



Program Evaluation Summary

“Laptop Computer for Every Teacher”

Southern Communities - Israel

Dr. Uzi Melamed

May 2011

The survey findings indicate a consistent change among the teachers who participated in the program “Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel.” Following the teachers’ participation in the program, the number of weekly lessons in which teachers utilized computers as a teaching tool increased by sevenfold. Before the start of the program, more than half of the teachers did not use computers in their lessons at all. More than three years later, only a small minority of those teachers (4%) did not integrate computers into their lessons.

The number of weekly lessons in which students were assigned tasks requiring the use of a computer increased by four. The laptop and training received by the teachers who joined the “Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel” program, helped them improve their current teaching methods as well as integrate a variety of new teaching methods. According to the teachers and their headmasters, the use of computers as part of the learning process helped to instill willful learning among students, improved their students' achievement and, to some extent, decreased disciplinary problems in the classroom.

The teachers’ own computer skills following the “Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel” program aided them in their daily routines, both professionally and personally. They used the computers that they received and the knowledge they gained in order to prepare learning materials, to more efficiently utilize time during lessons, to locate information for teaching purposes, to manage lessons and to organize managerial information.

Computer proficiency gave teachers more confidence in regards to computer use in the classroom and strengthened the teachers' position in the classroom as well as among their colleagues, friends and family. School headmasters saw the merit in having their teachers participate in the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program as well. They also saw that the frequency of computer use in the teaching process greatly increase following the teachers' participation in the program.

It should be stressed that the number of teachers who use computers in their practice, and the scope of teaching hours in which the teachers use computers, dramatically increased about seven months after the start of the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program, and then spiked again after 3 1/2 years.

The teachers' and headmasters' opinions regarding the ability of the computer to assist in a variety of areas and to improve the teaching and learning processes was also reflected positively following their participation in the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program. The teachers' and headmasters' faith in the computer's ability to aid the teaching process rose by 59% about seven months after the start of the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program, and rose again by 11% three years later.

Processes of change in the education system are often short-lived. They burst forth in a storm and silently fade away shortly thereafter. Sometimes, changes initially show positive results stemming from the novelty itself and from the very involvement in the school's and teachers' lives. When the novelty fades, so does the effect. This is not true for the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program. In just a short period of time, the program succeeded in transforming the conduct of the teachers in their teaching practice and changed their opinions and stances regarding the computer's ability to aid them in their teaching. These changes remained stable and even grew: during the course of over three years, the effects of the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program have increased - teachers have integrated more and more information communications technologies in their lessons, and both teachers and administrators have strengthened their belief in the computer's ability to aid teachers in their teaching.

Both teachers and headmasters suggested ways to improve the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program and its results. The suggestions for improvement centered around two issues: **equipment & infrastructure** and **training & instruction**.

Regarding **equipment and infrastructure**, the teachers' and headmasters' suggestions focused on two main issues:

- **The teachers' laptops:** many teachers and headmasters believe that the teachers' laptops need to be replaced because they are outdated, some are damaged and they are too heavy. Damaged computers take a long time to repair, sometimes yielding no results.
- **The equipment in the classrooms:** Teachers and headmasters believe that classrooms need to be equipped with digital projectors, smart boards and the ability to connect to the internet. Today, more than 1/3 of classrooms are equipped with projectors, less than 1/4 of classes are equipped with smart boards, and in more than 3/4 of the classes there is internet connectivity. According to teachers and headmasters however, this is not enough, which shows that the teachers are making use of the existing equipment.

Regarding **instruction and training**, many of the teachers and headmasters suggest emphasizing the practical aspects of integrating the computer into teaching during the training sessions. Many believe that the training sessions need to be adjusted for different groups of teachers, according to areas of knowledge, computer proficiency, and experience in computer integration in their teaching.

Many teachers (33%) believe that a lot of individual instruction needs to be given in order for every teacher be able to receive the support, instruction and guidance that she/he needs. Program leaders should consider the comments, reservations and suggestions of the teachers and headmasters and make improvements, as much as possible. These improvements can encourage further progress in this program, whose positive value is already apparent, and can positively influence any educational aspect of the schools that have adopted the "Laptop Computer for Every Teacher in Israel" program.