



Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School

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David Zimand, Head of School
Tali Ronen, President

A Beneficiary of the Jewish Community Federation

Dear Selection Committee,

This letter of recommendation is for an extraordinary teacher, Eti Zehavi, of Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School in Palo Alto CA, for your prestigious Kohelet Prize.

As the Director of Hebrew Studies at Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School, I have had the pleasure of working with Eti Zehavi for the past nine years, and as a professional educator and colleague, I feel qualified to speak about the many qualities that Eti Zehavi displays.

Eti has invested more than twenty-five years in teaching Hebrew (*Ivrit*) and Jewish studies; every day, when she walks into her classroom, she takes on a journey into the hearts and souls of our young generation. I truly believe that she can make a difference, since she devoted her life, energy and expertise to the field of Jewish and Hebrew education.

Eti is truly passionate about teaching Hebrew. Since the Hebrew language was revived in the late 19th century, Hebrew press and literature has flourished with new generations of authors and readers, and today it is a rich, vibrant, and living language. Hebrew is the language of modern Israel and an indispensable key to understand and appreciate Israeli society and culture. While appreciating this fact, Eti's goal is always to expand her professional learning and she is open to learn and explore new programs and methods of teaching Hebrew.

In her many years of experience, Eti was actively involved in writing sophisticated and exciting Hebrew curriculum which brought her Israeli soul into the classrooms. She understands the pure psychological and emotional barrier to learn Hebrew, and recently she graduated with a Master's degree in counselor education. Since then she explores ways to incorporate social emotional teaching into her Hebrew curriculum. Eti understands that she is not teaching a program but teaching the kids. She has the talents and the responsiveness to really watch her students and feel them all the time. She sees each of her students for whom they truly are, appreciates her students for their skills and abilities, as well as their emotional needs, and she fine-tunes her lesson plans to meet their needs.

In Eti's long career as a Jewish educator, she has acted in the role of the Hebrew Studies Coordinator at Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School. She brought to the elementary school the *Tal AM* Hebrew program, hired and mentored new Hebrew teachers, and structured the Hebrew department.

In summary, Eti Zehavi is a gifted educator and has a profound impact on her students, the Hebrew studies, and on our school.

Sincerely,

Sharon Alter

Director of Hebrew Studies & 8th Grade Hebrew Teacher

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