

For May 2026 Spotlight

MafTeach Fellows Celebrate Together and Design Solutions to the Pipeline Challenge

Celebrating the end of a powerful year learning about chinukh firsthand, many of the 59 MafTeach fellows gathered on Wilf Campus May 3rd to reflect on their experiences teaching in one of 9 North American day schools participating in MafTeach's School Community Fellowship or in MafTeach's Lunch and Learn program at MTA, YU's boys high school.

"The experience helped me build real confidence in my own abilities as a teacher," shared one fellow, noting how supportive local teachers were in giving of their time and expertise to offer fellows feedback how to improve their classroom instruction.

"I learned that teaching is not just about the Torah info you know. You need to be able to package the information in a way that the kids will be able to understand and relate to the material," noted another fellow, reflecting the student-centered approach taught at Azrieli.

But it's not all about content. Said another fellow, "Building real relationships with students and showing that we care about who they are both inside and outside the classroom is essential. That connection is what allows students to feel safe, supported, and ultimately more open to learning."

The convening also had a prospective purpose. Under the direction of Rabbi Yehuda Chanales, MafTeach's director, fellows delved into potential challenges that prevent young people from considering careers in Jewish education and worked together to design solutions. They considered questions like: How might we expose more people to the joy of teaching? How might we raise the profile of teachers and Jewish education in our community? How might we make teaching a financially viable career option? Participants then "pitched" their ideas which ranged from a career fair showcasing the range of opportunities in schools to teacher recognition Shabbat across America and community-based tuition funds for teachers' children. We look forward to integrating some of their ideas through MafTeach and future Azrieli initiatives!

The program concluded with each fellow receiving personal recognition from mentors at their host school, walking away both inspired and encouraged by the unique contributions they will make.

We'd like to thank the 9 participating schools, across 7 North American Jewish communities, for hosting and supporting MafTEACH fellows throughout the year:

- Atlanta Jewish Academy (Atlanta, GA)
- Netivot haTorah Day School and Tannenbaum CHAT (Toronto, ON)

- Faber Hebrew Day School (Detroit, MI)
- Fuchs Mizarachi School (Cleveland, OH)
- Kohelet Yeshiva (Philadelphia, PA)
- Hillel Academy of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Seattle Hebrew Academy and Northwest Yeshiva High School (Seattle, WA)

Know a college student considering (or who should be considering) a career in Jewish education? Encourage them to apply to MafTeach here (bit.ly/mafteach26)