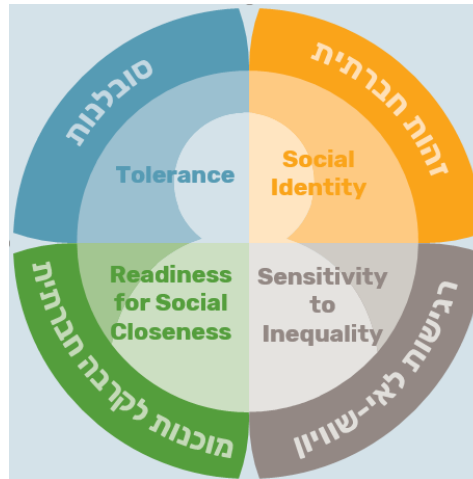




## Standard of Hope in Israeli Education

### *The Characteristics of an Ideal Graduate*



**Introduction:** One of the major challenges in developing a clear standard for education for shared society is a clear and concise definition of the desired educational goal, or the characteristics of an ideal graduate who is ready to live in a diverse, shared society. In other words, articulating an answer to the basic question: what should characterize an ideal graduate of an educational framework for shared society that successfully meets this standard? This challenge is especially difficult because various people and groups see and define the concept of education for shared society differently, and sometimes there is a tendency to maintain a certain level of ambiguity in order to accommodate different opinions and positions and to allow the participation of different groups and sectors.

As part of the process of developing such a standard, we therefore felt it was necessary to produce a clear and accepted definition of the ideal graduate, because in our eyes this definition is necessary to outline clear objectives for the educational frameworks involved. In practice, a clear definition of the ideal graduate creates both a broad goal and a vision for the entire education process, while also allowing the selection of specific training content, indices, curricula, etc., that align with the vision of the ideal graduate.

**Rationale:** There are three basic assumptions that underlie our definition of an ideal graduate. These three assumptions lead to a circular model of the ideal graduate. An initial breakdown of each of its components is below.

1. Education for shared society should lead to significant changes in the perceptions and attitudes of the graduate in terms of: perceptions of the common good, perceptions of a particular and shared identity, attitudes and perceptions of other groups in society, and perceptions of the ideal relations between the different groups.



2. Education for shared society is designed to increase the graduate's motivation, tolerance, and ability to interact with members of other groups in the course of their adult lives.
3. Education for shared society in a divided society must maintain a delicate balance between various components (e.g., common identity, sensitivity to inequality, promotion of tolerance), because a lack of balance may cause these components to interfere with and counteract one another.

### **1. Identity Component - Partnership:**

*General Description:* The graduate will feel that he or she is an integral part of Israeli society, including its various sub-groups, will define Israeli identity as a central part of his or her experience, feel a sense of shared fate with other members of society, and will be willing to work to advance common social goals and values. But at the same time, the graduate will respect and recognize the particular identities of different sub-groups within Israeli society.

*Required balance:* Education aimed at developing common identity and common goals, in the absence of appropriate balances, can lead to a lack of pluralism and equality and can also promote unity and homogeneity as supreme values that cannot be challenged. Therefore, this component must be balanced by developing tolerance towards other subgroups (both minority and majority groups), as well as by developing sensitivity to inequality and a willingness to act against it.

### **2. Attitude/Emotion Component - Tolerance:**

*General Description:* The graduate will become acquainted with and accept members of other social groups (hereafter: "outgroups" or "tribes") while developing tolerance for other groups and their language. In addition, there will be a significant reduction in the graduate's stereotypes, prejudices, group-based hatred, and the negative behavioral intentions stemming from these attitudes. This attitudinal and emotional change will be based on a change in basic norms regarding the proper treatment of the other and will include a reduction in both overt aspects of hatred such as the desire to distance oneself from, and to exclude, the other, as well as more subtle implicit aspects of bias.

*Required balance:* Education that cultivates tolerance and acceptance of the other in the absence of appropriate balances may lead to a blurring of distinct identities while preserving the status quo, even when the status quo is unfair or unequal. Therefore, the component of tolerance must be balanced by the graduate upholding the legitimacy and safety to maintain particularistic identities and by continually striving for equality and fairness.

### **3. Collective Action Component - Equality and Social Change:**

*General Description:* The graduate will be sensitive to social and structural inequalities in the society, not only the inequalities faced by the social group to which he or she belongs. As part of the "partnership contract" between the various



sub-groups or tribes in society, the graduate will be willing to actively work to reduce inequalities between groups or injustices directed at members of different social groups. As a result, the gap (which usually exists in democratic societies) between support for general democratic values and a willingness to act in order to realize them will be significantly reduced, even when action would not necessarily serve the members of the graduate's subgroup directly.

*Required Balance:* Striving for equality and social change in the absence of appropriate balances can lead to segregation and disintegration in a society, as well as to a constant and ongoing struggle to change the status quo. Therefore, the component of equality and social change must be balanced with a sense of partnership and collective identity that includes all members of society. This collective identity would ideally also include belief in equality as a central part of the core content that forms the identity.

#### **4. Individual Action Component - Readiness for Social Closeness:**

*General Description:* The graduate will develop the readiness, willingness, and motivation for social closeness with members of other social groups in various areas of life (e.g. residence, employment, culture, etc.). The educational process will equip the graduate with the necessary knowledge, skills, and motivation to live and act as part of a diverse environment, while recognizing and coping with the difficulties and challenges involved, but also appreciating the benefits inherent in a life characterized by diversity.

*Required balance:* Given that the individual action component is built on the first three components, and as long as it also includes a recognition of the desire and need of members of social groups to live and act alongside members of their own group, there is no need for any additional balancing.