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BUILDERS OF JEWISH EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

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A Community OF Builders

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Gratitude, Responsibility, and Jewish Education



At our June 2022 board meeting, a high school senior who had recently returned from Israel as a participant in BJE March of the Living shared

the following with the board. On her 18th birthday, she recounted, the BJE group visited the grounds of Yad VaShem, where she took particular note of the memorial to 1.5 million children who were murdered during the Holocaust. She reflected on the fact that these young people did not live to experience the milestone of 18 years. Her sense of gratitude for all the blessings she enjoys, she said, made that day the most meaningful birthday she could have imagined.

We are privileged to live at a time of extraordinary possibility. Yet, much in the world remains in need of repair. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks wrote that Judaism "is about how a nation can be formed on the basis of shared commitment and collective responsibility. It is about how to construct a society that honors the human person as the image and likeness of God. It is about a vision, never fully realized but never abandoned, of a world based on justice and compassion...." This vision is nurtured and given expression, from generation to generation, through Jewish education.

At the heart of Jewish education is gratitude and a profound sense of purpose and responsibility. Engaging successive generations of children and families in the joy of Jewish living through meaningful educational experiences is the enduring mission of BJE. Accomplishing such a mission is only possible with the partnership of many, many people and organizations, and we express gratitude to all who join in this collective project. These pages include just a few of the highlights of a year rich in Jewish learning experiences for the tens of thousands of children and families touched by the work of BJE.

Thank you for your continuing partnership, and best wishes for a Shanah Tovah – a year of good health and abundant blessing.

Bennett L. Spiegel President

Eric Hartung

Gil Graff Executive Director

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z"l: Of blessed memory

BJE Launches Positive Education Training for Jewish Schools across Los Angeles

In January, BJE launched its first-ever educator cohort in Positive Education, to be trained to apply the science of wellbeing and principles of Positive Psychology, Neuroscience and Integrative Health to address community wellbeing among staff, students, and families.

BJE received a Reimagine Grant from the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles and partnered with the Center for Positive Education to offer this intensive training program for its first cohort of 15 educators who, upon completion of the training, received certification in Positive Education and will begin translating their learning into action at their respective schools all across Los Angeles in the fall.

This is the first time BJE has organized a training cohort with educators from across day schools, early childhood programs, and part-time religious schools. The first cohort included educators from: Ilan Ramon, Kehillat Israel, Ohr Eliyahu,



Temple Akiba, and Wise School early childhood programs; Brawerman, Harkham Hillel, Heschel, Ilan Ramon and Valley Beth Shalom day schools; and Kehillat Israel, Los Angeles Hebrew High School, Temple Aliyah, Temple Menorah and Temple Ramat Zion part-time religious schools. A second cohort is planned for Fall 2022.

"This approach to social-emotional learning speaks directly to the needs of our students and their families," said Julia Levine, Religious School Director at Temple Ramat Zion. "I'm excited to bring this knowledge to the Religious School faculty as we prepare for next year, and to weave the lessons I have learned into our Religious School curriculum. Positive Education's focus on things like relationships, resilience, building upon students' strengths, and connecting with your emotions relates directly to both Jewish values and the challenges that our children face in today's world. This amazing professional development opportunity has given me the resources, language, and knowledge to make sure that our school continues to adapt and offer relevant and deep Jewish meaning to our families."

BJE Secures over \$5.2 Million in Government Funding for Jewish Schools in 2021-2022

Since 2008, with the support of funding from the Jewish Federation, BJE has represented BJE-affiliated schools in accessing federal Title funding previously known as "No Child Left Behind" and currently known as the "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*." Over the last decade, BJE has helped secure close to \$17 million in government funding to support services to students, educators, and parents at BJE affiliated schools.

In the 2021-22 school year alone, BJE assisted 29 affiliated day schools and yeshivot in accessing over \$5.2 million in government funding and services. In addition to ESSA funding, BJE also assisted schools in accessing COVID-19 relief funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)** and the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools Program (EANS).** ***ESSA Title I Funding** assists students who are falling behind academically by providing support in English Language Arts and Math, counseling services and support for teachers working with Title I students.

Title II funding is available for educator professional development (workshops, coaching, tuition reimbursement and conference attendance.)

Title IV funding provides for student support in obtaining a well-rounded education, strengthening the use of educational technology, and supporting safe and healthy students. Services can include academic and counseling services for students, workshops for parents and educators, coaching and conferences for educators and educational technology equipment and training.

****COVID-19 CARES and EANS funding** assisted schools in obtaining equipment to address the additional safety needs created by Covid, such as personal protective equipment (PPE), dividers and additional school furniture to enable distancing, Covid testing, and technology to support remote learning.

Propelling Educators Forward with State-of-the-Art Training and Skills



Training Educators to Help Families in Times of Public Crises & Trauma

"David Lewis [Director, BJE's Center for Excellence in Part-Time Jewish Education] is always telling us to let him know how he can better support us. After the situation in Colleyville, Texas I told him that I could really use some training in trauma-informed care. Within a few weeks he had worked with the Crisis and Trauma Response Institute to put together an incredible program, tailored to meet the needs of synagogue educators. It was such a clear sign of support and care for those of us on the ground, helping families work through the secondary trauma of that situation, and I am pleased to say that this kind of response from David and BJE is the norm and not the exception."

Rabbi Carrie Vogel

Director, Jewish Experience Center and Interim Director, Early Childhood Center, Kehillat Israel (K-12th grade)

Increasing Skills to Serve At-Risk Students

"I received teacher/administor coaching through BJE specifically on managing challenging cases, including parental guidance and response to intervention for students at risk. My coach helped me and other teachers in our school create effective strategies to manage classroom behavior, including students with learning disabilities and mental health challenges affecting learning. I am so grateful to BJE for the ability to receive this coaching." **Esther Pearl Kreinman**

YULA Girls Student Support staff

One very important aspect of BJE's work is providing professional development training to educators from among the more than 140 BJE-affiliated schools, early childhood through high school. In order to continue growing and learning, teachers rely on BJE to organize and host programs that introduce the latest and most cutting edge skills and ideas in education, and to help schools pursue government funding, when appropriate, that helps pay for such training. For many schools in our community, BJE offers opportunities to the collective that they would not be able to pursue individually. This is an often unseen but critical piece of BJE's impact on schools and student experience.

Supporting Ever-Changing Needs Due to Covid

"There are two types of professional development that happen through BJE – informal networking and formal programs. Throughout the pandemic, one of the most valuable opportunities was BJE's twice a week Zoom with BJE Religious School Educators Network. Particularly during the early days, we were all grappling with how to turn our programs virtual, and then how to keep them engaging as the days and weeks wore on. We were able to share our individual expertise and teach one another. We were also able to share what we'd been learning about Covid requirements and how to adapt our schools and classrooms."

Rabbi Rebeccah Yussman Director, Jewish Learning and Living, Temple Menorah

Helping Students Develop Resilience

"In our Positive Education cohort, BJE has done an amazing job of not only helping us acquire the knowledge, but also helping us think through how best to implement the ideas in our schools. The training included time with Dr. Abby Fifer Mandel, who helped us learn about user-centered design so that we really put our students front and center in planning our implementation for the fall. We're still in the planning phase, but we have the tools we need to make meaningful changes to our program to benefit our students, families, and teachers."

Rabbi Adam Schaffer

Director, Jewish Learning Cooperative of Shomrei Torah Synagogue, and the Sevran Center of Temple Aliyah



Providing Master Coaches

"We had the incredible opportunity to work this year with coaches on both an administrative level and with teachers in the classroom. The sessions were truly impactful and helped our administrative team work through some important self-reflection and set goals for improvement. This could not have been possible if it weren't for the continuous support our school receives from BJE. We are truly grateful."

Michelle Andron Principal, Emek Hebrew Academy

Advocating for School Funding and Accelerating Educator Skills

"BJE has played a crucial role in facilitating Briskin Elementary School's ability to access Title funding. Marie Perez [Coordinator, BJE Center for Excellence in Day School Education] and Betty Winn [Senior Consultant] have been incredible advocates in this process. As a result of the work of BJE and its staff, we have been able to offer our staff topnotch professional development which has included working with Dr. Cindy Kratzer from UCLA and Shelley Lawrence from Schoolhouse Collaborative. We have been able to offer our students access to a terrific guidance counselor, which has been crucial in light of the impact of COVID-19."

Dr. Hannah Bennett Head of School, Briskin Elementary School Temple Israel of Hollywood

Teaching Students by Teaching Their Parents

"At our last BJE Early Childhood Directors Network event we heard from Dr. Bruce Powell. He spoke about his book, *Raising A+ Human Beings*. Although he wrote the book from his experience working in high schools, he easily adapted it for Early Childhood Centers. Of the many things we learned, one thing I will take back to my school is his approach to educating parents. His acronym, PAVES (Parent, Action, Values, Expectations, Supper) is a great way to set a framework for parent education. This year I plan to begin a monthly parent coffee, and PAVES will be at the core of our discussions. This is the type of learning we're all afforded regularly by being part of BJE's Early Childhood Directors Network." Alisha Sela

Director, Early Childhood Education Center Kadima Day School

New Tools to Foster Brain and Body Development

"As an educator, I pride myself on being a lifelong learner. BJE offers me opportunities for both professional and personal growth through its workshops and programming. One workshop that was particularly meaningful was when a pediatric occupational therapist came to speak with us about practical strategies we can use in our classrooms to help children with various skills. We now have "cozy corners" in almost all our classrooms so that when children feel overwhelmed with big feelings, they have a calming, safe space to re-regulate. The therapist also offered fun "tricks" to help with fine motor, gross motor, balance, cross-body coordination, and vestibular activities. All of these tools can help strengthen muscles, increase brain development, and regulate the body. Professional development is a critical part of being an educator. We strive to provide the best environment possible for children's social, emotional, and physical growth. Because of this, it is incredibly important for us to be a part of both the learning and implementation of this knowledge." Sari Edber

Assistant Director, Early Childhood Center Temple Judea



The Only U.S. Delegation to Participate in 2022 International March of the Living



BJE, which has long conducted the largest teen March of the Living (MOTL) program of any community in the U.S., partnered with International March of the Living to create a powerful 10-day opportunity for teens this spring. Eighty seniors from 13 high schools across Los Angeles travelled to Israel (only, due to the war in Ukraine) where they engaged with Holocaust memory through visits to museums and interaction with survivors (in person and via Zoom), and experienced Israel's Memorial Day and Independence Day. The BJE-led group of teens was the only U.S. group to participate in this year's international program.

"I would say to anyone considering going - do it! It's an incredible experience. I learned and listened and now know I want to be that person to change the world we live in. I honored my grandfather, my family, my ancestors, and all Jews around the world. It's important to see what your family has gone through, see your history. It's a powerful event that should never be forgotten, and everyone should take an opportunity to go!"

Jason S. (BJE MOTL '22 delegation)

"I was able to gain a new perspective on how to think about Holocaust victims as individual people and not just as the six million number we typically hear about."

Rachel P. (BJE MOTL '22 delegation)

"Hearing the stories of those who were killed in the Holocaust gave me the powerful responsibility to pass on their stories, so that everyone can be as informed as I had the opportunity to be." **Talia E. (BJE MOTL '22 delegation)**

"Our daughter would do it all over again—that's how deeply meaningful it was for her. She loves Israel all the more, she reveres the way Israelis feel about their homeland, and she shared notes she took as the speakers you selected spoke. The words always fall short of how full our hearts remain because of your dedication to this journey." **BJE MOTL Parent** "I am sure that you've heard my words come from many other parents many, many times but my son came back telling me how his life was changed forever. That's huge coming from a 17-year-old teenager. I totally believe him though. He's always been connected to Israel and absolutely has a Jewish soul; however, seeing and experiencing Israel the way he saw it with BJE's March of the Living took him to another level. Thank you for this opportunity. Thank you for helping my family financially, because without your financial support he would not have been able to go. Thank you for allowing my child to be a vessel and a carrier of this important story and message. I feel so blessed and so grateful."

BJE MOTL Parent

"Our time together with these teens during this unique BJE March of the Living trip was extraordinary, as we have watched them become ambassadors of memory. They took the incomprehensible event that is the Holocaust and pushed themselves to understand and to learn through words, videos, images, and stories."

Abby Cutler, Director BJE Teen Experiential Education

BJE GALA 2022

Celebrated Volunteer-Professional



According to BJE Executive Director, Gil Graff, "Collaboration is key to the success of any professional or nonprofit endeavor, and BJE has had a history of exceptional leaders – volunteer and professional – who care deeply about BJE's mission, and are committed to accomplishing our goals."

At the 2022 Gala, BJE celebrated two such leaders: longtime community leader and BJE Immediate **Past President Mark Berns**, and **BJE Associate Director and Director of Donor and Community Relations**, **Miriam Prum Hess**. More than 300 people gathered

outside at Stephen S. Wise Temple's beautiful Nahmias Plaza-Katz Pavilion for a celebration of these two exemplary leaders who have each made many profound contributions to Jewish education in Los Angeles.

In addition to attendees' honoring Mark and Miriam and supporting the work of BJE, **funds were raised** at the BJE Gala toward meeting a generous match grant challenge offered by the Simha & Sara Lainer Family Foundation to establish an endowment to help support BJE's JKidLA program. This robust resource, including a website, social media platforms and personalized Concierge service, is used each year by thousands of community members to connect to Jewish schools, camps, and programs for children, teens, parents, and families. JKidLA services are provided free of charge to families.



Visit JKidLA for Jewish Activities for Kids and Families in LA www.jkidla.com

in partnership with



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2021-2022 BJE by the Numbers

20,000+

students in greater Los Angeles benefit from BJE's work

80 teens from 13 L.A. high schools participated in a 10-day BJE March of the Living opportunity in Israel. They were the only U.S. delegation to join this year's powerful international educational experience

28,000+

people use JKidLA on all its platforms (website, consultation, eblasts, social media community)

15 schools were part of BJE's first Positive Education cohort, where lead educators (from early childhood, day school and part-time religious schools) earned certification and skills to enable integration of the principles of Positive Psychology into their schools' educational approach Use of JKidLA increased **38%** in the two years during the Covid pandemic **279** day school students benefited from tuition assistance made possible through BJE-administered scholarship funds

Students at more than **100** schools benefitted from **111** professional development sessions

conducted by BJE to help advance educators' skills to strengthen student learning. Participants included educators from Jewish early childhood centers, day schools, and part-time religious schools, as well as teen experiential educators, specialists, heads of school and administrators

Instagram

BJE represented 29 Jewish day schools to secure **\$5.2 million** in government funding: helping students who are falling behind academically, providing professional development to advance student learning, and offsetting Covid-incurred school costs

300+

educators from **21** BJE-affiliated early childhood centers attended BJE's annual Bebe Feuerstein Simon Early Childhood Institute



Welcome First-Time BJE Directors and Officer!



BJE is very excited to welcome eight new board members and elect one first time officer of the board. They each shared with us why BJE is important to them. To read more about each of them, and to see the full board list, visit the Board of Directors page of our website at www.bjela.org/bje-board-directors.



Alan Petlak, Recording Secretary

"BJE plays a vital role in supporting Jewish education in Los Angeles, and recognizes that a strong Jewish community is dependent on strong

Jewish education. It is one of the few Jewish organizations that serves the entire Los Angeles Jewish community. I'm honored to be a part of the important work BJE does."



Gregg Bernstein, Director

"I'm seeing more and more in secular education that Jewish history is not being taught in any meaningful way, as I recall learning it in school myself. Jewish

education is key to transmitting our history and culture to the next generation. I'm looking forward to being more involved with BJE because I want to help support the Jewish educational community in Los Angeles."



Brian Dror, Director

"After having been involved in my children's Jewish day schools for over 25 years and seeing the difference an involved and committed person can

make, I would like the opportunity to participate in a city wide way. Joining the BJE board will hopefully provide me with the opportunity to have an even broader impact on ensuring that a Jewish education is made available to every child in our community."



David Horowitz, Director

"As a parent of two children in Jewish day school, I've been fortunate to observe firsthand the benefits a Jewish education has had on their development

and identity as members of the Jewish community. I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to be part of an organization that will help other families enjoy the meaningful experiences we have had."



Jason Kboudi, Director

"Day school is important to our children, because you're putting Judaism into their hearts and into their minds every day, and it sticks with them, no matter the path

their lives take. We've always been passionate about

involvement with our Jewish community, and in fact moved to LA largely for greater Jewish engagement opportunities for our family, so I'm looking forward to becoming more involved with BJE."

Kim Schwarz, Director



"Receiving a Jewish education is a gift, and I'm grateful that my four children have had amazing opportunities to be engaged and inspired by committed Jewish educators. As

an active member in the community, I see the profound support that BJE provides to Jewish educators and organizations. I'm so grateful for that, and enthusiastic about contributing to BJE's important work."



Michael Steuer, Director "I got involved with BJE because I care greatly about Jewish continuity and know that broad access to quality Jewish

education is the cornerstone

of ensuring a Jewish future for generations to come."

Payman Vahedifar, Director



"My three children are second-generation immigrants from a Jewish community that stretches back 2700 years. As Iranian-American Jews, they have straddled

three different identities. I am truly grateful that my children's well-integrated Jewish education has given them a solid foundation, developed their sense of self, strengthened their connection with their community and relationship with Israel and most importantly helped them connect the past to the present. As such, I truly believe in the importance of Jewish education and the mission of BJE. I am excited and grateful to be an ambassador for BJE, to promote its vision and expand its reach."

David Weiner, Director



"I am the product of a Jewish day school and Jewish teen programs and am thrilled that my children are similarly benefiting from Jewish early education and

elementary schools. I believe that Jewish education both provides community and promotes engagement in the wider community – essential ingredients for a fulfilling and meaningful life."



Above and Beyond: Celebrating Extraordinary Builders of Jewish Education Honoring Mel & Susan Plutsky and Nancy Schulman

Appreciation for education and community leads many Jewish parents to lend their time, energy, and resources to the many schools that help make L.A.'s Jewish life so rich. But some parents, like this year's Gala honorees, Mel and Susan Plutsky and Nancy Schulman, see beyond their own schools to broader, community-wide engagement.

"Mel, Susan, and Nancy have a deep understanding of the value of contributing to the collective community," said BJE Executive Director Dr. Gil Graff. "Their decades of support have helped BJE thrive as a communal resource for schools, educators, students, and parents."



Mel & Susan Plutsky

Susan chaired the annual campaign and served on the executive committee at Milken Community School. Their children attended Wise School and Milken Community School and one

For 10 years, Mel served

on the Wise School board.

of their grandchildren attended de Toledo High School. They have been involved in numerous community organizations including AIPAC, Camp Newman, and Harmony Project, among others. Mel, who joined BJE's board in 2012 and has over the past decade served as a committee chair and Vice President, is currently active on BJE's Executive, Investment, Audit, and Day School Finance & Governance Overview Committees.



Nancy served as a trustee on the Milken Board of Directors, as a docent, and on the Principals' Advisory Committee. She currently co-chairs the Milken Admissions Committee. She has served on a number of committees at

Valley Beth Shalom (VBS). Her sons attended VBS and Milken Community School. Since joining the BJE board in 2011, Nancy has held many leadership positions, including chairing the Financial Resource Development and Nominating Committees, serving as a Secretary of the Board, and Co-Chairing BJE's 2022 Gala. Nancy is currently a BJE Vice President. The Plutsky and Schulman children all participated in BJE Teen March of the Living and both couples participated in BJE Adult March of the Living.

BJE and the L.A. Jewish community are grateful to Mel and Susan Plutsky and Nancy Schulman for their decades of support and leadership. We hope you will join us at the gala, when we honor these three distinguished leaders in Jewish education.



"We are grateful to have received an invaluable education from Stephen Wise School through Milken Community School," shared **Emily and Joey Plutsky**. "Our fondest memories and most pivotal moments include traveling

on Tiferet, attending BJE Teen March of the Living, spending summers at Camp Newman, going to Shabbatons, joining daily Kehillah, celebrating Jewish holidays, and participating in vibrant class discussions integrating texts across History, English, Psychology, and Jewish Studies.

Jewish education serves as the foundation upon which we conduct our lives and engage with others in the community."



"I am so grateful I had the opportunity to go to such amazing Jewish schools. Not only did I learn how to think critically, but I learned how my Jewish values are a core part of my identity. My Jewish education has taught me how important our

community is and my responsibility as an adult to teach these lessons to the next generation."

- Michael Schulman

"My education taught me not only to be proud of my Judaism, but that I truly do have the power to make a difference. When I think of the VBS and Milken schools, I think of the loving community of amazing teachers and friends that helped me grow into the person I am today." - **Daniel Schulman**



Supporting Jewish Education Honor Roll of Donors Gifts of \$100+ received July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

BJE gratefully acknowledges the essential support of the donors and organizations whose generosity enables BJE to provide ongoing services and programs to enhance quality, increase access, and encourage participation in Jewish education.

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 * Funds administered by the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles
 ** Includes matching gift



BJE Acknowledges with Appreciation Program funding from the Jewish Federation, in support of:

California Association of Private School Organizations (CAPSO) dues (on behalf of schools)

Day School Capacity Building

JKidLA/Concierge Program

L.A. Jewish Teen Initiative Programs (Professional Learning Community)* BJE March of the Living

Reshet L.A.

Strengthening Jewish Day Schools through Leveraging Government Funding

*The LAJTI is co-funded by the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and the Jim Joseph Foundation, with seed funding provided by the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles.

Program funding gifts (\$10,000+) from foundations and individuals in support of:

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BJE donors and staff whose passing we became aware of during the year.

Elaine Berke • Abraham Berman • Barbara Braun • Rita Chotiner • Tim Fletcher Robert Friedman • Michael Gittelson • Hazzan Binyamin Glickman

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Thank you to the over 90 donors who, as we go to press, have collectively contributed more than 90% of the "match" goal.

(Received January 1 - August 5, 2022)

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LEGACY SOCIETY

BJE gratefully acknowledges the generosity of those who have made testamentary provisions to support the enduring mission of BJE

Abraham^{z"} & Annette Berman Sandy & Max Candiotty Rhea & Hal^{z"} Coskey Arlene & Gerald Davis Janet & Jake^{z"} Farber Robin & Gil Graff Betty & Sivan Hamburger^{z"l} Miriam Prum Hess & Mark L. Hess Renee & Chuck Hurewitz Rabbi Glenn Karonsky Linda Goldenberg Mayman & Robert Mayman Marcia & David Nimmer Dr. Susan & Mel Plutsky Norman Saiger Elizabeth Rosman Schwartz & Mitchell Schwartz Jo M. Seligman

BJE is grateful to receive generous and continuing support from the following legacies established at the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles

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To discuss Legacy or Endowment opportunities at BJE please contact Roberta Berrent, 323.761.8617 or rberrent@bjela.org

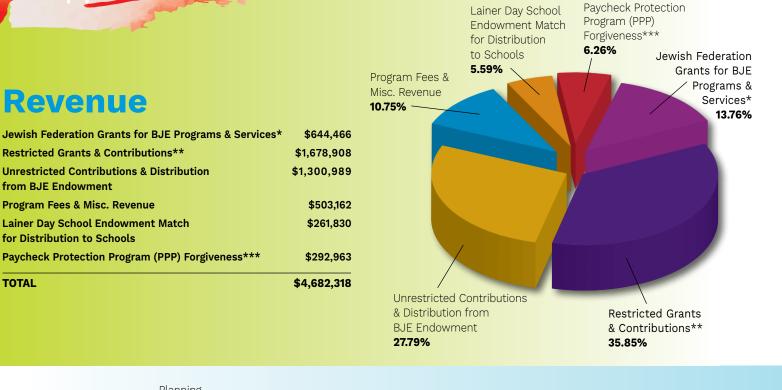


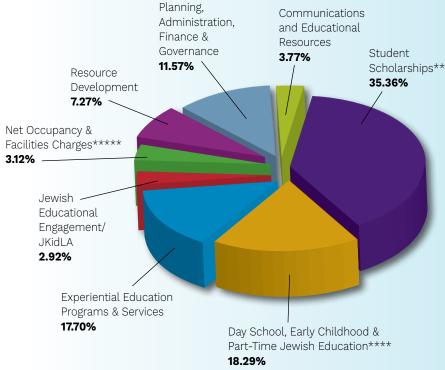
TOTAL

Financials at a Glance

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Operating Budget

(unaudited)





Expenses

Day School, Early Childhood & Part-Time Jewish Education****	\$856,394
Experiential Education Programs & Services	\$828,927
Student Scholarships**	\$1,655,824
Jewish Educational Engagement/JKidLA	\$136,557
Communications and Educational Resources	\$176,224
Resource Development	\$340,631
Planning, Administration, Finance & Governance	\$541,757
Net Occupancy & Facilities Charges *****	\$146,004
TOTAL	\$4,682,318

* Includes \$615,000 in program grants, \$23,902 for L.A. Jewish Teen Initiative, and \$5,564 for CAPSO dues, on behalf of BJEaccredited Day Schools

** Includes \$970,368 spend rate distribution to schools of funds deposited by schools as part of High School Affordability Initiative

- *** BJE secured a PPP loan of \$292,963 in fiscal year 2020-2021 which was entirely forgiven in the second quarter of 2022
- Does not include nearly \$975,000 in services secured by BJE through the Every Student Succeeds Act in support of student learning and professional development at BJE-represented day schools, and \$4,259,000 secured for pandemic related equipment, services and programs (CARES/EANS) used in 2021-2022
- ***** Net occupancy charges paid to The Jewish Federation



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BJE Launches New Website



In spring 2022, after a deep dive into user experience, BJE launched a new website. Check it out at www.bjela.org.

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Kathi Barnhard Vice President



Mayer Brenner Vice President



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