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# Educators As Social Entrepreneurs: A Different Approach to Teacher Training

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*Abstract: Future teachers will face challenges that are unknown in the educational field of the present. It seems that more than ever, the future teacher will have to display the ability to adapt to changes, understand societal and cultural issues deeply, and to create and maintain a sense of community. (Bar Shalom, Bloch and Peretz, 2007). The four walls of the classroom, which used to define a clear boundary between the class and “the world out there”, seem to become more fluid, fragile, and open to outside influences. Therefore, the future teacher is expected to be proactive and have the skills needed in creating partnerships with the surrounding community (Bar Shalom, Bloch and Peretz, 2007, Bar Shalom, 2006, Epstein & Sheldon, 2006, Sanders, 2005, Sanders et al, 2002). As a strategy to help future teachers adapt to the demands and challenges of the future, The David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem created, in conjunction with the Jerusalem municipality, a program in Social Entrepreneurship, which aims to help future teachers become educational leaders who have a capacity to generate social change in the context of the classroom and the surrounding community.*

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Teacher Training

## Introduction

**F**UTURE TEACHERS WILL face challenges that are unknown in the educational field of the present. More than ever, the future teacher will need the ability to adapt to changes, to understand societal and cultural issues deeply, and

to create and maintain a sense of community. (Bar Shalom, Bloch and Peretz, 2007). The walls of the classroom, which used to define a clear boundary between the classroom and “the world out there,” will become more fluid, fragile, and open to outside influences.

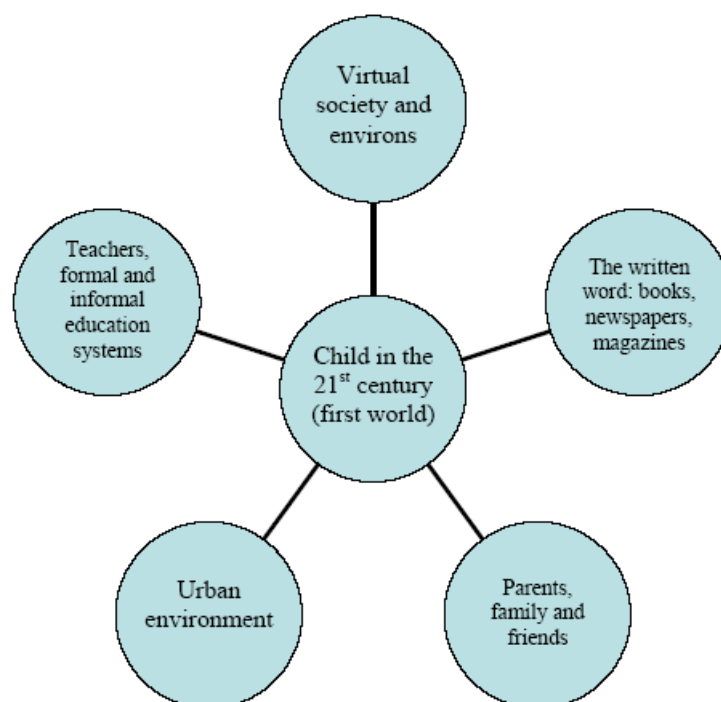


Diagram 1: The Forces that Shape and Educate 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Children



Therefore, the future teacher is expected to be proactive and have the skills needed in creating partnerships with the surrounding community (Bar Shalom, Bloch and Peretz, 2007, Bar Shalom, 2006, Epstein & Sheldon, 2006, Sanders, 2005, Sanders et al, 2002).

Diagram 1 emphasizes a powerful new player influencing the child's education. Virtual reality has already entered class life in ways that traditional teaching is not equipped to deal with. For example: a teenager girl bursts out crying in the middle of a lesson and runs out of the class; later the teacher finds out that her boyfriend had sent her an SMS that he was breaking up with her.<sup>1</sup> This mundane example indicates the complexity and challenge lying ahead of the teachers in particular and society in general.

In addition to changing roles, boundaries and influences in the complex business of meaning-making, there is an increasingly powerful voice in the educational community advocating for greater community involvement on the basis of normative rather than pragmatic grounds. This stream of educational thought argues that the very purposes of education are not only grounded in the desire for the development of the learner's intellectual and emotional life, cultural competence and vocational skills, but for her connection to society and desire and ability to contribute meaningfully to its positive evolution. Even if the surrounding milieu was not changing as it is, this broad school of thought – carried forward by educational practitioners and academics, community groups and educational organizations – argues for increased attention to what they variously call citizenship education, democracy education, leadership development, justice education, and futures thinking.

As a strategy to help future teachers adapt to the demands and challenges of the future and become the co-shapers of the societies in which they live – local, national and international – the David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem created, in conjunction with the Jerusalem Municipality (The Department of Social Services), a program in Social Entrepreneurship. The program aims to help future teachers become educational leaders capable of generating different organizational and social relations that will frame the educational experiences they offer their students. They become capable of enacting social change in the context of the classroom and the surrounding community. Even though it is implicit in the program directors' approach, whether or not the student teachers should be trained to, themselves, create leadership development opportunities for their school students, remains an open question.

At the end of the three-year program, the students receive a joint diploma from David Yellin College

and the Jerusalem Municipality. Both institutions felt that they had something to gain from the synergy generated by the college and municipality working as a team. The college brings the formal educational know-how, while the municipality brings extensive practical knowledge from the fields of community work and informal education. The idea was to create a synergy that is greater than the sum of its parts. The individuals behind the program's inception are the former dean, Dr. Itai Zimran, the current dean, Dr. Anna Rousseau, and the head of the Social Services Department at the Jerusalem Municipality, Mr. Yossi Sharabi. The program staff consists of Dr. Yehuda Bar Shalom and Mr. Eyal Bloch, and Ms. Rachel Peretz, senior social worker from the Jerusalem Municipality (The Department of Social Services).

### **The Ideal Teacher as Social Entrepreneur**

Social entrepreneurs are individuals who show an ability not merely to criticize a given social or communal problem, but to identify a solution, find partners to help in its implementation, and ultimately generate the desired social change. In some cases they have the ability to turn a crisis into an opportunity. They are not "just dreamers" they are dreamers, visionaries, and do-ers. They seem to be "married" to their cause and difficulties do not deter their enthusiasm. (Bar Shalom, 2006, Drayton, 2006, Bornstein, 2004). Social entrepreneurs are not interested in profit. Therefore, mission-related impact is their main criterion for gauging success. Of course, social entrepreneurs need resources and even wealth, but these are seen as means to an end. (Dees, 1998)

We envision a new generation of teachers who will seek to become social entrepreneurs. They will have the ability not only to be effective teachers in subject matter but will also use their subject matter as a springboard for addressing current communal, national and global issues. They will be able to inspire and educate their students in new ways, empower communities, and generate social change. They will create effective partnerships with the surrounding communities while locating additional resources to make their initiatives succeed. One of the writers of this paper, Eyal Bloch, is a model for social entrepreneurship. After many years of teaching experience from kindergarten to university level, Eyal Bloch now acts as a social and educational entrepreneur. He has created and developed educational models for coexistence and cooperation that have been duplicated throughout the world. He founded and coordinated the "AllinPeace" movement, which organizes "Peace Olympics" for children from areas of conflict throughout the world. Eyal Bloch has also

<sup>1</sup> True example reported to us by an Israeli teacher.

worked with visually impaired youth from the Zulu nation in South Africa, who became the "heroes" of the AllinPeace children due to their ability to run 240 km in four days! Since 2000, Eyal has been involved in developing programs for bridging visually-impaired and seeing students in cooperation with the Centre for Studies of the Blind at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

## **David Yellin College and Jerusalem Municipality Educational Social Entrepreneurship Program Design**

### ***The First Year***

The first year provides students with the theoretical foundations of social entrepreneurship, presenting many examples from successful educational initiatives in Israel and abroad that have achieved change in specific communities. A key focus is programs that have succeeded in empowering students and communities who belong to marginalized and excluded groups, such as Meier's Central Park East School in New York, (Meier, 2002, Wood, 1992); Bialik School in Tel Aviv, which serves mostly children from migrant workers families (Bar Shalom, 2006); Neve Shalom school, which integrates Arabs and Jewish students; Keshet School, which integrates religious and secular Jewish students (Bar Shalom, 2006, Weil, 2000); and Kedma School, which empowers students from marginalized Mizrahi communities (Aram, 2007, Bar Shalom, 2006, Bairey Ben Ishai, 1998). The common denominator of all of these schools is that their leaders have proven themselves to be social entrepreneurs able to create frameworks suitable to the social and cultural needs of the students and the surrounding communities. School was not the only model utilized. Students were also exposed to social entrepreneurs who generated changes in the fields of social services and informal education. One of the most important examples was the analysis of Uri Amedi's work in the "Heart of the City" Project of Jerusalem. Amedi is a veteran social entrepreneur who has managed to bring together people from diverse backgrounds to create an ambience of tolerance and coexistence despite the problems central Jerusalem has known. His work is an excellent example of building a democratic civil society by the people and for the people.

One of Amedi's biggest achievements was the transformation of the city's open market workers, usually seen as a subversive and "criminal" population, into a democratic self-run community. Another famous program is Amedi's intervention in favor of the Palestinian children working in the Mahane Yehuda market. He created a program, together with

Palestinian social workers, that enabled these children to regain some of their childhood in their harsh life conditions. Uri's work has been a very important teaching model for the students. They were impressed by the depth of Uri's three-dimensional model whereby he strives to use the center of Jerusalem as a laboratory to work on what he perceives are the three biggest problems that Israeli society faces, namely the tension between the religious and secular Jews; between Mizrachim (often underprivileged Jews of North African and Asian origin), Ashkenazim (Jews of European origin), and the national tensions between Jews and Arabs.

Other progressive and experimental models are examined critically. For example, democratic and progressive schools in Israel and abroad certainly offer a new way of looking at the educational experience. The program helps students carefully examine the possible societal price of the way these institutions seem to mostly attract students from middle class backgrounds (Bar Shalom, 2006, Hecht, 2005, Zimran, 1991). Other important theoretical foundations are critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1996, McLaren, 1989, Freire, 1993), alternative ways of thinking, (such as DeBono's *Six Thinking Hats*, 1999), and an examination of the pros and cons of the increase in third sector activity in the west in general and in Israel in particular (Gidron, et al, 2000).

### ***Second Year***

The second year is devoted to advanced learning in social entrepreneurship. In the second semester, each student, in conjunction with the Jerusalem Municipality, is assigned to do field work in social projects such as working with disadvantaged youth in community projects or working in a radio show for visually impaired people designed and operated jointly by students and blind people and broadcast over the college's radio station. The two teachers from the college, together with the facilitator from the Jerusalem Municipality, supervise the students' activities in the field. Each student reports during the semester and gives a final report at the end of the year. The practical work in the field has proved itself to be a worthy endeavor for the students. It enables them to identify a range of tools and strategies that they expect will prove useful in the regular school setting. This experience offers them opportunities to grow as educators capable of integrating formal and informal education in their future work.

### ***The Third Year***

In the third year, the students prepare a seminary paper requiring them to conduct research on an educational initiative. We particularly encourage students to research an initiative that they themselves have

created i.e. an action research project on their social entrepreneurship. Other students' research proposed initiatives that may or may be not implemented in the field.

The third year is open to other students who have not participated in the first two years but who have a leaning to educational entrepreneurship. These students can write the research paper, but will not be eligible for the dual diploma with the Jerusalem Municipality. This option has been effective for veteran teachers who decide to return to school and take some courses. This course has been relevant for those who wish to explore their field from the point of view of social entrepreneurship.

### Examples of Student Initiatives

From questionnaires and ongoing evaluation of the program, we can see that a majority of students feel that the skills learned in the program, especially the meeting with social entrepreneurs, created positive change in the way they view their unfolding educational career in general and the possibility of generating change in particular. Along the way, we have seen students engaging in new and exciting initiatives. Here are a few examples.

Ela's field placement in the second year was in a low-income neighborhood in Jerusalem. Together, with the local community worker, she engaged in dialogue with neighborhood children and educators. As a group, they came to the conclusion that they would like to do something to improve the aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood. A joint committee decided that painting the huge trash containers with children's art would make a lively addition to the neighborhood. Ela turned to the David Yellin Arts Department which was happy to provide students to undertake this project as part of their own learning requirements. We see here a simple win-win situation in which the resources exist and just the social entrepreneur was needed to tie them together. The project was very successful and received local media attention.

Ravit is a veteran teacher who decided to join the research seminar in her third year because she wanted to generate changes in her field. She is the vice principal of Keshet School. The school itself is an example of a social entrepreneurship initiative by Ruti Lehavi. She created the first Israel school in which orthodox and secular Jewish children, who are normally segregated, study in a bi-cultural school that seeks to strengthen pluralistic values and acceptance of the "other" (See Bar Shalom, 2006, Weil, 2000).

During this research year, Ravit came to the conclusion that what is missing in the Keshet School is the informal component. She came up with the idea

of creating a youth movement that would operate according to the school values. She checked this idea, sending questionnaires to parents and students, leading focus groups, and engaging in dialogue with staff members. She concluded that the idea seemed feasible to all those involved and the initiative has now been implemented in the school.

Karnit and Noa worked with the "Aleh" association for the blind. They met with visually impaired students and asked them about their needs and aspirations. It emerged that there is no radio broadcast addressing the needs and concerns of blind people. With the guidance of the Aleh staff, they joined forces the David Yellin College and recruited resources available there. The college radio station had a broadcasting slot, but did not always know exactly how to use it. The new radio program, created jointly by the social entrepreneurship students and blind students from the "Aleh" organization, serves the blind community in the city and the surrounding communities.

All these three examples reflect a process of needs assessment, planning, and implementation. Furthermore, we see that the social entrepreneurs/educators use and integrate available resources to create projects whose outcomes were previously unattainable. They developed what we call "social entrepreneurial thinking" - a way to address a need or void in the community with a win-win action. We are sure that they will use this ability as future teachers in the field. In support of this view, Ravit, who already is a veteran in the field, testifies in a letter that the program changed her mindset about possible solutions to social and cultural problems in her school.

### The Significance of the Program

In questionnaires and discussions that we have conducted with the students during the last three years, we have discovered that the students felt that the exposure to the actions, philosophies and fields of social entrepreneurs has given them skills that were not accessible in other college courses. Furthermore, the exposure to the philosophy of social entrepreneurship and to social entrepreneurs gave them fresh ideas about new possibilities in school community relations and in community development in general. The students particularly liked the combination of visits to the field, hands-on placements, and theoretical classroom discussions.

We believe that the days are gone in which teachers can or should hope that the school walls will protect them from the world "out there" (Elkind, 1997). This program attempts to develop some responses to the burning question of how to train teachers in the changing world we live in (Hargreaves, 1998).

### Additional Theoretical Considerations

At a deep, primary level the program seeks to offer a meaningful response to the dystopian tendencies so influential in Israel and the western world today. Despite the apparent wealth, knowledge and power available to citizens and their governments, there is deep ambivalence about whether we are in fact proceeding down a path of progress and positive social transition or one of increasing dysfunction and non-sustainability. Futures Thinking is a discipline and a pedagogy that has taken on the challenge of helping students envisage a positive future using eclectic methods of social analysis and investigation (Slaughter and Bussey, 2005). This approach shares with some approaches to citizenship and democracy education the need to develop the interpersonal and emotional qualities necessary to embody effective

and worthy agency. Hannah Arendt, Martha Nussbaum and Maxine Greene are particularly strong sources to draw on in this regard with their respective notions of deliberative argumentation, compassion and imaginative action (Waghid, 2005).

An additional source of theory we draw on is that of service-learning. A field developed in the USA for over two decades, it has attracted extensive empirical and analytical research. While used in many different settings and for different purposes, including as an adjunct to studies in diverse disciplines, personal growth and citizenship development (Eyler and Giles, 1999), its use in the context of citizenship education is of particular interest to us. A strong theoretical basis that distinguishes between the different 'types' of citizens that programs seek to develop, is most compelling (Westheimer, Kahne, 2004).

**From "What Kind of Citizen? The Politics of Educating for Democracy" *American Educational Research Journal*. Volume 41 No. 2, Summer 2004, 237-269. Joel Westheimer, University of Ottawa. Joseph Kahne, Mills College**

	Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Justice Oriented Citizen
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acts responsibly in his/her community</li> <li>Works and pays taxes</li> <li>Obeys laws</li> <li>Recycles, gives blood</li> <li>Volunteers to lend a hand in times of crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active member of community organizations and/or improvement efforts</li> <li>Organizes community efforts to care for those in need, promote economic development, or clean up environment</li> <li>Knows how government agencies work</li> <li>Knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critically assesses social, political, and economic structures to see beyond surface causes</li> <li>Knows about social movements and how to effect systemic change</li> <li>Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice</li> </ul>
<b>SAMPLE ACTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contributes food to a food drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps to organize a food drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes</li> </ul>
<b>CORE ASSUMPTIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character; they must be honest, responsible, and law-abiding members of the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must question and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time</li> </ul>

In proposing this typology, the authors do not suggest a hierarchy per se, as each kind of citizenship understanding, commitment and behavior is necessary for a dynamic and healthy democratic society. They do claim that the last is rarely sought. Even when it is what a program declaratively seeks, there is often a

huge dissonance between the declared goal – which embraces the Justice Oriented Citizen – and the actual impact of implementation – which does not. (Westheimer, Kahne & Rogers, 1999). In the examples given in this article:



- **Ela's** bin-painting project is a case of encouraging **Participatory Citizenship**
- **Ravit's** school-based youth movement is unclear, without us knowing more about what values and kinds of citizenship the youth movement itself engenders.
- **Karnit and Noah's** radio with and for the blind project goes much closer to reflecting the development of a **Justice Oriented Citizen** in that it addresses root causes of the problem, namely lack of access creating inequality of service and information availability.

This model enriches our thinking and is an important ancillary to the concept of social entrepreneurship. It ensures that we continue to put in front of students the full range of possible actions as social entrepreneurs – not only the more widespread model of the personally responsible citizen and the participatory citizen, but also the Justice oriented citizen. It also helps us and the students be discerning in relation to the ways society benefits from the outcomes of specific student actions and

## The Future

Whereas programs to develop entrepreneurship in the context of MBA studies at business schools is widespread and has attracted comparative research (Twaalfhoven, 2001), programs such as the one under review are still in their relative nascence. As the program evolves, we will increasingly draw on new thinking and practice designed to build new self-conceptions and tools for the teachers of the future. In addition to giving additional attention to how the wisdom and insight of citizenship education, democracy education, leadership development, justice education and “Futures Thinking” can find their place in the course, additional tools we will draw on are: ecological thinking, process thinking, chaotic thinking and possibilities thinking. These will all strengthen future teachers' capacities to imagine a new reality (Greene, 2002) and to have a sense of ownership over their new social initiatives (Bygrave, 1994).

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Dr. Bar Shalom has done research in the following topics: Arab Jewish relations, religious and secular encounter in Israel, relations between ethnic groups in Israel, Changes in Israeli society, culture and education, Israel Diaspora relations, Political changes in Israel, multicultural education. Besides his position as Chair of Education at the David Yellin College in Jerusalem (The Largest in that city), Yehuda teaches the core course in Jewish Education at Tel Aviv University Overseas school. Yehuda is co-founder of the Network for social entrepreneurship together with Jerusalem's municipality, and he is very active in Jewish/Arab dialogue.

### *Eyal Bloch*

I have many years of experience both as formal and informal educator. Initiated many new programs on multiculturalism and co-existence. Co-founder of the Social Entrepreneurship Network and Co-founder of "All in Peace".

### *Yonatan Glaser*

Yonatan Glaser is the founding Director of B'Zedek ('in Justice'), an initiative to activate and train Israeli youth and tertiary students in social change and social justice. A serial social and educational entrepreneur, Mr. Glaser was a co-founder of Netzer Olami, an International progressive Jewish-Zionist Youth Movement active in 13 countries. He later founded Hiburim, an Israeli non-profit that worked to weave together the Jewish and liberal-humanistic traditions in Israeli schools. Mr. Glaser has worked in formal and informal education settings with Israeli and Jewish Diaspora youth leaders, teachers and School Principals. He has taught, initiated new educational programs, developed curriculum and led educational interventions, worked for the Israeli Ministry of Education and participated in the Ministry's Citizens for 21st Century Conference. Holding Law and Economics degrees from Melbourne University (Australia), Mr. Glaser earned his MA in Jewish Philosophy from Hebrew University (Israel). He is a graduate of Israel's prestigious School of Educational Leadership. Mr. Glaser served the (Jewish) Reform Movement in North America as its Central Educational Shaliach (Emissary) from 2003-5.



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