The goal of the LaHaV curriculum app is to expand our project beyond curriculum and content and transform the teacher experience within Judaic studies classrooms as well. Teachers often find themselves reinventing the wheel in their classrooms, having to research and plan material while also honing the structure, execution and assessment of the course. The result is a exhausting balancing act that can crush young teachers who are first starting out while also discourage veteran teachers from venturing away from tried and true practices. The digitization of this project will facilitate an unprecedented level of teacher support and collaboration to address these issues.

Through the use of this platform, a teacher in Chicago can upload a lesson plan that is immediately accessible to a practitioner in Los Angeles. A new unit authored in New York can be viewed and adapted by other educators throughout the country. Goals, skills and summaries associated with each text in the curriculum are instantly available to educators for use as they design and prepare their classes. At the center of this interconnected network lay conferences, training seminars, and shared innovation for educators throughout the country, enabling them to more profoundly impact their students.

By empowering educators to create and then share curriculum materials through our digitized platform, we envision the development of a cohort of expert practitioners who can play leadership roles in training new recruits, exploring new materials and presenting innovative methods and experiences at conferences and seminars built around the curriculum. For young teachers learning their craft, this curriculum platform will provide them with the materials and sources for their classrooms as well as field-tested examples of approaches adopted by other educators who have taught the same material. At the same time, for the experienced educator, the project will offer the opportunity to share and showcase their work, providing for professional development opportunities, recognition for excellence within their schools, as well as mentoring and training roles for other educators of the curriculum. The result will be a vast, collective and collaborative improvement of the Judaic studies teaching experience that can affect teacher retention, satisfaction and growth while also providing for direct benefits to student outcomes as well.

The app itself has several core features that are depicted in the screen shots below. Beta testing of the app is currently underway with schools across the US.

Login:
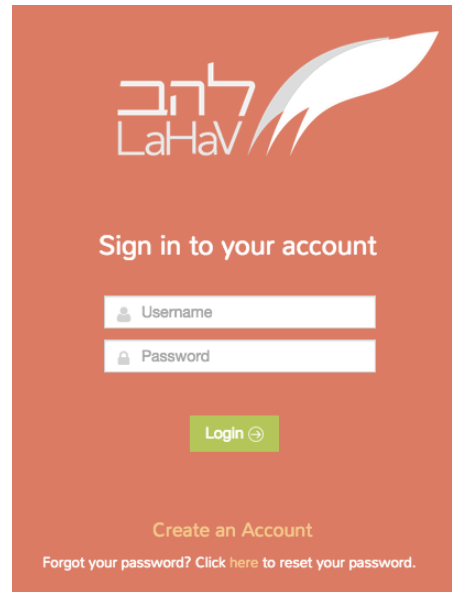
Each unique app user – whether student, teacher or administrator – has their own login credentials with which to access this app. This enables us to control access to the app and ensure that only registered and authorized users can access it. Furthermore, unique logins allows each user to access his or her own unique content, including any notes, sources, text annotations or other material that they have generated through use of the app.

Source Navigation
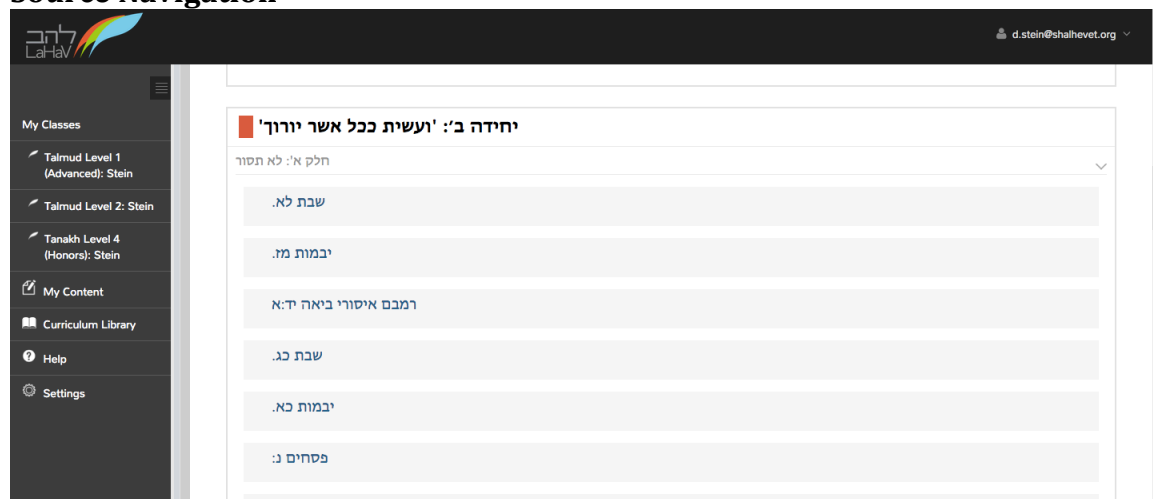
Upon logging into the app, users can navigate to their classes to access the sources associated with that course, organized according to the units and sections for each course.

Source Viewer and Annotations

Upon viewing a source in the curriculum, users have various annotation options available to them. Users can **Highlight** text in various colors to identify key sections or distinguish between various segments of a source. Additionally, users can **Translate** individual words in the text. The translate tool includes access to an online version of the Jastrow Dictionary to allow users to independently discover the translation of a word and create vocabulary lists of words from across the curriculum. Through the annotation engine, users will also be able to record **Notes** related to this source. This will be the primary vehicle through which students will take notes in class and during Havruta sessions as well as when reviewing material from class. Finally, the annotation engine includes a tool for **Punctuation**, allowing students to punctuate the gemara texts that they are studying, helping to solidify their language skills while facilitating thorough understanding of each source.

Teacher's Guides

For teachers, the app offers access to a library of resources associated with every single source in the curriculum. First and foremost among these resources are the teacher's guides that have been created as part of the LaHaV curriculum. These teacher's guides offer translations, summaries, big ideas, affective values, essential questions, key skills – including vocabulary, history, methodology, halakha and conceptual analysis – that may associated with each source. Additionally, the teacher's guides contain information about both the vertical and horizontal integration of each source with other courses, allowing teachers to identify areas of collaboration with other instructors in their school. These teacher's guides serve as the backbone of teacher planning and preparation for each class.
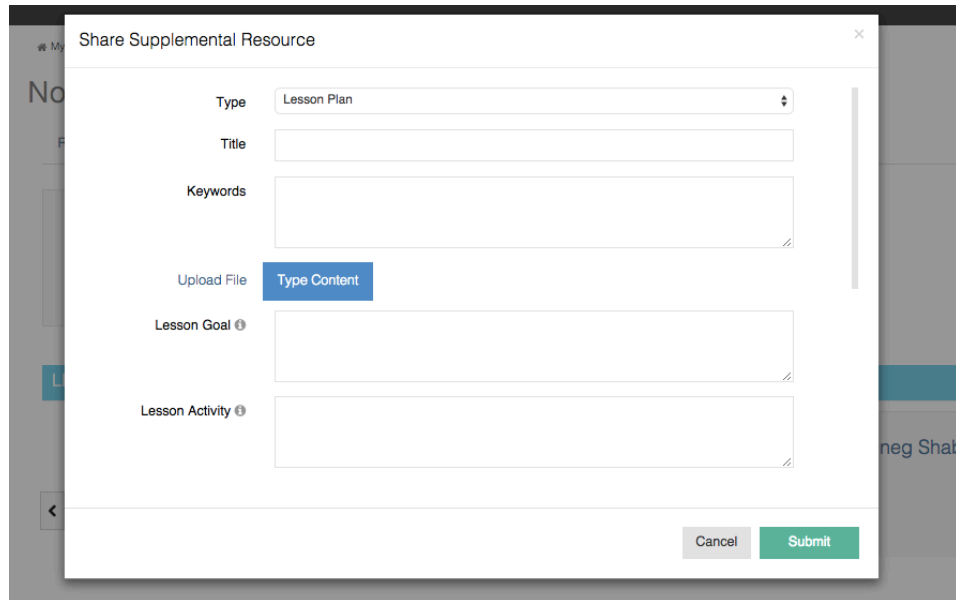
Resource Sharing
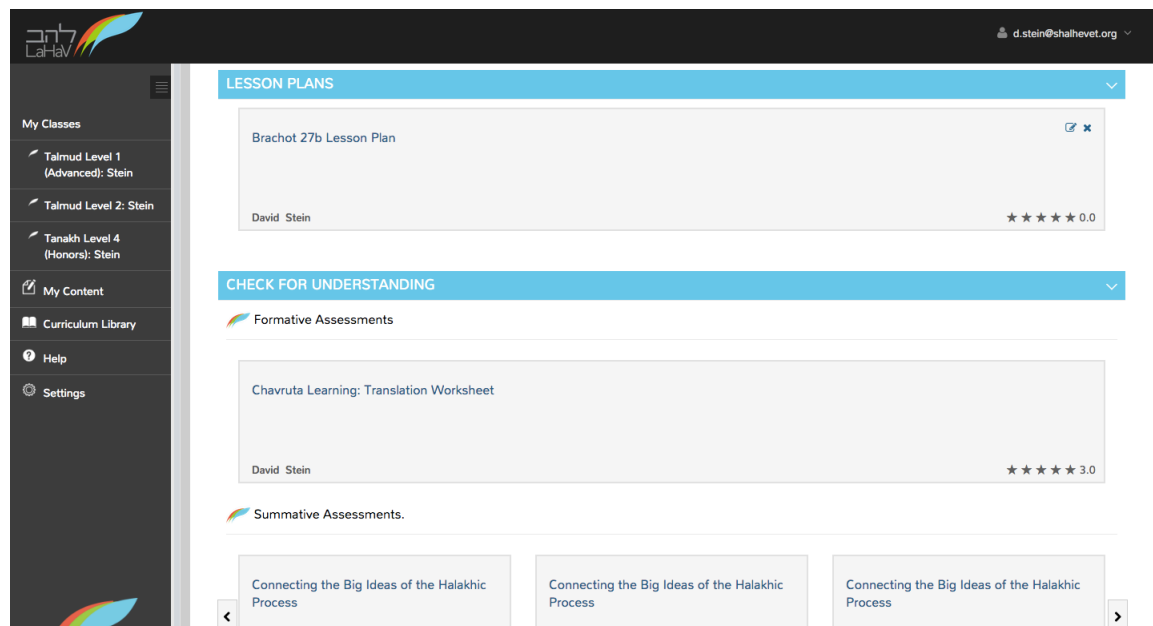
In addition to the teacher's guides, the app provides teachers with several other critical resources associate with each source. In this feature, lesson plans, assessments, projects and additional materials, including media and videos, can be accessed by the teacher. This function allows teachers to see what has been done by others teachers of the curriculum and to view these resources to help guide them as they plan their own class. Each resource is fully searchable by keyword and type, so that users will be able to find exactly what they're looking for as they prepare their class.

Lesson Planning and Sharing

The resource section of the app includes the ability for teachers to create and share their own material into the project for viewing and access by other teachers around the country. As part of this feature, teachers can create lesson plans using a template specifically designed for this curriculum, helping ensure the standardization and quality of the materials created and shared through the app, as well as communicating and supporting the development of best practices for all curriculum users. Similarly, tests, projects and other materials can be uploaded to the app to allow teachers to access a wide range of tools and resources from educators across the world.