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Hebrew Academy of Long Beach teachers focus on SEL training

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Hebrew Academy of Long Beach teachers are receiving training in social, emotional learning to help their students cope with learning during the coronavirus pandemic.

JEFFREY BESSEN/HERALD

By Jeff Bessen (mailto:jbessen@liherald.com)

To learn better techniques to address students' social and emotional needs, teachers from the Hebrew Academy of Long Beach in Woodmere are taking part in program stretching over several months in conjunction with Hidden Sparks, a nonprofit that aims to train teachers and provide them with the tools to help students in Jewish day schools who need support.

The focus is on an academic year that will begin differently from the traditional opening of school because of the coronavirus pandemic. Hidden Sparks is assisting teachers establish classrooms routines which could be easily transitioned online.

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Hidden Sparks SEL coach Lily Howard Scott is working with HALB teachers during the back-to-school season to help them prepare the students for success in the coming year. Strategies focus on helping students cope with their emotional responses to the pandemic and bolstering the students sense connection, engagement and investment at school.

Scott, a teacher and curriculum developer, has had her work, both written and on video, used in graduate school programs and professional development seminars across the country. She is a graduate of Northwestern University and Bank Street College of Education.

“Research shows that the way students feel in the classroom is inextricably linked to how well they perform educationally, and that their social and emotional wellbeing is tethered to their academic wellbeing.” Hidden Sparks Executive Director Debbie Niderberg said in a statement. “We’re thrilled that

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Lily is guiding our educators on how to welcome their students back to school and how to talk about pandemic. Given that students are most successful when they feel connected to and a sense of belonging in their classes, she is also helping teachers to nurture caring and connected classrooms for all pupils."

In August and September, Scott met virtually with the faculty team and will continue to consult with and further train educators based on the needs of their specific students and classrooms.

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