



TRY – Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim



December 8, 2020

Kislev 22, 5781

Dear TRY Students and Families,

As I mentioned in my last email, we will be sending periodic emails throughout the next few weeks, introducing key members of our staff and filling you in on important details to help you prepare for the upcoming semester. We are continuing to review applications and are accepting students on a rolling basis, and all students (those who were accepted and those working their way through the process) will receive these updates.

Let's begin by focusing on academics. Each student has very different needs and our team is working tirelessly to hire faculty and to build an individual academic schedule for each student. In order to ensure that we can meet all of your academic needs, please be sure to submit all materials related to academics as soon as possible. Below, please find a letter from [Aliza Zeff](#), our Director of Teaching & Learning.

Lastly, we encourage you to make arrangements for students' phone service during their time on TRY. Following Aliza's letter you'll find information about acquiring phone service from an Israeli company called Talk'n'Save, and the special deal they're giving TRY students.

You should also be receiving a **very important email today** from our Family Liaison, [Elinor Kaufman](#), regarding visas. Please be in touch with Elinor should you have any questions or concerns!

With warm regards from Jerusalem,

Jonathan Madoff, MSW
Director
Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim
jonathan@ramah.co.il



Dear TRY Students and Families,

I'm looking forward to a wonderful semester and to getting to know each of your children this spring. I've been in touch with many of you already to begin discussing the details regarding your child's academic needs.

My main responsibilities include coordinating the academic component of the program, ensuring that our school is running smoothly and that our students are receiving appropriate academic support. I also provide supervision to our teachers throughout the semester.

In addition, I oversee administration of AP Exams, SAT prep course, academic accommodations, report cards, communication with home schools, etc.

I realize that there are many details and fine points to consider when planning a semester abroad, and I am here for all of your academic questions or concerns. Please feel free to [contact me](#) regarding any of the topics listed below.

Learning Specialist

TRY is delighted to offer the services of a Learning Specialist, [Rachel Goldberg](#), to meet with and

support students with learning challenges, attention deficit, executive function disorder and those who struggle with organization and self-motivation. Our experienced specialist will meet with your child one-on-one weekly (or more often if needed) to help them achieve their academic goals on our rigorous program. This service is provided at an additional fee of \$45 per hour (\$540 for one weekly session for the entire semester).

If a student is struggling in a specific class, we can also arrange for tutoring, either with the teacher or with an outside tutor.

SAT Prep Course

TRY is happy to offer a preparation course for those planning to take the SAT in Israel in May. The course will be taught by an experienced SAT tutor. It is also suitable for those planning to take the PSAT.

There will be 10 sessions throughout the semester. The class will focus on both the mathematical and critical reading/writing aspects of the test and help students develop their test taking skills. The cost of the course is \$450 and students must sign up in advance if they wish to join the classes. The course will only run if a minimum of 3 students register. Please register for the course by [emailing me](#) by December 28.

The exam is offered at a local high school in Jerusalem on May 9. Students wishing to sign up for the SAT (with or without doing the preparation course) can find details of how to do so on [our website](#). The deadline for registering for the exam is April 8. While we have several general SAT and AP review books in many subjects, students taking standardized exams in Israel are encouraged to bring their own review materials.

AP Exams

If you are already registered with your school to take the AP Exams, we will need to request a transfer code, which allows the student to take the exam in a different location. This will be done together with myself and the student. They need to know their College Board log-in information. If you have not yet registered, please be in touch with me and I will help with this process.

The Israel office will confirm with you and your child prior to ordering their exams in early March. Once it is confirmed that your child is taking the exam(s), you will need to send payment to our New York office. The price per exam is \$195 which includes administrative costs and international AP exam fees. If your child is taking an AP exam but is not registered for the course, please contact me as soon as possible.

Additional Tuition Fees

Certain classes may be liable for additional tuition fees. Please see the TRY handbook (section titled "Tutorial Fees") for more information. If this applies to your child, you will receive an email from us in the next couple of weeks to let you know what to expect. Please remember that scholarships are available.

College Credit

TRY's Israel Core Course (ICC) classes have received college accreditation by Gratz College of Philadelphia. This means that any student interested in receiving college credits simply needs to apply to Gratz College before the first day of our program. For more information, [click here](#).

Our Educational Philosophy

We are proudly an accredited school through the [Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools](#), and every few years, we go through an intensive process of review and accreditation. If you wish to understand how we work, below are some of the keys to our success.

1. Faculty and Academic Standards

We hire highly educated, professional and experienced teachers who have a passion for teaching their subject areas. They are more than teachers; they role models, community members and are a crucial part of every TRY participant's experience. Our standards and theirs are very high and we take them very seriously.

2. Philosophy

Our educational philosophy includes three main components:

a. First, we adopt a student-centered approach to education. During the first weeks of the program we meet with each student to help tailor the academic experience to his/her/their needs. We then continue to touch base with all students as the semester progresses. Furthermore, classes are designed so that there is a low student-teacher ratio. This enables us to meet individual learning styles and learning needs of our students. Teachers use a variety of creative methods to reach and challenge each student. We strive to help students learn and grow so that they can succeed on their own.

b. Second, we allow the philosophy of informal education to blend with the formal educational setting. We have the advantage of running a formal educational program, while at the same time embracing the informal Jewish educational approach of Camp Ramah. Students on TRY know their teachers by their first names and can contact them on a regular basis as needed. Our teachers are available to help students in various ways. They sometimes invite students to their homes for Shabbat, and they make an effort to make personal connections with students. This approach of informality and personal connections

help the formal educational process in being efficient, meaningful, and successful.

c. Third, we adopt an integrated approach to learning. Themes covered in the Israel Core Course may be simultaneously taught in Hebrew class and reinforced through activities with the madrichim. Novels and topics for English essays may be based on subjects taught in the Israel Core Course. In this way, the overarching themes pervade the educational experience, rather than being limited to one subject area. Thus, students see a well-rounded teacher, who is both Jewish and a subject area role model.

3. Study Away from Home

Our students gain a great deal from their academic experience on TRY. They participate in study groups, homework nights, group projects, and peer support. The hadracha staff, who are not parents but assume that type of role, can often effectively encourage students to study and challenge themselves without the complications of a direct family relationship. Thus, we create a different kind of learning atmosphere than students tend to experience at home. In addition, each week we have a supervised study hall to help maintain an atmosphere of quiet focused study, assisted learning, and small group work. Not every student is assigned to every class period - most students have an hour or two off during the school day, when they can get work done. Parents can help students succeed in our learning environment by:

Encouraging your child to utilize free periods for studying; Reminding your child to meet with myself or our Learning Specialist to receive help with time management and study skills; Help your child keep in mind that it can take a few weeks to successfully adjust in the beginning. The first week of classes may be challenging. Our teachers spend much of the first week bringing their class to a common starting point in the study material so that they can move forward together and complete the curriculum. If you hear from your child that a class is too easy, too hard, or doesn't seem to be covering the correct material, please encourage him or her to speak with TRY staff members and/or feel free to [send me an email](#).

4. Evaluation and Innovation

Parents will receive midterm and final report cards. We will be in touch with you regarding any problems or challenges as needed. Students evaluate their academic experience twice throughout the semester. We have increased our transparency even more by using an online school management system, "Quickschools" which allows you to see your child's courses, homework assignments, attendance, grades, and more.

You will receive an invitation to join our Quickschools community during the first week of school.

All of the above factors combined, enable us to provide students with an excellent and unique educational experience. We hope this gives you some more insight into our approach and we look forward to working together with you and your children for a very successful program in 2021.

If you have any questions or concerns on any of the above, please don't hesitate to [bén touch with me](#). I look forward to meeting your child this coming semester.

Shavuah Tov from Jerusalem,

Aliza Zeff
Director of Teaching & Learning



This year, more than ever, we all depend on reliable phone/internet service in order to stay in touch with people, especially long distance. That's why we are pleased to be teaming up again with [Talk'n'Save](#) as our recommended cell phone and/or SIM card provider for our students' time in Israel. From years of experience we've learned that when a student uses a plan from their provider back home, it is often more challenging for us to assist when there are problems. When using an Israeli company it is much easier to receive technical support on the ground in real time.

Talk'n'Save is currently offering **free shipping in the US and Canada** for anyone placing an early order, and on top of that you can get a **\$10 discount** off your first monthly invoice if you [sign up here](#) and place your order with a representative!

With an understanding that there may be some uncertainty regarding what 2021 will be like, due to COVID-19, Talk'n'Save will refund clients for unused time that may be lost should the program be delayed or cancelled.

For more information about the plans offered for TRY students, please check out the [Talk'n'Save website](#).

or call 1-866-825-5672, or [click here](#) to schedule an appointment with a Talk'n'Save representative.

IMPORTANT: Anyone signing up for a plan with Talk'n'Save (or any other Israeli phone provider) must make sure to speak with their provider at home and have their phone unlocked for use with other SIM cards. If you're not sure how to insert a SIM card (we know it can sometimes be more complicated than it looks) please speak to us when you receive it and we'll gladly talk you through how to set it up.

www.try.ramah.org.il

Useful links



Tichon Ramah Yerushalayim is a program of [Ramah Israel](#), a division of the [National Ramah Commission](#), which operates under the educational and religious supervision of [The Jewish Theological Seminary](#). Since 1962, Ramah Israel has provided substantive experiential education and meaningful Conservative Jewish living for North Americans in Israel in the spirit of the Ramah Camping Movement.

Think Israel. Think Ramah.

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