

Thank you for being a Builder of Jewish Education!

Your support empowers BJE to provide Jewish educators and children with innovative approaches, cutting-edge skills, essential resources, and transformative educational programs to help them flourish. Your donations help BJE continually enhance the quality, increase access, and encourage participation in Jewish education for children, birth through high school, with diverse backgrounds and interests, throughout Greater Los Angeles. Thank you.

Jewish Day Schools Learn to Thrive in The New Reality



Heads of school and lead administrators from BJE-accredited Jewish day schools gained new insights and tools for strengthening their schools in the new landscape, and for addressing challenges that continue to emerge post-pandemic. Amy Schiffman, President of Evolve Giving Group shared simple steps to engage and inspire today's donors, including parents, grandparents, alumni, and community members. Jami Bachrad of Evolve Giving Group presented tactics for addressing several pandemic-related challenges, including retaining and recruiting faculty and promoting a thriving workplace culture.

BJE Selected to Lead 2023 International March of the Living



In April, 168 high school seniors representing 10 L.A. public, private, Jewish and secular schools experienced BJE's March of the Living. The BJE delegation, typically the largest from the U.S. to the international march, was selected to lead nearly 10,000 global participants on the march from Auschwitz to Birkenau to commemorate Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day. After a week in Poland learning about Jewish life as it was experienced pre-, post-, and during the Holocaust, the journey proceeded to Israel where BJE teens celebrated Israel's 75 years of independence in Jerusalem.

Positive Education – Translating Theory into Practice



In May, BJE brought together educators from across Jewish early childhood, day, and part-time religious schools for a day-long "Positive Education Next Steps" gathering. The educators had been trained and certified via 2 cohorts of BJE's Positive Education training program with the goal of bringing their learning back to their individual schools to help enhance student, staff and community mental health and wellbeing. The educators spent the day sharing their experiences, thinking about their implementation goals for next year, addressing possible barriers, and working collaboratively. This BJE workshop was facilitated by Shelley Lawrence of Schoolhouse Collaborative, who works with individuals and schools to engage in deep self-reflection and goal setting. Overall, 28 BJE-affiliated schools now have at least one educator who has been trained and certified in Positive Education. BJE's Positive Education Initiative is supported, in large part, by a generous Reimagine grant from the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles.

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building Jewish education

IMPACT REPORT

bje January - June, 2023
BUILDERS OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Strategic Planning Process to Guide Future Focus

BJE is midway through a year-long, in-depth of examination of our community's current and emerging challenges and needs with the goal of developing a strategic plan for BJE to best serve L.A.'s Jewish schools, educators, students, and families.



Responding to our community's ever-evolving needs has been a hallmark of BJE's 86 years of leadership as an advocate, planner, catalyst, and creative force for strengthening and advancing Jewish learning, with special emphasis on children and youth, early childhood through high school, their educators and parents. With expert facilitation from 2B Communications & Strategy Group, and input from hundreds of stakeholders, BJE's board and staff will, by the close of 2023, develop a plan to most effectively address current and emergent Jewish educational needs in the changing landscape of Greater Los Angeles.

Securing Available Public Support on Behalf of Day Schools



BJE represents 28 Jewish day schools in a consortium to access government Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title services as well as government funding for non-public schools to defray pandemic-related costs. Between January and June 2023, BJE helped schools secure more than \$1.1 million in services to help students falling behind academically or in need of counselling, provide professional development opportunities with the aim of advancing student learning, and \$6 million to offset COVID-occasioned school expenses.

Educators Learn Vital Self-Care

Early childhood educators are experts in caring for children. However, not all are skilled in taking care of their own well-being while managing the stress, pressure and responsibility that can come with their profession – especially through the pandemic. In May, BJE led a day of professional training in the unique ways in which taking care of oneself can help increase energy, restfulness, inspiration, and joy. A hands-on painting workshop led by Karen Sachs provided a playful process to inspire self-learning and expression. The session addressed the importance of self-care and provided the opportunity for educators to connect with colleagues about strategies for personal well-being.



BJE Creates Network for New Religious School Directors



During the pandemic, there was considerable turnover among the ranks of Directors of part-time Religious Schools. Over a 15-month period, more than one-third of congregations employing a Religious School Director 75% time or more needed to engage a new Director. The new educational directors came from a broad range of experience and backgrounds and required specific training in various areas.

BJE responded to this need by creating a professional network specifically for new directors of part-time religious schools, providing professional training on topics from Jewish studies basics to how to supervise faculty, and more. BJE has matched new directors with mentors to help accelerate the directors' skills and success.

BJE expresses its appreciation to the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles for partnership grants toward support of BJE March of the Living, JKidLA/Concierge, securing public funds, and strengthening day school and part-time Jewish education.

