Taste of Science III.” In every classroom and sometimes spilling over into the hallways, one could hear the “Excellence 2000” kind of classroom noises – learning through group work, sharing, praising one another and thinking out loud as these new materials were introduced.

More for the Detective Club

In addition to the ongoing training that all Chais participants receive throughout the year, future seminars will be held for those who have chosen to delve deeper into Excellence. Teachers who participate in the Young Detectives Club will receive an additional 18 –30 hours (18 for veterans and 30 for new and one-year teachers) of Chais teacher training during the school year, focusing on their particular subject.

Let’s Hear From the Teachers

One of the most inspiring aspects of the Chais Teacher Institute summer training is the “Teachers’ Forum” panel. This session allows teachers to share with one another both their frustrations and successes from teaching in the program.. Every Excellence teacher benefits from this annual platform that allows them to share and compare: what worked, what didn’t work and how next year can be even better. Teachers normally get the opportunity to exchange notes and ideas with teachers from their own schools and maybe from their own communities. But only at the Chais Institute can teachers exchange notes and innovative ideas with other teachers countrywide, who are all dedicated to one goal: excellence in education.



What’s New in 2009?

In the past, Chais staff wrote and presented all of the lessons, but 2009 was different. For the first time veteran teachers wrote, presented and taught their own workshops at the seminar. Creative topics such as “Challenging Children to Enjoy Mathematical Thinking” and “Reaching the Peak” were given over by Excellence 2000 teachers. This new program was a success; positive feedback was received from students and teachers alike.

The Science Adventure Program Soars

Field trips to research, science and technology centers allow student to enrich their science experiences in a variety of platforms. As part of our ongoing Science Adventures program, for the first time representatives of well-known academic and research institutions were brought to the summer training seminar. This enabled the representatives of the various programs to address

the teachers directly, and let them have a taste of what they have to offer their students.

Only at Chais

More than 200 teacher training hours were held in a stimulating atmosphere to captive audiences. Clearly the success of 2009 demonstrates that the experience is as valued as it is invaluable. The Chais Teacher Training summer workshop of 2009 experience was expressed eloquently by one math teacher, "I come every year and every year because of it, I'm a better teacher."