

PJA Strategic Plan – May 25, 2017

I. School Identity and Community

Goal: Capitalize upon and strengthen the strong sense of community at PJA.

Strategies

1. Explore diverse opportunities to strengthen community

Action Steps:

- i. Further develop Limmud 2.0, Kehillah, and other opportunities for family education.
- ii. Identify opportunities to strengthen the sense of community experienced by families as a part of PJA and strengthen family engagement
- iii. Fully implement Mishpachot initiative
- iv. Inspire alumni to stay engaged with PJA
- v. Expand outreach to broader community (PJ Library programming, Limmud 2.0, admission events, etc.)
- vi. Foster connections between pre-K and Kindergarten students and families
- vii. Explore ways to communicate as one school

2. Welcome and support diversity within the PJA community

Action Steps:

- i. Continue and expand Anti-Bias Education initiative
- ii. Review curriculum at all levels to ensure appropriate attention to inclusion, including an appreciation for diversity within Judaism and diversity of thought
- iii. Review and update school diversity statement
- iv. Provide professional development regarding inclusion

3. Communicate effectively about the quality of the school's academic program.

Action Steps:

- i. Construct Learning Commons

- ii. Re-envision Middle School program and convey meaningful information about the academic program through what we say and what we do
 - iii. Highlight the success of school alumni
 - iv. Ensure a consistent emphasis on appropriate differentiation in student instruction at all grade levels
 - v. Increase attendance by families at programs that highlight the academic program; consider one or more events on a Sunday
 - vi. Ensure authentic communication about all of PJA's programs and services
 - vii. Employ technology to make it possible for parents to develop a better understanding of the academic program
4. Reinforce understanding of and commitment to school mission and middot

Action Steps:

- i. Disseminate new mission statement widely
- ii. Revise statement of middot

II. Financial Strength

Goal: Work to fill sections to capacity and optimize enrollment to improve our financial strength for PJA to continue to achieve our mission.

Strategies

1. Stabilize/Increase Enrollment and Address Affordability Concerns

Action Steps:

- i. Strengthen financial assistance program by exploring: changes to the maximum amount of aid above 50% of tuition; better articulated financial assistance eligibility guidelines; presentation of information about typical awards; the implementation of tuition affordability initiatives (such as flex tuition and/or grant programs); or freezing middle school tuition for three years (once a student enters 6th grade)
- ii. Align tuition costs to better match enrollment levels
- iii. Stabilize trip fees by increasing the subsidy for the Israel trip (through an endowment sub-fund and/or identification of interested donors) and explore spreading out the cost of all school trips across all grade levels
- iv. Expand funding for support services to better attract and retain a wider range of students by meeting needs for remediation and enrichment

2. Increase endowment

Action Steps:

- i. As a general rule, direct bequests to PJA to endowment (unless bequest has another specified purpose)
- ii. Dedicate funds raised by PJA Auction in excess of what is needed for operations to endowment
- iii. Launch endowment campaign
- iv. Create endowment funds for specific areas of need (e.g. scholarship, Israel trip, arts, etc.)
- v. Consider a policy such as one which dedicates 5% of *any* gift to the endowment

3. Create a Stronger Culture of Philanthropy

Action Steps:

- i. Enhance parent education about school fundraising in general and Life & Legacy program, in particular
- ii. Expand donor base to reduce reliance on top donors and Federation
- iii. Explore new fundraising opportunities and models (e.g. Giving Circle)

4. Address Depreciation and Deferred Maintenance

Action Steps:

- i. Plan for and fund physical plant repair and replacement
- ii. Complete IT Audit and follow-up with a revised technology plan

5. Explore Mission-Appropriate Venture Projects to Serve our Community

Action Steps:

- i. Develop one or more off-site Early Learning Centers
- ii. Identify and pursue additional PPS sites for after-care when possible and appropriate

6. Provide Equitable Compensation

Action Steps:

- i. Evaluate and monitor teacher compensation to reflect market rates and cost of living for early childhood, day school and after-care staff.
- ii. Implement salary scale for early childhood and after-care staff.

III. Ensuring Student Success

Goal: Increase PJA's ability to support a diverse student body to ensure the success of all PJA students.

Strategies

1. Enhance student support

Action Steps:

- i. Provide increased professional development regarding instructional differentiation
- ii. Increase resources in support and enrichment services (e.g. occupational therapy, consulting psychologist, speech and language therapy)
- iii. Increase support services resources in Early Childhood program

2. Improve student engagement and success

Action Steps:

- i. Review transition from 5th to 6th grade from the vantage point of student success
- ii. Re-envision middle school program to build on lower school innovations (e.g. use of MakerSpace, project-based learning) and to ensure a broad range of learning opportunities (e.g. differentiation, accommodation, enrichment)
- iii. Fully leverage early intervention in Early Childhood program and provide greater in-house support for Early Childhood teachers and families

3. Strengthen Family Education and Communication

Action Steps:

- i. Provide education to families to enhance understanding of our program and our assessment methods
- ii. Increase consistent communication with families in lower and middle school
- iii. Offer greater information about enrichment and support services opportunities
- iv. Increase use of PowerSchool (LMS) with continued parent education

- v. Explore new systems and methods to share information with parents
- vi. Enhance communication between lower and middle school faculty
- vii. Help Early Childhood families better understand age-appropriate benchmarks and their ability to support children at home
- viii. Offer regular, formal assessment (e.g. ASQ) of children in the Early Childhood program

IV. Enrollment Management

Goal: Strengthen and increase recruitment and retention at PJA.

Strategies

1. Utilize our alumni to illustrate the success of PJA

Action Steps:

- i. Improve tracking of alumni and promote alumni achievements
- ii. Support efforts to strengthen engagement of alumni and alumni parents
- iii. Clarify and define staff responsibilities for alumni communication, engagement and programs

2. Create a stronger sense of community and inclusion from Early Childhood through Day School

Action Steps:

- i. Identify opportunities to ensure that Infant/Toddler and Preschool families feel a part of the PJA community (e.g. "buddy families")
- ii. Increase the percentage of PJA preschool children who enroll in the Day School
- iii. Support efforts to strengthen communication

3. Find specifically defined leadership opportunities at each grade level

Action Steps:

- i. Give middle school students more leadership opportunities through experiences such as leading mishpachot, giving a drash, and leading holiday celebrations
- ii. Reinstate Student Council
- iii. Identify new opportunities for middle school students to serve as role models for lower school students
- iv. Highlight events and opportunities at each grade level by extending invitations to children and families in other grades, especially the preceding grade

4. Highlight Student Achievement

Action Steps:

- i. Revise middle school program to ensure student-centered focus and a broad range of opportunities

- ii. Address disparity between perception and reality vis-à-vis the academic program
- iii. Communicate strength of PJA's academic program
- iv. Implement additional enrichment opportunities
- v. Highlight unique offerings (e.g. capstone, STEAM day, *taglit*, etc.)
- vi. Disseminate alumni profiles
- vii. Build relationships with independent high schools (e.g. OES, St. Mary's, Catlin Gabel, Northwest Academy) and foster connections between their admission directors and PJA families

5. Enhance social vibrancy

Action Steps:

- i. Explore opportunities to build relationship between PJA's middle school and other middle school programs
- ii. Implement mixed-age opportunities
- iii. Identify special co-curricular programs that we might offer (e.g. debate team)
- iv. Develop clear guidelines for optimal size of sections and grades

6. Strengthen outreach to prospective families

Action Steps

- i. Partner with other non-profits (e.g. OMSI) to bring attention to our students and our programs
- ii. Work with realtors to contact families that are new to Portland
- iii. Build stronger connections to synagogues and their families
- iv. Improve connection to PJ Library families