



THE UHI BULLETIN

The Weekly Newsletter of United Hebrew Institute, Kingston, Pennsylvania, USA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Rabbi Raphael Nemetsky

We have recently experienced the science fair, UHI style. With that description, I am referring to a series of practices that ensures that the educational component was emphasized and other elements that normally interfere with the learning process were deemphasized. The result was that a productive long term project was achieved and students could take genuine pride in what they produced.

For example, most of the work was done under the direct guidance of the teachers so that students did not go home frustrated and parents did not become exasperated. As well, the artistic and creative elements of the projects were relegated to a much less significant grade than were the academic aspects. Finally, the students were given the option of not entering the science fair competition. This is because competing is really not an academic pursuit. In fact, most competitions are counterproductive. In the end, the overwhelming majority chose to participate in the competition, but it was their choice.

What really struck me about the science fair is something that occurred after the fact. My daughter is currently taking a science course in community college near her home. As providence would have it, she had to do a science project, minus the display. She asked me to look over her report and comment on it. (Children never outgrow needing their parents.)

The report was well written with good vocabulary and proper structure. However, the actual experiment was not even close to the complexity of what our students examined and tested. In conversation she mentioned that the experiment itself was suggested by the professor. Not to deflate her in any way, I did not mention my reaction to her report.

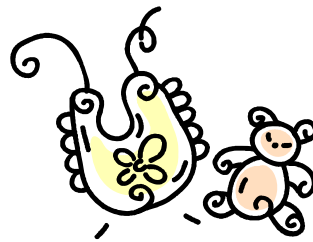
However, here at UHI, since we are all family, I feel comfortable discussing this with you. However much I was initially impressed with the quality of the students' work and the teachers' guidance, my appreciation increased manifold after seeing what college students are required to produce. While I realize that not all colleges operate at the same academic level, it is likely that many have similar expectations.

What this tells me is that our students are well prepared for at least high school level work and likely even more than that. This is all the more impressive when one takes into account that the science fair projects were produced while the regular courses of instruction were ongoing. Add to that the fact that our students are taking a full load of Judaic instruction, and it is obvious that our students are progressing at a very high level of success and that they are more than meeting the requirements for their grade levels.

I take this opportunity to thank all the teachers for their dedication and commitment to excellence so that each student reach his/her potential and I thank the parents for their commitment to their children's day school education that allows us to best prepare them for their future.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Raphael J. Nemetsky

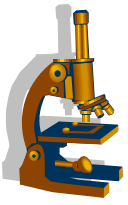


*Mazel Tov to
Carole Panunzio on the birth of
her first grandchild, Oliver*

*Mazel Tov to
Rabbi & Mrs. Sommer
on the birth of their son*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb. 15 No Classes Presidents' Day
- Feb. 20 Shabbaton Grades 1—4
- Feb. 21 Purim Carnival at JCC
- Feb. 25 Fast of Esther
- Feb. 28 Purim



UHI SCIENCE FAIR

