

The Power of Partnership





The year 2021-2022 marks 85 years since a Los Angeles Jewish community organization established BJE (known, then, as Bureau of

Jewish Education.) As BJE expanded its programs and services to meet the needs of a rapidly growing Jewish community, the Jewish Federation Council encouraged BJE to become, as other major service providers in the community, an independent agency. In a friendly spinoff, BJE became a separate organization in 1990.

From its inception to the present day, BJE — since 2009, Builders of Jewish Education — has been rooted in partnership. The group that initiated BJE recognized that working collectively to strengthen the community's Jewish educational institutions would "lift all boats." At a time when there were Yiddish schools and Hebrew schools, Orthodox Talmud Torahs and temple-sponsored Sunday schools, as well as secular, cultural programs of Jewish education, visionary leaders understood that there was value in providing professional development for educators, improving curriculum and instruction, promoting greater participation in Jewish education, and helping Jewish schools and families meet the

financial challenges of providing and accessing Jewish education. Eighty-five years later, BJE's mission remains: encouraging participation in Jewish education, enhancing the quality of Jewish education, and promoting access to Jewish education.

Strategies for accomplishing BJE's enduring mission change over time, to meet changing needs. A constant, however, is partnership. Partnership between BJE and educational providers; partnership between BJE and allied organizations, including The Jewish Federation; partnership between outstanding volunteers — in the footsteps of BJE's founders — and professional staff who carry forward BJE's services and programs; and partnership with the community of caring donors who support BJE and the mission it represents. It is because of these longstanding partnerships that BJE, with your support, was able to respond as it did during a year of particular challenge, as described in these pages.

Thank you for your continuing partnership and best wishes for a *shanah tovah*, a year of good health and abundant blessing.

Brown L. Spyf

Bennett L. Spiegel *President*

Gil Graff

Executive Director

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BJE Gala 2021 Recognized Extraordinary Heads of Schools



In a year unlike any we have seen, BJE held a very special Gala. The 2021 BJE Out of the Box Gala, chaired by Susan Baum, celebrated 88 heads of early childhood centers, parttime religious schools and day schools all across Greater Los Angeles, recognizing the extraordinary work happening under their leadership during a time of great uncertainty. Rather than attend a more traditional inperson event, ticketholders and sponsors received a delicious, catered Shabbat meal to enjoy in their own homes. Heads of Schools at participating schools and synagogues received a meal for themselves and their households in appreciation of their leadership and dedication to our community. Special tributes were shared with all the educators. In total, more than 1,000 people participated in the event, raising money to help enable BJE to continue providing meaningful support to schools and educators at a time when the needs created by the pandemic were profound.

BJE Kindness Challenge

In 2017, after many years running service learning programs for teens, BJE leadership decided to open the experience to the broader community, as part of BJE's 80th anniversary celebration year. Sisters-in-law Kim Schwarz and Amy Leibowitz agreed to co-chair BJE's first ever community day of service learning. Since then, the successful program has been held twice a year. When COVID-19 prevented a group from assembling in person, Kim, Amy and BJE staff were determined to adapt the program rather than cancelling. The BJE Kindness Challenge was born. From July 20-24, 2020,

families across the Los Angeles area participated in a social media



campaign designed to promote acts of chesed (kindness). Fourteen community organizations signed on as partners to encourage their members to participate. Individuals who signed up received Jewish educational materials on chesed, and families posted their actions on social media and tagged #BJEBuildingKindness.

Kim Schwarz, Co-Chair

Acts of kindness and service to our community have always been such a priority for both my family and Amy's, but during the beginning of COVID-19, even more so. We were leaving notes for the mail carrier, cashiers at the market, residents at the Jewish Home; assembling bags for essential workers; delivering food to pantries and shelters. The value of each act counts. The more we talk about these things and share them with kids at a young age, the more it becomes ingrained in them as they grow.

BJE's Impact in Schools

The 2020-2021 school year was a year like no other!! Every school was forced to make dramatic adjustments and adaptations, learn new skills very quickly, and be responsive to ever-changing guidelines. For early childhood centers, day schools and part-time religious schools across the Greater Los Angeles area, BJE's professional staff played key roles in enabling each school to pivot and respond to the pandemic. BJE staff were leaders, supporters, advocates, conveners and more. Educators shared the tremendous impact BJE had on their work.

Religious School Educators Network



Led by David Lewis, BJE Director of the Center for Excellence in Part-Time Jewish Education, the Religious School Educators Network (RSEN) began meeting as often as twice a week, as religious schools became a place of both Jewish education and emotional support for students.

Keri Loventhal, VBS Etz Chaim Learning Center Director

When the pandemic began, if it wasn't for BJE and our network of educators, I think I would have been lost. Our group had been meeting in the past, but at this turning point, we really came together as colleagues and friends. Everyone was in the same place and everyone was facing the unknown. With the help of



BJE and specifically
David, our group
began meeting
twice a week for the
year. Our network of
colleagues became
closer and a deeper
level of trust was

formed. The BJE Religious School Network is one of many silver linings during this pandemic.

Rachel Kaufman, Assistant Principal, Los Angeles Hebrew High School

I'm so grateful to the RSEN. Gathering together in person had always been beneficial and I went into the Zoom conferences not knowing what to expect. I found that more than ever I needed to be inspired, and listening to the other educators talk about their successes and challenges helped shift my perspective. Connecting and collaborating was a wonderful way to bridge communities. Having a network run by David Lewis who is such a charismatic, enthusiastic and caring individual is priceless and I think I speak for everyone when I say that we have gained a lot from the numerous opportunities RSEN provides.

Day Schools



Led by Rabbi Jim Rogozen, BJE Director of the Center for Excellence in Early Childhood and Day School Education, day schools dealt with varying guidelines for K-2, K-6 and 7-12 grades and a constantly changing landscape throughout the school year.

Mrs. Y. Blauner, General Studies Principal, Cheder Menachem

We were grappling with something we have never seen before - the simple, basic question of 'How are we going to be able to open our doors tomorrow?' From day one, Jim established a sense that we were going to work together, have a platform to share and see others going through something similar. It's our responsibility to lead with strength, so it helped to be able to take that hat off for a moment and hear that everyone was in a similar situation and needed guidance and support. BJE is always there for us; whatever comes our way, there's an unwavering commitment to us, so that we can turn around and provide the children with a solid education and families the support they need.

Malka Clement, Director Hebrew and Judaic Studies, Wise School

For Judaic studies educators, online resources are more scarce, which was an extra challenge during COVID-19, and Jim saw an opportunity



to generate a comprehensive online resource bank used by the different Jewish day schools and share it with the community of heads of Judaic studies departments. The meetings Jim organized for the Jewish Studies Administrators Community of Practice became essential during the pandemic at a time when we were very siloed within our schools.

Early Childhood Directors Network



Led by Carly Rosenstein, BJE Early Childhood Education Specialist, the Early Childhood Directors
Network sprang into action.
As childcare providers, early childhood centers remained open throughout the pandemic and were the very first BJE network to tackle the challenges of in-

person learning during COVID-19.

Robin Masnicoff, Early Childhood Center Director, Beth Shir Shalom

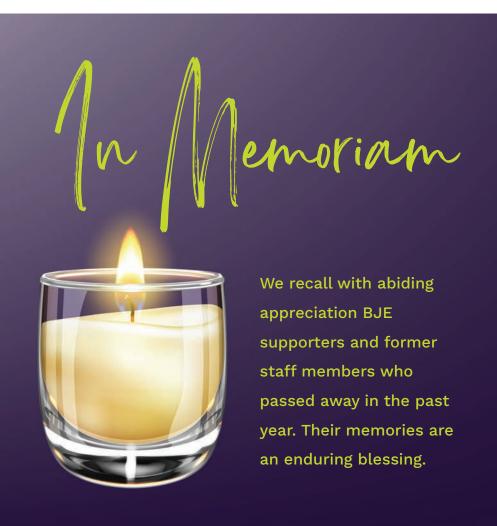
BJE has been so responsive and supportive during this incredibly stressful year. Before COVID-19, it didn't seem like the directors really connected fully. But this experience in many ways placed us all on the same playing field. Even for long-time directors, this has all been totally new. Carly really brought us all together. She looked at everyone's strengths and called on us to help each other based on what we could bring to the table. Having more frequent meetings, all on Zoom, was key for a busy director. It was so helpful to hear everyone's stories and share knowledge,



and Carly was receptive to us individually, so she really helped ensure we were all getting what we needed. I think we are more supportive and cohesive than before we had to be physically distant and that is in part because of her leadership. And I can say that the kids are thriving.

Alisha Sela, Director, Early Childhood Education Center, Kadima Day School

This year, BJE really brought us together in a way I hadn't seen before. It gave us a chance to brainstorm, collaborate and vent with colleagues, but it also presented opportunities for professional development by Zoom that were a challenge to fit into our schedules in-person. Things were constantly changing in areas like health codes and licensing, and Carly condensed so much critical information into a weekly email, which was incredibly helpful. She also created a WhatsApp group for us, so we didn't have to wait for network meetings to get feedback from colleagues. For me, a silver lining to this COVID-19 year has been the strengthening of our BJE Early Childhood Directors Network.



Dr. Emanuel (Manny) Abrams Al Ashlev Jillian Ben-Ezra Rabbi Joseph Bronner **Holly Brock Cohn** Ray Friedman Nat Gorman Sharon Krischer Jennifer Leonard Scott Lieberman Richard Lindheim Louis G. Miller Rachel (Shelly) Parrell Janet Salter Alan Schneider Aviva Schotland **Larry Selk** Rita Shapiro **Yonaton Shultz Harriet Weinreich Judy Weinstock**

L'Dor V'Dor BJE March of the Living Digital Edition

Though the pandemic prevented BJE from assembling teens in person for experiential education programs, BJE staff didn't miss a beat! They understood that many teens were struggling with the social isolation and needed ways to connect. In partnership with Holocaust Museum Los Angeles, BJE paired high school students with survivors, replicating the very personal interactions students would typically get as participants in BJE March of the Living.

Amalia Abecassis, 11th grade, Shalhevet High School

Having the opportunity to meet and speak with Holocaust survivor Eva during this crazy time was such a unique and memorable experience. The L'Dor V'Dor program not only allowed me to hear the stories of Holocaust survivors but also enabled me to feel part of a community. Meeting with my peers allowed me to be engaged and think differently. Speaking with Eva gave me a powerful sense of her

inspiring strength and bravery. Eva dealt with trauma at a very young age. However, she survived and turned to art and writing as a way of expressing and overcoming her experience. Her



story of survival helped me believe that this time in lockdown would pass, and that it is important to stay positive when times are challenging. At the end of every session we were reminded: 'Make sure to share the stories that you have heard today at the dinner table and with those around you.' It was a reminder of my purpose on this program: to share the stories of the survivors so that they will never be forgotten.

BJE Securing Government Funding for Schools

Millions of federal dollars are available to fund educational support services for students and educators, but schools need to know about the resources and expend tremendous time to access them. BJE's Day School Consortium works to pursue resources on behalf of the collective and to teach schools how to pursue additional funding as well. In the last decade, BJE has helped secure over \$12.5 M in services for BJE schools from the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to expand professional development opportunities for teachers and provide support to students with various educational needs. During the pandemic, BJE also helped schools access over \$3.3 M from the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) to help schools recover from economic hardship due to the pandemic.

Mark Shpall, Head of School, deToledo High School Between EANS and various Title funds we've been eligible for, BJE makes it happen. They understand and help explain all the administrative and legal complications to make it so much easier on our staff. Especially this last year, they helped us get considerably more than we might have been able to get on our own, and with all the money we've expended on COVID-19 needs that we never could have anticipated, it's allowed us to make a very safe and educationally sound experience for our students. Getting the professional development funding for our staff enables them to pursue much more enrichment than we would be able to provide on our own.

Rabbi Mendel Greenbaum, Dean, Cheder Menachem and Bais Chaya Mushka

BJE has been a tremendous asset for us, helping us to access federal funds, navigating the intricacies and challenges that are involved in dealing with the government, and they've really helped us access funding that would have been very challenging to access otherwise. In general they're a resource for us in the community, but particularly this year, in coming through the pandemic, BJE has been an essential source of support helping us navigate these opportunities.

BJE By the Numbers

\$4 million+

in government funding secured through BJE for professional development, student support and COVID-19 relief

140 schools affiliated with BJE

\$2 million

distributed to 14 day schools from endowment spend rate and match funds

1000+

people celebrated 88 exceptional educators from a broad range of BJE schools at BJE's annual Gala

400+

teens participated via Zoom in interactive program operated or co-sponsored by BJE

BJE helped day schools and ECCs secure 118,000+ disposable masks, 26,000+ cloth masks, 2,200+ N95 masks, 19,000+ face shields, and 1,200+ hand sanitizers.

22,000+

students in the LA area benefit from BJE's work

26

Teen Educators attended BJE's seminar on race and inclusivity

16,000+
people visited BJE's
JKidLA website

BJE held 143 professional development opportunities for BJE-affiliated educators

10,500+

people follow BJE's JKidLA on Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest or via eblast

1,100+ BJE donors









BJE at 85 2022 Gala to Honor the Best

Next year will mark BJE's 85th year dedicated to excellence in Jewish education in Los Angeles, and we are thrilled to announce our Gala honorees.

While the landscape of Jewish education in 2021 certainly does not look the same as it did in the 1940s and the work may look different, what has endured is the quality of BJE's professional and volunteer leadership and the remarkable partnerships that exist among them.

The 2022 BJE annual Gala will recognize two such

individuals: Mark Berns, BJE Board Member and former President, and Miriam Prum Hess, BJE Associate Director and Director of Donor and Community Relations.

According to BJE Executive Director Gil Graff, collaboration is key to the success of any nonprofit endeavor. Mark and Miriam represent BJE's continuing history of exceptional leadership, both volunteer and professional. They care deeply about BJE's mission, and have done much to accomplish important goals.

Mark Berns

By profession, Mark is a CPA, and by any measure, a leader in his field. His devotion to service as a lay leader in the community goes back decades. He always brings his exemplary professional skills to bear in his volunteer leadership. In fact, though Mark always has a great deal on his plate, he gives his full attention to whomever he is supporting. In addition to serving as immediate Past President at BJE, he has served on BJE's Personnel, Day School Governance and Finance, Planning and Budget, Audit, and Investment Committees. He is a past president of Stephen Wise Temple, served on the Milken Community High School Executive Committee, where he co-chaired the Middle School Building Committee, and has volunteered to help struggling congregations as a member of the National Board of the Union of Reform Judaism.

Mark's BJE Accomplishments:

- Bringing his financial expertise to bear, Mark strengthened BJE's finances by helping to eliminate escalating pension costs while still securing benefits for employees.
- Mark played a vital leadership role in helping BJE respond to the challenges faced during the pandemic, including cancellation of the International March of the Living.
- Mark has played an active role in BJE's support of day schools through the Governance and Finance Committee, resulting in financially strengthening a number of individual day schools throughout the community.



Mark on BJE:

BJE is the most inclusive organization that I have ever been involved with, engaging the full spectrum of our Jewish community and supporting and enriching Jewish education and its teachers, administrators and boards from early childhood through high school and everything in between. It's important to me to increase awareness in the community of the excellent work BJE does for Jewish education.



Gil on Mark:

Mark is a remarkable human being in the way that he relates to people. He has incredible intelligence and many skills that he brings to his work, both professional and volunteer. But he never takes a "lone ranger" approach. He's a true collaborator and partner and has earned the tremendous respect of both his fellow lay leaders and BJE's professional staff.

Miriam on Mark:

I have been blessed to work and partner with Mark during

his tenure as president of BJE from 2017 to 2020 and for years prior and since. I have learned tremendously from Mark's leadership, wisdom, commitment to the community and menschlichkeit. I am truly blessed to have a wonderful lay partner in Mark, whose vision and support enable BJE to shine amongst organizations.

in Professional-Volunteer Partnerships

Miriam Prum Hess

Miriam's entire 40-plus year career has been in Jewish communal service. She joined BJE in 2004, and her impact has been profound. Her contributions to Jewish education in Los Angeles are countless, and her approach of innovation and adaptation has been a hallmark of her career.

Miriam's BJE Accomplishments:

- Recognizing the growing need for day school funding, Miriam established a community-wide day school endowment capacity building effort. Today, nearly half the area day schools have endowments, and in the aggregate, millions of additional dollars are annually generated to support school operations.
- Seeing that there were federal funds available to all school-age students that were largely untapped by the day schools, Miriam led the way in establishing a Jewish school consortium to pursue these resources collectively. To date, more than \$15 million has been successfully brought to the benefit of day school students.



• Realizing that there was a need for multiple entry points into the community for young families, whether they were new to parenting or new to Los Angeles, Miriam developed JKidLA's website and concierge concept. This year alone the site had more than 16,000 visitors.

Miriam on BJE:

One of the greatest things about working for BJE has been the remarkable people, staff, lay leaders and educators, with whom I get to work every day. I feel truly part of a team. When I reflect on BJE successes and achievements, I attribute much of that to being surrounded by capable and committed people, listening to their needs and working together to find solutions.



Ezra and Eliana Hess

Gil on Miriam:

I can't think of a person I know who is more exceptional in their respective field. Her entire career has been one of innovation and adaptation. She looks at what's going on in the world of Jewish education and sees opportunities. Seventeen of my years at BJE have included Miriam, and they have been deeply enriched by having her as a colleague and friend.

Mark on Miriam:

I have known and worked with Miriam for almost 20 years. I've watched as she's led the BJE charge in securing grants for our Jewish schools. This has been especially challenging the last several years, but Miriam never backs down.

She is a key contact for all the Jewish schools, executes our Galas with ease, and always does everything with a big smile. I have the utmost respect and hold Miriam in the highest esteem as a true professional, so dedicated to BJE's mission and to Jewish education.



BJE 2022 GALA

Save the Date: March 27, 2022

Nancy Schulman, Felice and Douglas Williams
Co-Chairs

Welcome to BJE's New Officers and Directors!

BJE is excited to welcome six newly elected board members and two newly elected officers of the board. They each shared with us why BJE is important to them. To read more about each of them, visit the Board of Directors page of our website at www.bjela.org/bje-board-directors.

New Officers

Sharon DeMayo, Corresponding Secretary



Whether understood as pure intellectual achievement or passing of knowledge from generation to generation, the commitment to learning is at the core of Jewish tradition. It is an honor and a

privilege to contribute to the exceptional work BJE does to ensure that quality Jewish education is accessible throughout Los Angeles. By promoting Jewish education across all the denominations, BJE ensures that future generations will be proud of their extraordinary heritage.

Jay Stein, Treasurer



Educating our children about Jewish values, Jewish traditions and Jewish religious rituals is what connects our children to Judaism for life. And, for the Jewish people, it is the bridge from our ancestral past to our present and our future.

New Directors

Lee Broekman



As a communication and leadership educator and curriculum developer, I'm excited to both broaden and deepen my impact as a member of the BJE Board. It's an exciting time to explore community and connectedness in

learning as we move from social distance to social presence. Jewish education has provided me with meaning, interaction, knowledge and experience that shaped my instructional approach. I am looking forward to contributing my experience and expertise in a creative and meaningful way to the field of Jewish education.

Andrew Goldberg



Like many people in Los Angeles, we send our children to multiple Jewish schools with different affiliations and interact with many other people who send their children to a number of other Jewish schools. It is important to me to

be involved with an organization whose mission is to provide resources to all Jewish schools in LA spanning the religious and cultural spectrum.

Eric Hartung



For the past 24 years, I was a teacher in Jewish day schools. Jewish education is near and dear to my heart, as I feel it provides a strong Jewish foundation for young people before they enter the "real world." In my retirement, it's important to

me to stay close to education, and being involved with BJE is a meaningful way to do this. I look forward to bringing an educator's perspective to the board.

Darryl Schall



BJE's mission is aligned with what is incumbent upon every Jewish parent: providing an education which passes on Jewish teaching and heritage to the next generation. I am proud to help support BJE's efforts.

Stacey Weiss



I feel passionately about making sure that Jewish education is accessible to everyone so that no one is turned away for financial reasons. It is a critical part of who we are and helps us bring Jewish values to whatever we do in life. For me, it is part

of carrying on the legacy of my father, who cared so much about Jewish life and made sure his children and grandchildren all had a Jewish education.

Beverly Woznica



If you are fortunate, there will be a teacher or two in your life who will show you the beauty of living a Jewish life and why it is a great privilege to be a Jew. I have been blessed to have such teachers and they, along with many who are in the

leadership of BJE whom I admire, have inspired me to be a part of the BJE community.

Supporting Jewish Education Honor Roll of Donors

Gifts of \$100+ received July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

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.

\$500,000-\$999,999

The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles

SUSTAINER

\$100.000-\$499.999

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Janet Farber

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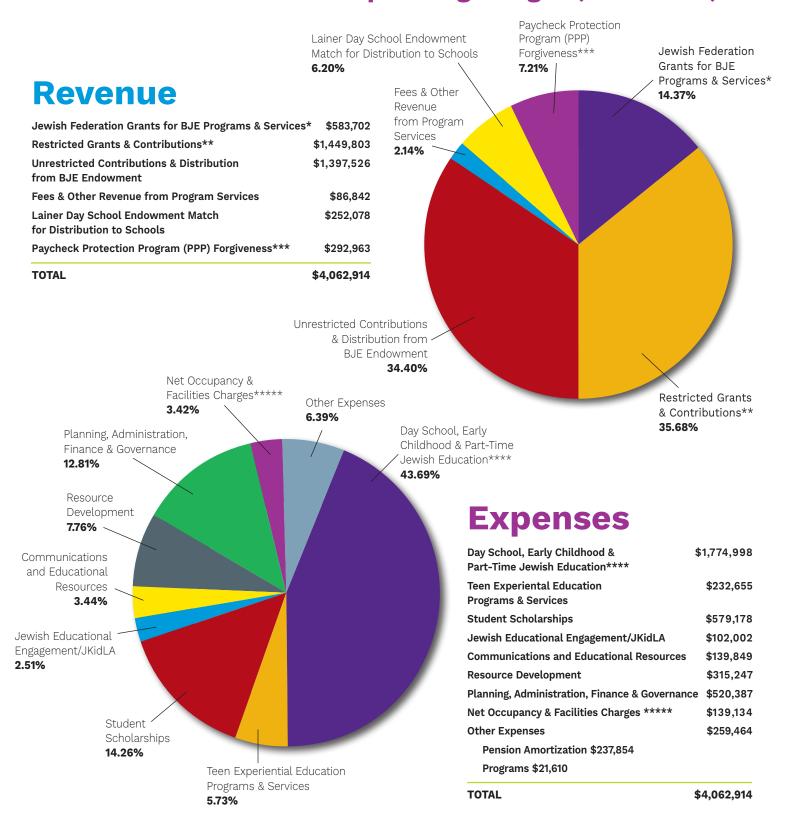
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^{*} Includes \$530,000 in program grants, \$20,926 in support of collaborative project with Simms/Mann Institute, \$27,174 for L.A. Jewish Teen Initiative, and \$5,602 for CAPSO dues, on behalf of BJE-accredited Day Schools

^{**} Includes \$923,090 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 2019-2020 which was entirely forgiven in the first quarter of 2021 and is reported in 2020-2021 revenue

^{****} Does not include nearly \$800,000 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 \$3,329,000 secured for pandemic related programs (CARES/EANS) to be used in 2021-2022

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