

# SPECIALIZED SCHOOL NETWORKS

## GOALS

- to connect educators facing similar challenges
- to bring together teachers and students from smaller communities
- to create a united front for fundraising and business costs
- to provide educational resources specific to the needs of small communities
- to support the unique role of the general studies principals in day schools and improve the quality of general studies programs in day schools

For more information about the JDS Council for Smaller Communities please contact [hadler@CoJDS.org](mailto:hadler@CoJDS.org).

For more information about the General Studies Principals Council please contact: [tfeldman@cojds.org](mailto:tfeldman@cojds.org).

## Small Communities Council

*The day school movement proliferated 70 years ago based on the firm conviction of dedicated individuals that the future of Jewish life in America will only be perpetuated if it is based on solid Jewish education. History has proven this to be true and it is most obvious in smaller communities. Day schools are the lifeblood of a community, even more so than the synagogue, the JCC, the kosher supermarket, restaurant or community programs.*

*CoJDS has taken a special interest in the perpetuation of Jewish life in smaller communities through support of the local day schools. For too long individual schools in these communities have been operating as if on lone islands separated from each other. Our goal is to unite the efforts of the schools as a unified force which will be much stronger than the sum of its parts.*

### HOW WE DO IT:

**SMALL COMMUNITIES CONFERENCES:** CoJDS gathered 40 school leaders in Orlando in January and 50 school leaders in Cedarhurst in July to collaborate and brainstorm about the ways that communities can work together. School leaders shared programs and discussed solutions to common challenges.

- Small Community Think Tanks
- Establishment of E-mail Collaboration Group for Small Communities
- Enlistment of Human Resource Director in Israel for Placement of Judaic Teachers in the Diaspora

• • • WHAT'S NEW • • •

**E-MAIL GROUP COLLABORATION:** An outcome of the July conference of small communities was the creation of a discussion group for similar schools to discuss issues such as tuition assistance policy and procedures, report card systems and fundraising. Keeping the discussion within similar sized schools avoids the static created when larger schools participate in the conversation.

**SMALL COMMUNITY ADVOCACY:** The needs of schools in small communities are often neglected due to limited access to philanthropic support. CoJDS will serve as the unifying force to develop proposals which will serve multiple communities. Instead of each school representing 50-100 students, a consolidated voice will advocate for 50-100 schools, representing several thousand students.

### CITIES PARTICIPATING IN COJDS SMALL COMMUNITIES CONFERENCES IN 2018

Albany, NY	Indianapolis, IN	Plainview, NY
Allentown, PA	Kansas City, KS	Portland, OR
Birmingham, AL	Knoxville, TN	Richmond, VA
Buffalo, NY	Las Vegas, NV	Rochester, NY
Buffalo Grove, IL	Longmeadow, MA	Seattle, WA
Calgary, AB	Margate, FL	South Bend, IN
Charlotte, NC	Memphis, TN	Stamford, CT
Cherry Hill, NJ	Mexico City, MX	Sunnyvale, CA
Chesterfield, MO	New Orleans, LA	Tulsa, OK
Coconut Creek, FL	Norfolk, VA	Vancouver, BC
Columbus, OH	Omaha, NE	West Hartford, CT
Greensboro, NC	Orlando, FL	Woodbridge, CT
Harrisburg, PA	Ormond Beach, FL	Yardley, PA
Houston, TX	Ottawa, ON	
Huntington Beach, CA	Phoenix, AZ	

**“THE FUTURE OF THE JEWS IN THE DIASPORA WILL BE DETERMINED ON HOW WE ACT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. WE DO NOT HAVE ANOTHER 10-20 YEARS. WE NEED TO ACT NOW.”**

DVIR KAHANA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF DIASPORA AFFAIRS OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL  
ADDRESSING THE COJDS SUMMER CONFERENCE, JULY 2018

**“THERE WERE MANY REASONS I FELT THIS THINK TANK WAS EXCELLENT, BUT WHAT STOOD OUT MOST FOR ME WAS THE SUPERLATIVE SMALL COMMUNITIES' FOCUS GROUPS AND DISCUSSION. THE IDEAS EXCHANGED AMONG THE OUTSTANDINGLY TALENTED HEADS OF SCHOOL WERE THOUGHT-PROVOKING, INSPIRING, AND MOST IMPORTANT -- PRACTICAL.”**

POST-CONFERENCE SURVEY FEEDBACK



Small Communities Council meeting at Summer Think Tank 07.18.18



Small Communities Council participants at Summer Think Tank 07.17.18  
*l-r: seated:* Mariashi Groner of Charlotte, NC, Susan Siegel and Carolyn Hawks of Greensboro, NC, Lillian Hellman of Tulsa, OK  
*standing:* Dr. Melanie Waynik of Woodbridge, CT, Beth Cohen of Omaha, NE, Lynn Raviv of Birmingham, AL



Rabbi Glass visits the N.E. Miles Jewish Day School in Birmingham, AL 04.09.18 Pictured are Lynn Raviv and Rabbi H. Glass



Small Communities Council strategy meetings 07.17.18



## Judaic Teachers Initiative

One of the most resounding needs we have heard from countless communities is for quality Judaic teachers who are knowledgeable and trained in pedagogy. In 2018, CoJDS took the first step in tackling this issue by enlisting a human resource director in Israel to oversee the flow of recruits graduating from the existing teacher training programs who are looking for positions in the diaspora. Rabbi Kalmen Rosenbaum comes with over four decades of experience as a principal, including leading schools in Richmond, VA; Hartford, CT; and Atlanta, GA. Rabbi Rosenbaum is one of only six private school principals from across the country and the third Yeshiva principal ever to receive the National Distinguished Principal award from the National Association of Elementary Principals (NAESP). Rabbi Rosenbaum will draw from extensive experience as a principal and his intimate understanding of the needs of small communities to assist CoJDS in directing teachers to positions in which they can be most effective.



*Rabbi Kalmen Rosenbaum conducts a teacher training class at Ohr Someach's Ohr L'Golah program in Jerusalem, Israel, 11.18*

### LOOKING AHEAD TO 2019

- **Judaic Staffing:** A survey released by the Pincus Fund for Jewish Education in July 2018, revealed that the most pressing need of schools in the diaspora is qualified, trained Judaic teachers. CoJDS is working to develop a centralized Judaic teacher training course as well as a unified placement service with a focus on providing Judaic staff to communities that have the most difficulty attracting teachers.
- **Distance Learning:** CoJDS will provide video conferencing lessons on an array of subjects. The use of technology will offer a level of expertise and experience not easily accessible in smaller communities. Distance learning offers several advantages such as the ability to connect smaller classes with each other, lower costs and the ability to engage "technology native" students in a format in which they are more comfortable.
- **Joined Curricula and Trips:** CoJDS plans to expand the current alliance of eight schools that are currently working together on shared curricula and middle school trips. We also plan to organize shared 8th-grade trips to Israel.
- **Shared Back Office:** Expected in 2019 is a model for a centralized business office to handle routine tasks such as bookkeeping, tuition billing, payments, insurance, and financial reports. The objective will be to copy systems currently in place in the business world and significantly cut expenses for schools with budgets that are strained enough. Schools will be better able to focus resources on their primary mission of education.

*Dear Rabbi Adler,*

*I wanted to send my thanks to you and CoJDS for recognizing the needs of small schools and making the commitment to help us achieve the best in our communities. We know we cannot do it alone, and we – collectively – are deeply appreciative for the leadership of CoJDS in this important initiative.*

**Beth Cohen, Head of School**

Friedel Jewish Academy, Omaha, NE

*I must take a moment to sincerely thank each of you for the inspiration and professional nature of the Think Tank. Kudos for the positivity, pervasive innovation and dedication to the cause of Jewish education across the North American landscape. The small schools initiative in both its medium of collaboration and outreach and message of strategic planning as well as each of the sessions including the out of the box evening talks Tuesday evening depict the dedication and vision of the organization to make Torah great and bring it honor.*

**Miriam Gettinger, Principal**

Hasten Hebrew Academy, Indianapolis, IN

*Dear Rabbi Glass,*

*You are truly remarkable and revolutionary in your mission, dedication and drive...I know that together we can build a network of strong thriving schools across our network and nation. You are making possible what has felt insurmountable. Thank you for the opportunity and pathways. I only hope that my peers and I can work together to make you proud. The significance of Jewish Day Schools does not [only] lie in their being conducive to the survival of our own people but in being sources of spiritual wealth, a source of meaning relevant to all peoples and an inspiration for all generations. Thank you.*

*Warmly,*

**Tracie Glazer, Head of School**

Hillel Community Day School, Rochester, NY

*Dear Rabbi Glass and Rabbi Adler,*

*Deep and sincere gratitude for allowing me to be part of the amazing work that CoJDS is doing. You definitely have brought Southern hospitality to Cedarhurst. Everyone in the CoJDS organization could not have been more engaging, caring, concerned about our welfare. ...it all starts at the top, Rabbi Glass! And Rabbi Adler, you went above and beyond to ensure that we were not lacking comforts, rides, etc. Many thanks to you both and to the entire CoJDS staff.*

*I, personally, understand what it takes to convene such a meeting as you did. It does not matter if it is for 10 or 500, it is an endeavor that takes thought, energy, etc. I am truly grateful. I believe we are all on a journey in many ways and for sure, the work of strengthening Jewish education is a work in progress. It is not necessarily a linear journey either. ....and we learn as we go along, agreeing and disagreeing. If there had not been such a gathering, I would not have had a chance to continue to learn more about the state of Jewish education today.*

*I know that the sharing of stories and experiences with each other and informal conversations went a long way in bringing the group together. And I am sure all the participants took away many gifts from the sessions and presenters. Impressive was the number of people who came. The three days were valuable in many ways.*

*Our afternoon sessions did gain traction. These were more productive sessions with worthwhile ideas and tangible take-a-ways generated.*

*Again, I look forward to other reflections on the past three days, and to build on what we learned for hopefully future meetings. I remain very optimistic. It is a privilege and responsibility that we have, as Jewish educators, to continually improve our practice—the lifeblood of the Jewish future is in our hands.*

*Again, it was a sincere privilege to share the three days with all of you and the other participants.*

**Lynn Raviv**

Birmingham, AL