



TEFEN SCHOOL PARENTS ASSOC.

*Application For a Contribution*  
for the Tefen Experimental School's  
Permanent Residence

2008

The Tefen Experimental School  
The Organization on Behalf of the Maalot Regional Experimental School,  
Western Galilee, Israel



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Dear Friend,

The Tefen Experimental School was founded 17 years ago (1991) by a group of parents from the Western Galilee, who wished to create an alternative educational system for their children, one that would reflect their worldviews and values.

The dream has become a reality. Today, the Tefen School numbers over 500 students from nursery school to 12th grade (ages 3-18), drawing students from Jewish, Arab, and Druze sectors, and has become a model of tolerance and co-existence. Thirty percent of our students have learning disabilities and/or physical challenges such as cerebral palsy, hearing or vision impairments. Without exception, these children are integrated into regular classes at Tefen, in a uniquely structured program that allows each child to proceed at his or her own pace. All of our students thrive in an environment where tolerance and acceptance have become a way of life.

The Tefen Experimental School is run by the school staff, the Parents Association, the students, and participating alumni. The school's philosophy is based upon the principles of democracy, cooperation and heterogeneity. Social and educational decisions are reached jointly in a forum composed of the different sectors that construct this unique educational community.

The Tefen Experimental School is situated within the Migdal Tefen Industrial Council. When the school was founded, the Parents Association temporarily rented an industrial building at enormous cost, after the Ministry of Education pledged responsibility. 17 years later we are still in the Industrial Park, even though the Ministry of Environmental Protection has declared the area unsuitable for Educational institutions, because of extreme industrial pollution.

We are in dire need to move our school to a safe and permanent home.

We therefore turn to you, to invite you to be our partner in constructing a new home for the Tefen Experimental School, giving our children the opportunity to continue their studies in this unique and supportive environment in years to come.

The attached material provides you with additional information concerning the community and the school's activities.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Tamar Oged  
Principal, Tefen School

Dr. Liat Pessach  
The Parents Association



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## REVIEW 1991 - 2008



The Tefen School opened its doors during the summer of 1991 at the initiative of a group of parents and educators that wanted to develop an alternative educational system in the Western Galilee that would reflect their worldview and values.

Today the school has a student body of approximately 500 students from grades K-12 from a variety of communities throughout the Galilee, moshavim, rural outposts, development towns, residential communities and Arab villages. Many of the communities are located along the Israel-Lebanon border region in the north.

The daily meeting of students and teachers from some 21 communities throughout the Galilee provides for a unique and mutual opportunity to become better acquainted with a variety of ways of life and communal living. The possibility for a real multi-cultural existence becomes possible when based upon personal, intimate and long-term acquaintances from the ages of 3-4 to 18 years old. A subject such as contributing to the community as an adult takes on a unique significance in a multi-cultural society. Conflicts and discussions concerning compulsory army service, a year of volunteer community service or National Civilian Service are an integral part of the lives of our young people and their parents. This way of life serves as a living example of the school's societal heterogeneity and democratic values. Testimony to this lies in the fact that over 70% of the school's graduates served a year of volunteer community service prior to their army service.

The school's daily operation and direction is based upon the principles of democracy, cooperation and heterogeneity. Social and educational decisions are reached jointly in a forum composed of the school's faculty, student body, parents and graduates known as the "parliament". This body provides a means of maintaining a true partnership among all of the various parties involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the school's operation and activities.

The school's curriculum strives to attain a balance between societal demands, culture and the pupils' tendencies. It is divided between a set of compulsory lessons and selective courses from within various learning frameworks. Within this selective framework the student from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and older is offered a wide variety of subjects to study. Choice and commitment to one's choice are seen as fundamental skills.



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The school shares a sense of mutual respect between adults and young people as well as within each individual age group and sector and recognizes the worthiness of children and young people as human being with equal rights. This is manifested in the warm and open personal relations that prevail between the children and staff and the calm and pleasant ambiance felt throughout the school.

A practical example of the implementation of the community's worldview is expressed within the framework of the "Relationship Committees" that are composed of students and teachers in order to solve the disciplinary problems (of students, teachers, parents and staff members) through mediation while avoiding the use of sanctions and one-sided punishments. This unique program has stimulated interest in other schools throughout the region. In fact, it is clear that the school's modus operandi has a significant impact not only on the 350 families that compose its community, but also on a broad-based, wide-ranging community throughout the Western Galilee.

The school's communal heterogeneity is also expressed in the unique types of classes found at the school such as classes for children with CP (cerebral palsy) and the autism spectrum (Asperger's Syndrome and PDD). The school has an especially high number of pupils with various learning and physical disabilities. More than 35% of the school's student body has been diagnosed with ADHD, hearing and vision disabilities as well as a number of students who have suffered from CVA's. While these children are placed in their own unique classrooms, they are also integral members of "regular" classrooms and participate together with the other students in the school's ceremonies, class trips and community activities. This is founded upon the perception that no one should be removed or distanced from his natural environment because of any particular limitation whatsoever.

The Tefen Experimental School is owned and situated within the Migdal Tefen Industrial Council. This is a council that has no residents and therefore ineligible for grants. The council allows the school to operate autonomously and supports it conceptually. Furthermore, the council serves as a conduit for transferring budgetary allocations from the Ministry of Education. However, the school receives no financial support whatsoever from the council as is the case in populated regional and local councils throughout the country.

The Tefen Experimental School Association that initiated the school's establishment is composed of concerned students' parents who strive to strike a balance between the school's operating expenses and the insufficient income received from the Ministry of Education.



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This situation leaves the school's parents with an abnormal financial burden to cover expenses such as rental fees to the Tefen Industrial Park, security and utilities- expenses that in all other schools throughout the country are covered by the Ministry of Education and local municipality.

Much to our dismay, in spite of the school's success and remarks by Michael Melchior, MK and chairman of the Knesset's Education Committee that "the country cannot allow itself to give up on such as successful school" the school is still in a temporary structure within the campus of the Tefen Industrial Park and no permanent solution on the horizon.

The Ma'ale Yosef Regional Council led by its mayor Avi Krampe has agreed to accept the school within its jurisdiction and allocate property for the construction of a permanent structure; however, the school lacks the funds to construct a building suited to the specific needs of a heterogeneous community in its natural environment, the Western Galilee. Only the construction of a permanent structure can guarantee the continued existence of this vision.

**We turn to you with these questions:**

**Are you prepared to accept this challenge?**

**Are you touched by the concept of an alternative school in the Galilee?**

**Would you be willing to help us continue the school's operation through a generous contribution towards the construction of a permanent residence?**

The attached material provides you with additional information concerning the school's activities. We would be happy to expand on any issue as required, and certainly, we would be happy to invite you to visit our school and see for yourself the variety of interesting and exciting activities.

We sincerely hope that you will be able to assist us in this important effort.

Sincerely yours,

Sigal Sitton and Dr. Liat Pessach  
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School Bazaar



Annual trip



Mixed-age student population



Kindergarten in play corner



C.P. Class



Shabat Reception



Integrated dance classes



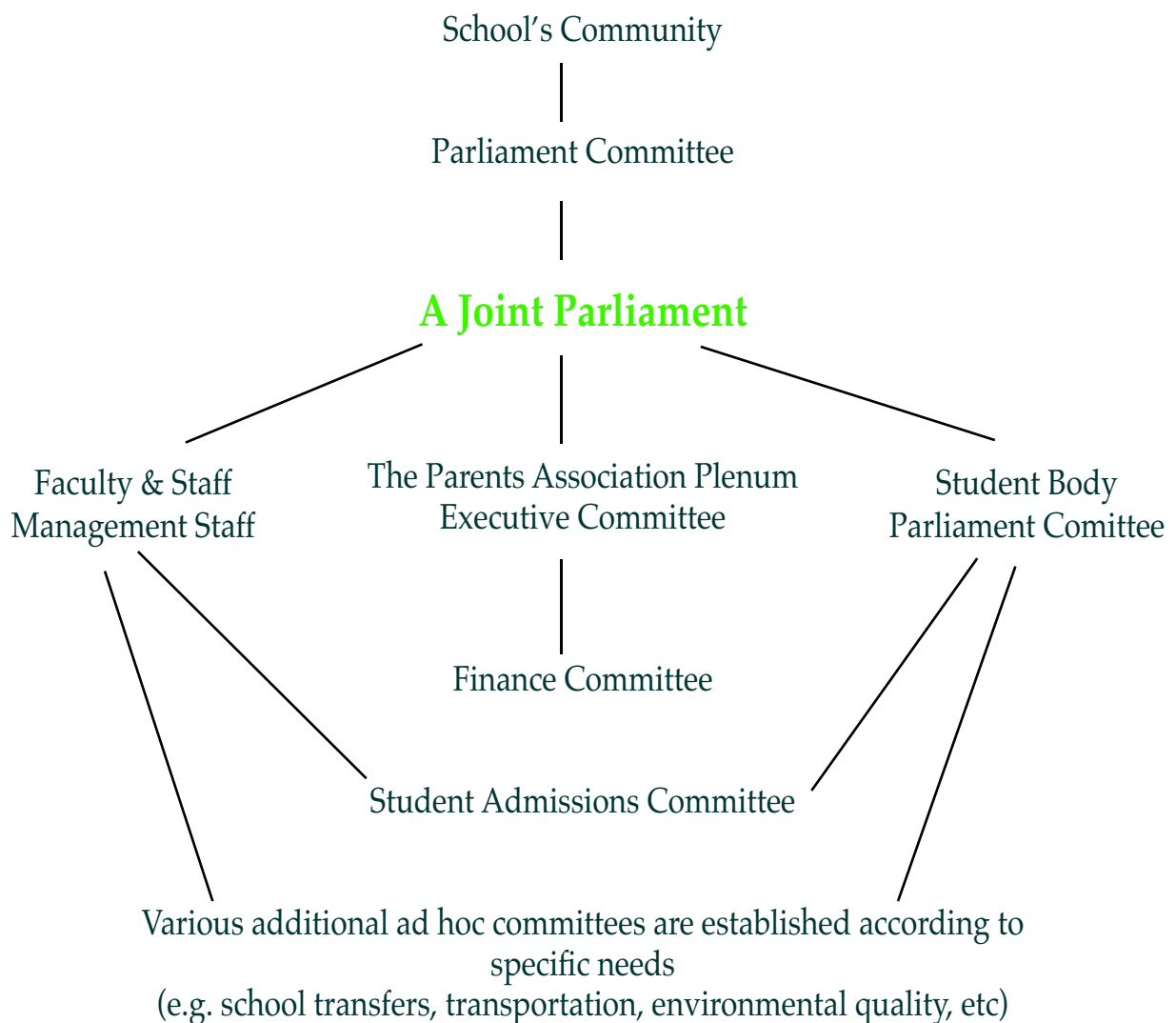
Outdoors as an integral part of school





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## THE TEFEN EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY









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## THE TEFEN EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL

The school includes a pre-school facility, kindergarten, grades 1-6 (one classroom per grade level) and a high school (grades 7-12, two classrooms per grade level\*).

The school also includes special education classrooms, two of which are populated by students with Cerebral Palsy (CP) and another by children within the Autism Spectrum (e.g. Asperger's Syndrome). In order to maintain a sense of belonging, continuity and daily contact with other children of their same age groups, these children are integrated into the school's regular classrooms.

\*The Ministry of Education has refrained from giving its approval for more than one classroom per grade level in the high school; therefore, the parents have taken upon themselves to fund one additional classroom for each grade level.

The school has a student body of approximately 500 pupils.

### Curriculum

The school offers its students a variety of routine subjects such as Math, English, Hebrew, Arabic, Sciences, History and Geography. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, students are exposed to a series of selective courses in fields such as art, music, theatre, dance, electronics, physics, chemistry, biology, photography, graphics, tourism and design. There is no clear channeling at the school (the school has no program of study majors as is acceptable in most Israeli high schools today) and every student constructs his/her own curriculum according to his needs and inclinations.

### Budget

The school's budget is composed of three primary sources of income:

- \* Payments from the Israel Ministry of Education for pre-school, elementary and middle school faculty (up to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade)
- \* 3.6 million NIS is allocated from the Israel Ministry of Education for the hiring of high school teachers, administrative staff and educational activities
- \* Approximately 2 million NIS comes from funds contributed by parents for the school's rental payments, utilities, security, janitorial services and class size reduction and pedagogical enrichment.

The Israel Ministry of Education recognizes the Tefen Experimental School as a "Cross-Regional" Educational Institution. The school is owned and situated within the Migdal Tefen Industrial Council. This is a council that has no residents and therefore ineligible for grants. The council allows the school to operate autonomously and supports it conceptually.



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Furthermore, the council serves as a conduit for transferring budgetary allocations from the Ministry of Education. However, the school receives no financial support whatsoever from the council as is the case in populated regional and local councils throughout the country. The Parents Association provides for the school's daily and stable operations. The association provides the school with an economic backing that is lacking as a result of the funding not provided by the local council. In addition to compulsory tuition payments, parents also contribute funding for facility rental, furniture and equipment purchases, school accessories, books, school trips and a variety of selective enrichment courses as well as individual remedial sessions and classroom reductions (all class are between 25-29 students each), etc.

Currently parental fees for children from preschool - the 6<sup>th</sup> grade are 4,100NIS per year. For high school students from the 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, this increases to 6,000NIS per year. This fee is comprised of compulsory payments and contributions made by the parents to the Parents Association.

It is estimated that the contributed portion of the tuition ranges between 1,000-3,000 NIS per student.

In addition to these expenses, the Ministry of Education has recently cut back on funding transportation to and from the school. Now this also falls on the parents. Our parents, all of whom are residents of the Western Galilee come from an average socio-economic stratum. Nonetheless, the school was established and instilled with the principles of integration and that a family's economic situation shall not serve as a pre-condition to a child's admission to our school.

Each year, the Parents Association allocates an amount of 100,000NIS or 4.5% of the annual budget to assist low-income families. The cutbacks instituted by the Ministry of Education only increase the burden faced by the school's families, particularly underprivileged families. In addition, 6% of the families attending the school pay no tuition whatsoever.

This year as well we have seen a significant increase (nearly twice as many than during the previous year) in the number of families turning to the association's dispensation committee for tuition reductions and some 50 families (70 children) applied for financial support.

Sponsored under the auspices of "The Organization on Behalf of the Maalot Regional Experimental School Western Galilee, Israel, the Dispensation Committee handles each request according to a clear set of criteria. This committee operates discreetly towards the families, yet with full transparency with regards to the various criteria and distributes the scholarships in a just and fair manner.



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## STUDENT POPULATION BY SETTLEMENTS AND GRADES

COUNCIL	NAME	KINDER-GARTENS		ELEMENTARY SCHOOL						JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL			HIGH SCHOOL			Cont.	TOTAL
		Pre	Hova	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th		
Kfar Vradim	Kfar Vradim	9	4	12	9	14	6	5	9	6	13	18	22	15	9	1	152
Karmiel	Karmiel	1	1					1		2	3	1	3	3	5	1	21
M. Galil	Bar Yohay									1							1
M.Yosef	Abirim	1	2			3	6	3	4	6	6	5	4	1			47
	E. Menachem				1					1				1		3	6
	Elkosh									1	1						2
	Gitta			1	1												2
	Granot															1	1
	Mitzpe Hila		1		3		2	6	2	3	1	2		9	4		33
	Hosen	3		1		1	1		1						1		8
	Meona	3		2	2	1	2		4	1		2	2	2	1		22
	Matat		1	2	1	1	1		2	8	2	3	2	4	4		31
	Neve Ziv				2				1								3
	Ein Ya'akov	1		1									1				3
	Tzuriel		1	1	1	1	1			1		1					7
Arab Counc.	Horfesh														1		1
	Kaukab												1				1
	Mrar										1						1
	Sajur									1							1
	Rame'												1				1
	Rechaniya													1			1
	Peki'in							1				1					2
Ma'alot	Ma'alot	7	10	4	6	6	8	9	3	12	12	4	6	8	8		103
Misgav	Har Halutz								3			2					5
	Harashim										1	4	3	5	2		15
	Kamun									1	1						2
	Tzurit													1			1
	Lavon				1					1					1		3
	Atzmon														1	1	2
	Tuval				1			1					2	2	2		8
Nahariya	Nahariya	1	1	2		1			4		4	1	3	2			19
TOTAL		25	21	25	29	27	28	27	28	49	42	48	49	58	43	3	502



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## **THE ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVE OF CONSTRUCTION AT THE TEFEN EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL**

According to our understanding here at Tefen there is a direct correlation between the schools architectural planning and the educational message that it conveys to its students and the community, teachers and parents.

The school's urban structure, the relationships between the structures, the relationships between the structures and the open spaces, the size of the internal spaces and their locations, the landscaping and interior design, all have an impact on creating a "place" that perceives and sends a message.

The human behavior of the school community, its students, teachers and parents can change or be influenced by the school's structural design and planning because of a either its sense of "home" or alternatively a sense of "formality".

We are interested in creating a location that invites social interaction, both structured as well as random between students of a particular grade level or multi-grade levels between students and teachers, teachers themselves, and/or gatherings intended for the entire school community, etc.

These multi-functional spaces are aimed at creating a sense of privacy for various functions or creating contact between the users. The creation of a pleasant space that in its architectural design purveys a "homelike" ambience creates a feeling of belonging to a community, a reason to maintain the structure, educating to care, prevent vandalism and educating to protect the environment.

The design of the various school facilities can have an impact on various educational activities by allowing trial and error, playing and influence various social activities of organizations and groups, leadership development, friendship and the study of pleasant and tolerant social behavior.

A hierarchy of building sizes and structures broadcasts to the entire community the measure of possible openness, the measure of respect held for individuals in the community, both adults and children. It is here that social behavior of mutual respect, attention, awareness of the differences and similarities between us, etc is taught and attained.



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A school requires a variety of quality “territories”: large and small, open and closed, covered or uncovered, belonging to a particular group or for public use, etc. Areas are required for learning, social activities and management.

The manner of study is influenced by the structure- frontal learning, group work or fieldwork by students.

There is no need for a complicated physical infrastructure rather proper physical-pedagogical planning. We are interested in an architectural design that will express heterogeneous values and acceptance of things different, democracy and partnership, educational continuity along with change and individual adaptation and the ability to learn through various means of expression.

We want to design the school’s area, landscape and structures so that it has the qualities necessary for encouraging the proper means of study and social behavior that we deem suitable to raise and educate our children.



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## FUNCTIONS REQUIRED FOR THE SCHOOL

### Homeroom Classrooms

The pre-school-kindergarten-elementary school division includes pre-school and kindergarten facilities in a area of 232 sq.m. (~2,500 sq.ft) (An area larger than Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms will total at 98 sq.m. (~1,055 sq.ft)

The elementary school will include six classrooms grades 1-6, 49 sq.m (527 sq.ft) per classroom, totaling 294 sq.m (~3,164 sq.ft)

The Jr. and Sr. High School Complex will include 12 classrooms (two classes per grade level), grades 7-12, 53 sq.m (~570 sq. ft.) per classroom, totaling 636 sq.m (6,845 sq.ft).

Two Cerebral Palsy (CP) classrooms, each classroom will be 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.). (An area larger than Israel Ministry of Educa eroom is not included in the Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

### Unique Functions

2 extra-curricular activity rooms, 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.)

8 committee rooms, 200 sq.m. (~2,152 sq.ft.)

8 rooms for Special Education work and for receiving parents, the rooms should be designed for individual and group counseling sessions, 200 sq.m. (~2,152 sq.ft.)

(An area not included in Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

### Administration and Service Area

A Teachers Room, including work corners for teachers & teachers and students 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.) (An area larger than Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

Clinic and First Aid Room for the school nurse and doctor – 14 sq.m (~150 sq.ft)

Administrative offices – 36 sq.m. (~387 sq.ft)

Principal's office- 24 sq. m. (~258 sq.ft) 4 offices for the school's vice principal and grade coordinators 12 sq.m (~129 sq.ft) each totaling 72 sq.m (~775 sq. ft.)

Counselor's office 12 sq.m (~129 sq.ft)

Logistical areas- janitor's office, storerooms for school furniture and cleaning materials, repair workshop- 70 sq. m (~753 sq.ft)

### Specialized Learning Centers (Workshop and Studio Facilities)

Drama workshop (with stage), two dressing rooms, equipment room, with the possibility of constructing a small hall (for work with individual students or small groups), will also serve



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as a location for external performances and significant cultural activities. The total area for this drama activity will comprise 300 sq.m. (~3,229 sq.ft)

(An area not included in Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

Art studios for drawing, sculpture and painting activities 200 sq.m. (~2,152 sq.ft.),

Photography 50 sq. m. (~538 sq.ft), music room 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.), a multimedia studio (for CP students) 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.). The total area for these art activities will comprise 430 sq.m (~4,628 sq.ft).

A 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.) dance studio will be designed.

The school's Science and Technology Center will include a 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.) technology laboratory, a 120 sq.m (~1,291 sq.ft) science laboratory, a 30 sq.m (~322 sq.ft) photography darkroom and a 120 sq.m (~1,291 sq.ft) electronics laboratory. The entire Science and Technology complex comprise 350 sq.m. (~3,767 sq.ft.). (Some of these facilities are not included in Ministry of Education standards while others are larger than those required by the Ministry of Education.)

The school will include a 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.) small animal zoo.

The school will also include a 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.) English Room and 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.) Math Room. (Both facilities are not included in Ministry of Education standards.)

Two sports facilities; one for the elementary school and the other for high school will be designed and constructed within a 300 sq.m (~3,229 sq. ft) area. (The gym facility for the high school is not included in ministry of Education priorities.)

With thoughts towards separate elementary and high school facilities, a 250 sq.m (~2,690 sq.ft.) library will be developed. (This area is larger than required by the Ministry of Education).

A 160 sq.m. (~1,722 sq ft) Computer Center with two rooms 80 sq.m (~861 sq.ft.) each will also be planned.

### **Common Grounds and Facilities**

A school yard- 100 sq.m. (~1,076 sq.ft.)

A plenum (open piazza) an area in which the entire student body may gather for both planned and/or spontaneous gatherings and activities. (An area not included in Israel Ministry of Education requirements).

A cafeteria and adjacent kitchen- 150 sq.m (~1,614 sq.ft)

A bomb shelter- 220 sq.m (~2,368 sq.ft)



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### Outdoor Development and Surrounding Grounds

Two dunam (~½ acre) of cultivated Mediterranean forest groves

Two multi-functional sports courts

Two pre-school playgrounds

A schoolyard and outdoor benches or activity areas

Three dunam (~¾ acre) parking lot

Bus loading zones

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### A Summary of Planned Construction

Homeroom Classes	1,308 sq.m (~14,079 sq.ft)
Unique Functions	500 sq.m (~5,381 sq.ft)
Administration and Service Area	304 sq.m (~3,272 sq.ft)
Specialized Learning Centers	2,150 sq.m (~23,142 sq.ft)
Common Grounds and Facilities	500 sq.m (~5,381 sq.ft)
Total Construction	4,762 sq.m (51,257.531 sq.ft)

**Additional Construction:** Shelters and Outdoor Areas

**Additional Expenses:** planning, presentation and construction supervision, infrastructure and area development.





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## CLOSING SUMMARY

The Tefen Experimental School serves the population of the Western Galilee as an enriching, enhancing and alternative educational environment. The school is a heterogenic and integrated community of secular, religious, Jewish and Arab families, a community in which “regular” children study, travel and dance together with children with special needs. Students, teachers and parents live and exist as a vibrant democratic community in a 15-year long educational experience starting from pre-school through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Children growing in this varied and enriching environment learn to become closely acquainted with others and develop respect and tolerance for those different from them. The children, as full partners in their education have already experienced many of the rights and responsibilities of active and responsible citizens. This experience serves them as an asset and important resource as they leave school for the outside world, bringing with them a desire and ability to give and contribute to their society.

After 17 years during which 10 graduating classes completed their education here, we can no doubt testify that our school has educated our children towards optimal integration into Israeli society, as they participate in a year-long postgraduate program of community service, a full and significant army or alternative civilian service, interesting academic studies and integration into the job market.

A unique school such as Tefen has of course unique needs and requires a physical facility structured to those needs. As a community that aspires to attain maximum integration of children with CP in the school’s daily activities, we require wheelchair accessibility throughout the entire complex. The Ministry of Education will invest the standard resources available in the school’s permanent structure; we are turning to you to help us attain what is missing, to help us build a permanent complex that will contribute towards the foundation of our special way of life and its unique educational approach.

We are asking that you help us construct our permanent school complex in the Western Galilee. According to initial estimates and the detailed plans adapted to the intended site, a school building adapted to our needs will cost about \$7,000,000.



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We are searching for a donor or donors who would be willing to contribute to the entire structure or parts thereof at their sole consideration.

For additional details, a review of the building plans and cost estimates, please contact either:

**Dr. Liat Pessach** - representative of the Parents Association at +972-50-5624906  
or by email: [pessach@gmail.com](mailto:pessach@gmail.com)

**Sigal Sitton** - representative of the Parents Association at +972-50-4321916  
or by email: [sigalitsit@walla.com](mailto:sigalitsit@walla.com)

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,  
The Tefen Experimental School Parents Association