



5771

Annual Report

2010/11



A Great School

Message From the President: Sally Zigler

The past year has been one of quiet progress at Associated.

We have continued to exercise fiscal responsibility through the implementation of a business plan that includes the optimization of class sizes and disciplined cost cutting. In addition, our fundraising efforts have produced some notable success and we are deeply grateful to the donors who continue to support our efforts. While the school's financial position will continue to present significant challenges, the school is on solid ground and we look forward to an even brighter future.

At the same time our commitment to educational excellence and innovation is uncompromised. We are leaders in the implementation and integration of technology. Associated's unique Centre for Diverse Learning uses a team approach to effectively meet a broad range of student learning needs. Our communicative Hebrew curriculum is producing students that can speak Hebrew but more importantly can "think" in Hebrew. Informal education abounds, creating experiences that bring educational objectives and Jewish values to life.

Our enrollment remained stable and indications are that it will be strong through 2011-12. This is undoubtedly a result of our educational initiatives and the quality of our brand. In the past year we have continued to aggressively market Associated with particular emphasis on our pre-Nursery programs and the Danilack Middle School.

Our success is in large measure due to the inspired leadership provided by Dr. Mark Smiley, our Director of Education. In addition, we have benefited greatly from the experience and judgment of Elliott Brodtkin, our new Executive Director/CFO and all of our non-educational staff. Our accomplishments are made possible by our extremely dedicated and well-qualified teachers. It is their day-to-day efforts that are the key to the success of our students and the satisfaction of our parents.

At each of our branches and divisions, we are fortunate to have wonderful educational leaders. Our Principals are recognized experts, most with advanced degrees. They are bringing the best educational practice into our school and creating communities that are home to our students and their families. This year, we say *l'hitraot* and pay tribute to two of our senior staff. For the past six years, Sheldon Diamond has been an extremely effective leader in our Middle School serving as the General Studies Principal. Sandy Rabinowitz caps off an exceptional career at Associated that has spanned over a quarter century. Having served as a Principal and Senior Principal he has touched the lives of so many of our students, teachers and parents. Thank you to both Sheldon and Sandy. We wish you much success in the future.

I am pleased to serve Associated alongside a group of extremely dedicated volunteers. The talent, ability, good judgement and tireless efforts of the Officers, the Board of Directors, the Parent Teacher Council, the *Va'ad Ha'Chinuch* and all other committees contribute to the great success of Associated as a leading community organization. For over 100 years, Associated has met the challenges thrown its way and thrived. It is our privilege to be a part of this tremendous legacy. We eagerly look forward to continuing Associated's educational mission.

Report from the Director of Education: Dr. Mark Smiley

I suppose it sounds funny to say that Associated – an institution that is over 100 years old – is maturing. But as our quest for continuous improvement endures and we regularly bring the best educational thought and practice to our school, the reality is that we are becoming much more sophisticated. There are educational developments taking place throughout the school – literally in every classroom. Using examples from the broadest possible categories, let me highlight some of that improvement.

Judaic Studies

Over the past few years we have successfully placed great emphasis on teaching communicative Hebrew – particularly at the preschool level. In both our immersion and regular classes, students are learning not only to speak, read and write Hebrew but in fact to think in Hebrew. As students with increased Hebrew language ability move up beyond their early years education, it is incumbent upon us to be able to consistently assess their progress. This year we have seen great strides in establishing standards and benchmarks for Hebrew assessment. We now have shared bases and expectations. This means that teachers have clear goals; that student progress is being measured consistently throughout the school; teachers from different classes and even branches can share ideas and strategies; and that teachers are better able to communicate with parents regarding individual student progress.

General Studies

Associated has unquestionably emerged as a leader within the day school movement in integrating technology into the curriculum. While early emphasis was placed on the acquisition of equipment, it is now clear that the role of technology is as a powerful conduit to learning. This past year we have seen a number of outstanding projects – many of which are bridging distances and allowing students to connect with the global community. One of our grade three classes just completed a year-long project in which they "skyped" with a Mennonite class in a rural village, prepared and shared information online and finally traveled to visit their project partners in Linwood, Ontario.

Professional Development

The investment we make in our faculty bears its greatest dividends in the classroom. We have now implemented Professional Learning Communities (PLC) throughout the school. As opposed to periodic professional development sessions, PLCs provide an ongoing means for teachers to integrate new strategies, reflect on their approaches, and collaborate with fellow educators. Our educational leaders are finding PLCs to be a very effective means of affecting change. Innovations in differentiated learning and other instructional techniques are being successfully incorporated with a view to improving student achievement.

Educational Leadership

Simply put, our Principals and Vice Principals are in a league of their own. Our leadership roster is comprised of educators with advanced degrees, established areas of expertise and rich experience that in many cases spans both Judaic and secular studies. We have added to the calibre of our leadership with the appointment of Brenda Stein Dzaldov as the General Studies Principal at the Danilack Middle School. Brenda brings over 20 years of experience as a teacher, educational leader, lecturer and author to Associated. In fact, she will receive her Doctorate in Education this year from the University of Toronto. With her previous experience as an administrator in our Bet Haya'el and as a current Associated parent, Brenda brings great passion and enthusiasm to her new role. We are delighted to welcome her.

The definition of the verb *mature* – to complete or perfect – has a kind of quixotic quality to it. As a school that provides students with the tools for lifelong learning, we recognize that the process of education is never complete. We strive however to continuously improve the quality of the educational experience we offer our students. We are proud of our success and look forward to an even brighter future for this great school.

We are pleased to report on some of this year's initiatives.

Graduate Survey

The 2010 graduates completed an in-school (on-line) survey which focused on their experiences at Associated Middle School. The graduates agreed that the Associated experience has been very positive; that they feel comfortable and safe in the school; have made close friends and believe the administration cares about the students. The survey also reported that there was an overall rating improvement in English, Ivrit, Study Skills and English Public Speaking. Some of the focus for improvement in the coming year will be on Hebrew language, Social Studies and improving the test and assignment coordination system.

Middle School Report

General Studies

The review of the Middle School General Studies program resulted in a plan that is focused on effective Instructional strategies as follows. (1) Focus on student achievements, smoother transitions, and collaboration between all parties; (2) Differentiated Learning assessments; and (3) Incorporation of professional development that is aligned with achieving student success, developing leadership training for staff as well as creating and sustaining Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Judaic Studies

Middle School's *Toda'ah* is now part of Talmud, which allows for a more guided approach to teaching the holidays. In addition, *Ivrit* has increased from 3 to 5 times per week allowing for a more communicative approach. *Tefillah* changes have been made so students develop a better understanding of the meaning of the prayers. Standards and Benchmarks for Torah aim to achieve identified goals to create the best possible environment for learning. Teachers reviewed performance assessments and rubrics; assessed skills needed for comprehending Biblical text; and discussed the need for ongoing feedback. Teachers are also working on criteria to ensure the continuity in marking from teacher to teacher.

Bet Hayered

Va'ad members were up-dated on some new Bet Hayered initiatives. The report presented to Va'ad focused on 6 initiatives:

1. An Interdisciplinary Team Approach to student learning means that "everyone" is involved in the students' successes. This approach helps with early assessments and intervention.
2. The New Kindergarten Curriculum focuses on play-based learning and learning through inquiry. Educators support this learning by facilitating and guiding students and help students make connections between prior knowledge and newly acquired knowledge.

3. Assessment in the Bet Hayered is conducted in order to properly and effectively differentiate and guide instruction.
4. Literacy initiatives in Bet Hayered continue to be a priority. The approach to writing has been revised to ensure there are many opportunities to write. Reading data shows that over a 2 year period there has been a significant overall improvement in reading levels.
5. Teacher Professional Learning has focused on math, literacy, differentiated instruction, applying morals and values to Torah studies, Jewish Holiday curriculum, writing assessment, guided reading and speech and language development.
6. Mini Mensch and Me & Mini Mensch and Beyond has been very successful.

Technology

Associated's technology plan is in its second five year phase that is designed to map out the direction of technology in conjunction with educational goals. Each campus will annually create a "Technology Usage Plan" (TUP) which will specify the target grade and subject, the rationale for the project in the framework of the curriculum, a timeline that stretches from formulation to implementation. A reflection of the project will be presented to the Technology Committee on a yearly basis.

Dress Code Policy

An up-dated dress code includes minor revisions to the current guidelines while still keeping with our tradition of modesty and of sanctity for the study of Torah. The revised code has an updated list of acceptable and unacceptable clothing for students.

We would like to thank members of the Va'ad Hachinuch for their commitment to this important committee. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the work of sub-committee chairs and to all those who prepared reports and made presentations. Special thanks to Dr. Smiley and the entire educational team; and to Smadar Koral.

**A Report from the Marketing & Communications Committee:
David Bercovitch, Chair**

While the Marketing & Communications Committee undertook no new initiatives this year, the school continued its marketing efforts including:

- advertising in a number of key, targeted publications
- targeted unaddressed admail campaigns
- more effective communication with those who have made enquiries to Associated
- the use of various out of home media
- open houses for prospective parents

- community Chanukah programs at each branch
- surveying our parents and new families

This spring we initiated a campaign specifically promoting the Danilack Middle School and planned to continue to market Danilack as an option for non-Associated parents.

In the coming year we will see advances in the school's use of e-communication and social media as we continue our Marketing & Communications efforts.

**L'Hitraot:
We Salute You**

This year, we bid farewell to Sandy Rabinowitz and Sheldon Diamond, two senior administrators who have been a part of our Associated family and have both played a tremendous leadership role with our students and staff.

Sandy Rabinowitz

began his tenure at Associated as General Principal in 1982 for what at the time was four campuses. Reflecting on his nearly 30-year career at Associated, Mr. Rabinowitz is truly a capsule of memories and school history. During his time at the school, he saw the Leslie branch open and close, saw the opening of the Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill and the creation of the stand-alone Danilack Middle School on Finch Avenue. Eventually Mr. Rabinowitz became Senior Principal, servicing all branches of the school with responsibilities that included assisting in the implementation of the Centre of Diverse Learning (CDL) program and other administrative projects. "I've witnessed a lot of changes and transformations", he says, "and witnessed how Associated really showed the community at large how to be a community."

Sheldon Diamond

General Studies Principal at the Danilack Middle School for the past six years, brought with him 32 years of experience in the public school system and added fresh practices and structure to the Middle School. For Mr. Diamond, being at Associated was a learning experience too. "I was as much a student as I was a lead educator," he says. "The highlight for me, coming from the public school system for so many years, was the chance to connect with my Jewish roots."

We wish both Mr. Rabinowitz and Mr. Diamond much success in the future and we thank them for their commitment to Associated.

**A Report from the Development Committee:
Annual Report for the year 2010 – 2011**

Over the course of the past year, Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto will have received almost \$1,075,000 in charitable donations. This represents donations to Kadima, our Annual Campaign, from over 700 donors, gifts in excess of \$175,000 (against a budget of \$220,000), as well as payments on pledges resulting from previous major-gift donor agreements in the amount of \$619,000. Additionally, Associated has received gifts for various Scholarship, Endowment and Building funds in the amount of \$280,000, of which \$55,000 were new donations and \$225,000 were payments on pledges resulting from previous donor agreements.

We are grateful for all the donations and hope that our donors will continue to view our fundraising efforts as a means of guaranteeing the future of our Jewish community.

Associated educates more children in our community than any other Jewish day school. Studies have confirmed that Jewish day school education is the most effective means of ensuring Jewish continuity. There is, therefore, a clear link between our donor's continuous support for our school and the future Jewish generations in our community.

There is no other school in our community who allocates more resources to assist children whose parents cannot afford the full cost of Jewish education. Associated accepted 506 students on subsidy in the school year 2010 – 2011.

One of our more interesting and popular fundraising initiatives that commenced last year and continued with much success this year, is the Boomerang Birthday program, which teaches our students about the mitzvah of tzedakah.

It is a part of Associated's Family Giving philanthropy program, which raises awareness and encourages giving in a variety of ways to Associated. Students who are celebrating birthdays are encouraged to have a "Boomerang Birthday" which means that they request a donation in place of a gift from friends and family. Donations are made to the school and when the gifts are tallied, half of the total gift is given back to the student to purchase any items of his or her choice. The remaining portion supports Associated in its development efforts and is added to the Kadima fundraising totals.

We are grateful to our Development Strategic Planning Committee ably co-chaired by Dr. Daphna Grossman, Renee Rosenzweig and Michael Kerzner for their leadership, involvement, guidance, hard work and support of the annual fundraising in the school.

The Admissions and Tuition committee actively ensures the continuation of Associated's long-standing promise that no child will be denied a Jewish education because of financial circumstances. It administers the school's financial assistance program to which The Centre for Jewish Education/UJA Federation makes a very generous contribution.

Through a group of dedicated volunteers supported by experienced professional staff, the committee reviews applications providing financial disclosure and where necessary conducts interviews of families. All information received by the committee is kept confidential.

The committee assisted 506 students requiring some form of financial subvention to start the 2010/2011 school year. These students represented 38.5 % of the overall Associated day school population.

For the start of the 2010/2011 school year the Associated population increased by 1%, in the elementary grades following a 5.7% decrease from the prior year. The number of elementary students requiring financial assistance increased by 2.1%. The Preschool's decrease in population of 7.5 % appears to be an anomaly in comparison to the last few years of steady growth. It is anticipated that overall enrolment for 2011/2012 will remain stable. Enrollment trends are often affected by economic conditions, changing demographics, the number of day schools in the Greater Toronto area and the high cost of Jewish education.

The chairs of the committee wish to thank all the volunteers and full time staff for their hard work and devotion to a most worthy cause.

The Parent Teacher Council is dedicated to enhancing the school experience for all of our children. As the voice of the parent body, we have representation on the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and the Va'ad Hachinuch.

The PTC supports many programs through a variety of fundraising initiatives that are ongoing throughout the year. Each year, the proceeds of these fundraising efforts are directed toward the purchase of library books and author visits, Siddurim for the Grade 1 ceremonies, graduation gifts for grade 8 students, holiday treats, the Welcome Wagon program for new families, as well as educational programs for parents and teachers.

PTC has given a total of \$40,000 towards it's five year commitment of \$50,000 to the Associated Hebrew

Schools Centennial Endowment Fund.

In a challenging economic time, PTC initiatives managed to successfully raise money through book fairs at each of our three branches, sales of the school Calendar, Middle School text book sales and the various food programs. In addition, the PTC held a Comedy Night Gala in May 2011 which was a success, raising \$15,000, to be directed to the Middle School Enhancement Plan.

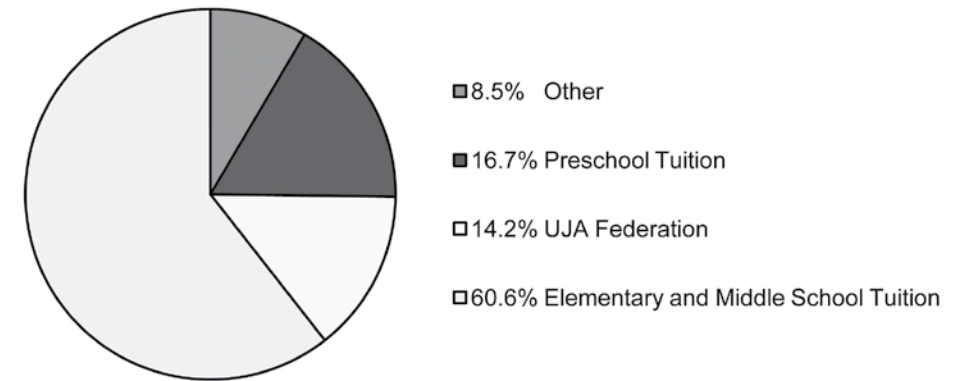
We are proud of our accomplishments and contributions to our school. I would like to thank all the parents and administration and staff for their ongoing commitment to the success of our School.

Financial Summary

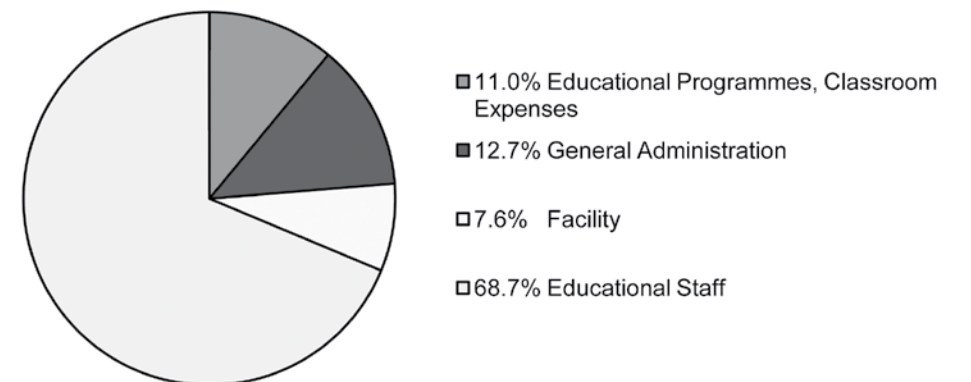
The financial summary is based on the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending June 2010, which is the last fiscal period for which such statements are available. To view our full Financial Statements, please contact Elliott Brodtkin, Executive Director/CFO, at 416-494-7666, ext. 200.

Distribution of Operating Revenue and Expenditures 2009/2010

Revenue \$19,529,000



Expenditure \$19,895,000





Administrative Offices

252 Finch Avenue West
Toronto, ON M2R 1M9
Tel.: 416-494-7666
Fax: 416-494-2925

Hurwich Education Centre

Danilack Middle School
252 Finch Avenue West
Toronto, ON M2R 1M9
Tel.: 416-494-7666
Fax: 416-494-3477

Kamin Education Centre

300 Atkinson Avenue
Thornhill, ON L4J 8A2
Tel.: 905-889-3998
Fax: 905-889-5183

Posluns Education Centre

18 Neptune Drive
Toronto, ON M6A 1X1
Tel.: 416-787-1872
Fax: 416-787-6155

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UJA Federation provides funding
for Jewish education at Associated