

Improving Teacher Effectiveness with Time To Know

Success Story

School Profile

Yisgav Elementary is an urban school serving 400 students mostly from middle to upper income families. The school prides itself on integrating students with special needs into its regular classes. Each class includes students with learning disabilities as well as two or three children with autism or severe handicaps, many of whom are accompanied by a teaching assistant throughout the school day.



"With Time To Know, the variance between the teachers is smaller. All students, even if they get a less experienced instructor like myself, benefit from very effective classroom teaching."

Shlomit Levanon, new English teacher

The Challenge

After significant turnover in administration and teaching staff, the school found that it needed to train a new and inexperienced teaching staff and stabilize the organization, while ensuring that academic standards and core values were maintained.

The Solution

Yisgav Elementary embarked on a search for a stable framework that would empower its novice teachers and quickly improve their teaching skills, while supporting academic standards and its mission of successfully integrating students with disabilities into regular classrooms. The school decided to use Time To Know as the primary instructional platform for math and reading/language arts in both Hebrew and English.

Implementation

During the implementation phase, one-to-one computing was introduced into each class and teachers participated in an in-depth professional learning program. According to Shlomit Levanon, a new English teacher who had just made a career change after practicing law for several years, "The Time To Know team welcomed me to my first school. These are people you can look up to because of their considerable teaching experience and their knowledge of the Time To Know system. Every problem I encountered, they were able to clarify with an in-depth answer."

The Time To Know professional learning team began by assessing Yisgav Elementary's unique needs. Training then focused on understanding the Time To Know interactive curriculum, technology, and constructivist pedagogy, and teachers learned how to develop strategies for individualized instruction and collaborative learning. Ongoing support was offered throughout the school year by experienced instructional coaches.

According to math teacher Meyrav Aderet, "The training provided a very clear structure, just like the Time To Know program itself. It was easy to learn, because I understood the basics very well, and then I could make the changes and adaptations I wanted."

Improved Teaching Quality

According to novice teacher Shlomit Levanon, "With Time To Know, the difference between the teachers is smaller. All students, even if they get a less experienced instructor like myself, benefit from very effective classroom teaching."

Meyrav Aderet, who had been a teacher for nine years but was about to begin teaching math for the first time, commented, "Time To Know really supported me professionally through all the



steps I needed to teach math with a high degree of skill.”

Support for Students with Disabilities

The Time To Know differentiated instruction fully supported the school’s mission of including students with disabilities. According to Shlomit Levanon, “Our special needs students benefit from the structure and predictability provided by Time To Know, and the individualized methodology really helps them learn. Even children whose disabilities used to prevent them from taking English now join the English class and are making good progress.”



“I have a student who used to perform below grade level. Now she has progressed to the average or above average level and her self-esteem has vastly improved. This is very satisfying for me as a teacher.”

Meyrav Aderet, math teacher

Professional Satisfaction for Teachers

Teachers at Yisgav Elementary describe the sense of personal achievement and professional job satisfaction that comes from meeting the unique needs of each student across a range of proficiency levels and learning styles.

According to Meyrav Aderet, “I have one very talented student who always finished his work quickly, but now he likes to continue with more challenging assignments in the same section.

“And I have another student who used to perform below grade level—she had great difficulty in understanding, especially in math, although she really wanted to learn.

“Now she has progressed to the average or above average level and her self-esteem has vastly improved. This is very satisfying for me as a teacher.”

Impact on Academic Achievement

An independent study conducted by the Szold Institute, the Israeli National Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, evaluated the impact of Time To Know on key criteria, including student achievement, and compared Yisgav Elementary with another school with similar student demographics. The results demonstrated that grade levels were maintained or showed statistically significant improvements.

Average Grade Difference between Start and End of Year

2008-2009 School Year (5th Grade)

School	Math – Fractions	Math – Comparing Fractions	English – General	English – Writing
Comparison School	11	5	10	7
Yisgav School	21	25	16	23

The Big Picture

Yisgav Elementary was able to maintain and improve student achievement levels during a period of considerable internal change and new teacher training. The school accomplished its goals, empowered teachers, improved teaching effectiveness, and enhanced the learning environment for all students, including those with special needs.

