



MJDS

MILWAUKEE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

2019-2020 Annual Report

וד"ת שנתי 5780

MJDS: Where academic excellence and Jewish values prepare children for a lifetime of success, leadership and engagement with the world.

Milwaukee Jewish Day School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, any gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national/ethnic origin or ancestry in the administration of the school's educational policies, admissions policies, employment policies, financial aid programs or other school administered programs.

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Milwaukee, WI 53217
414-964-1499
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hello@mjds.org



A partner agency of
Milwaukee Jewish Federation



MJDS Friends and Family,

Our 38th year provided our school the opportunity to show unparalleled academic excellence through authentically living our core values of wonder, empathy and *tikkun olam*. We launched the year with over fifty incredible kindergarten students in our expanded early childhood wing, adding to our largest student body in nearly a decade. MJDS' program offers a student-owned learning approach that builds skills and the mindset necessary for a lifetime of success, leadership and engagement with the world. We ended the year facing the challenge of COVID-19 and became the first school in Milwaukee's north shore to pivot immediately, providing best-in-class virtual learning for all of our families. I am humbled by, and grateful for, our staff's incredible response to this global crisis and their laser focus on the well-being and uninterrupted growth of our students.

I am so proud of our graduating families, as they are a testament to who MJDS is and our impact on Milwaukee and the world beyond. In the midst of a tumultuous spring, this resilient group chose to focus on strengthening our community, supporting one another and leading our school. I know that the future is brighter for Milwaukee area high schools because of these fourteen graduates and their commitment to fighting injustice and solving problems.

At MJDS we are driven to improve through research, innovation and risk-taking, which leads to deep and powerful learning experiences. This year some of the ways we moved from me to we include:

- Continuing our innovative Affordable Customized Tuition program, ensuring access to the MJDS experience for every Jewish family.
- Fourth grade students researched, explored and led an authentic Jewish wedding for their newlywed teacher. They created a *chuppah* and engraved a personalized *ketubah*, and led the service. The celebration was enjoyed by our entire student body, family, guests and local media.
- Our Repairing Together program creates interpersonal partnerships with diverse schools across the region through shared learning and service experiences. Face-to-face interactions allow students to meet new people, breaking down the barriers that separate us to find out what unites us, embracing the differences in one another and discovering the beauty of working side-by-side on a project of shared passion.
- Our distance learning program provided love, continuity, individualized learning and essential social-emotional support during a time of anxiety and fear.

I am so excited about our future. We expect our enrollment to grow significantly in 2020-2021, reflecting our flourishing school and the strength of our Jewish community. We will spend hours in professional learning, diving deeply into our K-8 science, STEAM and Jewish studies curricula, ensuring that the next generation of learners are prepared for the world they will inherit.

In short, our 39th year promises to be the best yet for Milwaukee Jewish Day School.

Bivrachah,

Aaron Lippman
Head of School





“Not only does MJDS offer a sense of community within its walls, it builds strong community outside which is preparing our daughter for the future.”

— Michelle Walny, mother of fifth grade student



Dear MJDS Community,

Todah rabah - for your collective love and support of the students, faculty and staff at MJDS! These are essential ingredients that enable the magic at our beloved school during ordinary times - and were especially important as we navigated uncharted waters this past spring. Without the strong, passionate community that underlies MJDS, the foundation upon which we were able to advance our school would not have been possible. I am humbled by all you do to build, sustain and grow MJDS, and deeply appreciate your continued commitment to our mission.

I wish to share a few of our accomplishments during my eight years of service on the MJDS board:

- We reclaimed and revitalized our mission & brand.
- We endeavored to vision our future - and enact strategy to realize it.
- We doubled-down to hire and retain a passionate, dedicated faculty & staff.
- We modernized our curriculum and created both a mindset & space for innovation.
- We strengthened “the J” in MJDS, built community and are living our core values.
- We promised to ensure access to high-quality, Jewish-values based education through our Affordable Customized Tuition program.
- We boldly expanded our early childhood offerings to include three-year-olds.
- *And*, we rallied behind our amazing faculty & staff as they pivoted, innovated & evolved to inspire & educate, support & love our students & families at the onset of and throughout this crisis.

In addition to the work we performed in partnership with school leadership, we began a methodical board development process. The composition of our board brings diverse skills and experiences, degrees and perspectives to facilitate and evolve our strategic agenda. I am at peace knowing that Sarah Schott has taken the reins as board President (as of July 1, 2020). Sarah is unrelentingly passionate, has unshakeable poise, and is wickedly smart. I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside her during my final year and I am confident she’ll be an awesome partner to Aaron and take MJDS to new heights.

During my service on the board we hosted three successful Galas, including our 36th Anniversary Celebration. While COVID-19 prevented us from gathering in April 2020, the ***MJDS Bright Futures Gala*** will take place at **The Saint Kate Arts Hotel on April 29, 2021**. We will honor Susan A. Lubar, shine a light on the Class of 2000, and celebrate our beloved school.

There is no school in our community or region that even comes close to MJDS - and, again, I wish to thank you for your unwavering commitment to our school.

With love, gratitude and, above all else, *shalom*.

Jason Gottlieb
President, MJDS Board of Directors



MJDS Board of Directors

President	Jason Gottlieb
President-elect	Sarah Schott
Treasurer	Peter Sprinkmann
Secretary	Bonnie Klein-Tasman
Vice-Presidents	Aaron Bernstein
	Allan Carneol
	Yoni Zvi

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Meghan Katch	David Wasserman
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When students graduate from MJDS they take the Rally Cry: Moving from Me to We out into the world and share our core values.

Wonder -- we encourage curiosity and appreciation of the world around us.

Empathy -- we understand and share the feelings of others.

Tikkun Olam -- we develop the desire and capability to heal injustice.



Anna Wolfe (07) will start studying at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City this fall and looks back at all the wonder she encountered at MJDS. "In my adult life, this connection between wonder and Judaism has stayed with me," Anna explained. She worked for Mishkan Chicago, a post-denominational spiritual community, designing classes inspired by her background in theater and the arts, as well as progressive education, allowing her to infuse more wonder and radical amazement into Jewish spaces. "In just five short years, I hope to be a rabbi who connects people to the wonder and amazement of Judaism."



Liviya David (09) is an analyst at Botho Emerging Markets Group in Nairobi, Kenya. She credits her Jewish Studies classes for instilling empathy and *v'ahavta l'rey'akha kamokha* - you shall love your neighbor as yourself. She believes that we all must take on causes bigger than ourselves, even if they do not affect us or the people in our immediate communities personally. Working with organizations to redefine Africa's role on the global stage and develop a more just and equitable world allows her to live these values every day.



Mikaela Zetley (08) is a special education math teacher in Boston Public Schools. In addition to inspiring her students, she values *tikkun olam* and is active in her community. She serves as a spiritual leader and organizer through Kavod, a group of young Jews in Boston who are committed to local social justice and teaching others to get involved. She is also a trainer and member of Resource Generation, an organization which supports young people to redistribute their wealth, land and power equitably. "I seek to give as many as possible the chance to feel the wonder, support and love I experienced as a learner at MJDS," Mikaela said.



"MJDS is not only teaching our son the rules, they're teaching him why the rules make him a better person. The moral base of his education will carry on through his life, helping him understand why we do the things we do and why we care for the people we care for."

— Yael Stein,
mother of sixth grade student



Launch of 3K

In 2019-20, MJDS expanded its early childhood curriculum and launched a 3K program. At age three, children are making huge learning leaps, so personalized academic, social and emotional learning opportunities are at the core of instruction. Our innovative curriculum is individualized to empower young children to own their learning, setting a solid foundation for growth and development.

One student started the program extremely shy and quiet, preferring to observe from a distance. Gentle guidance, encouragement and a focus on students adding their ideas to a group helped her to open up. Within months she engaged regularly with her peers, becoming more vocal and enjoying playing with others. Children learn that a mistake is okay, which builds their confidence and helps them discover new ways to express words and ideas. The sixteen students who launched the 3K program showed tremendous growth and forged a path for future development.

Focus areas include:

- Social skills and making friends
- Fine motor skills
- Rhyming and patterning
- Appropriately expressing emotions
- Making plans
- Finding solutions to problems

Break Space

Studies show that children are vulnerable to stress, which inhibits their ability to learn. MJDS recognizes that providing social and emotional support for students sets them up for academic success. Thanks to the generosity of the Weigler/Bernstein family and development of the Jordan Weigler Fund, in 2019 the Break Space opened, offering a safe place for children to retreat when their feelings become overwhelming, making it challenging to focus.

Dean of students Jori Broidy stated, “We need resources for children who struggle emotionally in the same way that we devote resources to children who need help with academic subjects.” The Break Space is available as a choice, not a punishment.

The softly lit room is quiet and calm allowing students to take a break, regroup, and refocus. It includes fidget toys, soft bean bag chairs, legos, and a sensory swing. MJDS social worker Jeannette Baas works with students to identify when they need a break. After introducing children to the room this year she said, “I was so proud to see so many students utilizing this space.”



Distance Learning During the Pandemic

In March 2020 when it was announced that MJDS would close the building and make the switch to distance learning, staff, students and families demonstrated their resilience and the strength of their commitment to support and sustain the mission to prepare children for a lifetime of success, leadership and engagement with the world.

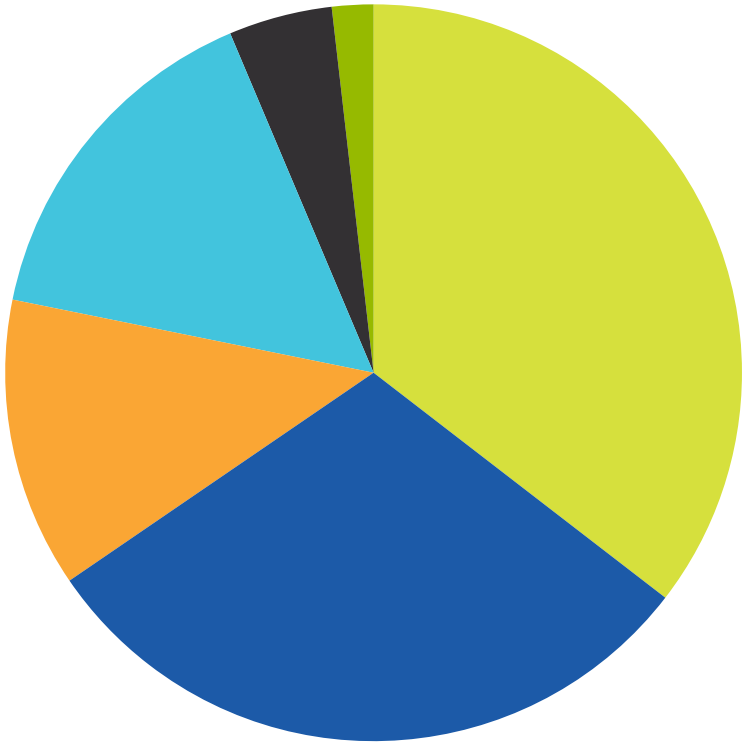
Teachers continued to evolve and improve their approach to distance learning, incorporating feedback from families and over the following three months students continued to thrive.

- Eighth grade students produced a weekly video news segment, **Schmooze News**, which featured school updates, interviews, surveys and weather forecasts. This student-led video series maintained a welcome connection. The segments can be found on the MJDS YouTube channel.
- Second grade students studied “The Water Princess,” a book based on the challenges Georgie Badiel-Liberty faced each day trying to get clean water growing up in West Africa. The class was thrilled to learn that the author not only created a foundation that supplies fresh water to Africa, she is also the godparent to one of the second grade students! Ms. Badiel-Liberty joined the class live via Zoom to answer students’ questions about her experiences.
- The Jewish Studies team helped maintain a sense of normalcy by fine-tuning a digital Shabbat Sing every Friday morning. Family, alumni and community members came together in a weekly celebration to sing, light candles and create *shalom bayit*.



In a time of unprecedented uncertainty and unforeseen challenges, staff worked to provide structure, community and purpose. Each day offered examples large and small of the MJDS community continuing to live the core values of wonder, empathy and tikkun olam.

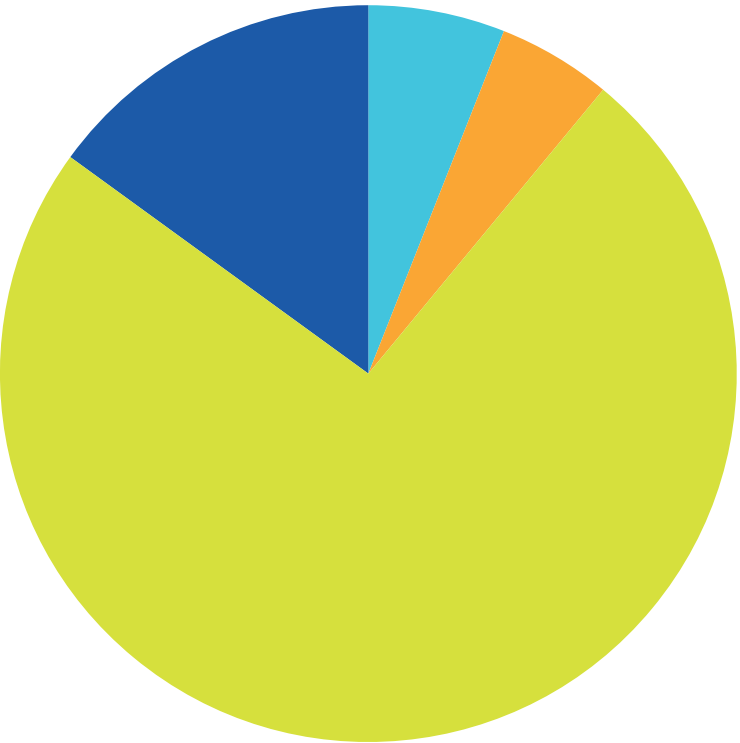
MJDS By the Numbers



Revenue

- 33% Fundraising
- 29% Tuition / Fees
- 17% Milwaukee Jewish Federation Allocation
- 14% Grants
- 5% Endowment Draws
- 2% Other

The support of our donors empowers us to continue our legacy of innovation, academic excellence and character development in the next generation of Jewish leaders. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our donors.



Expenses

- 74% Salaries / Benefits
- 15% Occupancy
- 6% Program
- 5% Administrative / Advancement

Affordable Customized Tuition (ACT) Program

Need-based tuition support is offered through the Affordable Customized Tuition (ACT) Program and ensures that 65% of our students receive assistance so they can benefit from the advantages of an MJDS education.

We are committed to providing a personalized and focused education that delivers academic excellence and Jewish values to each student and family in our community. We also believe that we have a social obligation to deliver the same level of commitment to the affordability of an MJDS education to ensure that any family who chooses MJDS is able to attend.

Through the ACT Program we take each family’s unique circumstances into consideration to arrive at a successful tuition plan.

Supporting the Advancement of Jewish Education (SAJE) Program

Non-need based tuition support is available through the Supporting the Advancement of Jewish Education (SAJE) Program, which significantly reduces tuition for Jewish communal professionals. The program has been in effect for nine years and has provided over one million dollars in support to 52 students. Families participating in the program work for organizations such as the Jewish Community Center, Milwaukee Jewish Federation, local synagogues, Jewish Home and Care Center and Bader Hillel Academy.

Funding

These tuition programs are funded through grants, restricted donations, endowment draws, annual campaign, the Fruit and Nut (FAN) sale and special events.



Student Charitable Efforts

Gaining empathy through face-to-face human interactions will have a long lasting impact on students. At MJDS, Judaism must be meaningful, relevant, and accessible. Students are taught that what they do and how they act is just as important as what they know. Learning how to be a *mensch* -- how to apply the Jewish knowledge and skills that they have learned -- is fundamental.

St. Ben's Community Meal

As students learn to think beyond themselves and connect to their community, many are inspired to conduct clothing drives and collect donations for local food pantries. There is a group that volunteers regularly at St. Ben's Community Meal in Milwaukee passing out milk, coffee or water, collecting trays and carrying meals for people having difficulty.

"Volunteering at St. Ben's is one of my favorite things we do at MJDS. You feel connected when you're helping other people," explained Koko (grade 5). They are instructed to behave as if they are servers in a restaurant and treat guests like customers. Shira, an eighth grade volunteer said, "When you're serving someone and they smile and say thank you, it feels like you're raising their spirits and making them happier. You're going to feel better after you help someone else."

Repairing Together

Repairing Together partners with local schools to share and celebrate cultural, racial and social differences. Experiencing in-person, diverse interactions teaches children empathy and understanding as they form friendships with students from different backgrounds. Throughout the year students participated in activities including:

- Discussing cultural and emotional/social learning through art. Students talked about the power of polar bears in Native American culture and the challenges presented by climate change. Using a fiberglass bear as their canvas, students painted messages of hope and change they would like to see.
- Learning about income disparity and different opportunities available based on where you live. Students participated in a simulation at Hunger Task Force that illustrated different social systems.
- Experiencing teamwork on an outdoor scavenger hunt at the Urban Ecology Center. Younger students teamed up to translate clues and work toward a common goal.

Partner Schools

- Milwaukee Jewish Day School
- Bruce Guadalupe School
- Indian Community School
- Milwaukee College Prep 38th Street Campus

A new second grade student from Israel joined the group and a boy went to introduce himself. When told she didn't understand English, he switched to Spanish. The teacher explained she only spoke Hebrew and the boy replied, "I do not think I can speak Hebrew, but I will stay with her and be her friend so she won't feel alone."



Ensuring Future Opportunity

Peter and Jodi Sprinkmann wanted a school that would build their children’s self-confidence from a young age, develop strong community leaders with a sense of purpose and a willingness to give back now and in the future.

They found what they were looking for at Milwaukee Jewish Day School.

The Sprinkmanns recognized that MJDS would provide a strong foundation, teaching their children life-long skills to engage in the broader world with the self-assurance of knowing who they are and where they come from. “Because of the enriched environment, value based learning and individualized academic attention, we saw our children truly thrive as they took their experience with them to high school,” they offered.

“MJDS taught us the importance of keeping Jewish traditions alive, together as a family. Our children were taught respect and given the ability to think for themselves in creative ways that allow them to stand out from the crowd,” Peter and Jodi shared.

Though their children have graduated, the Sprinkmanns continue giving time and resources to MJDS. They explained, “Supporting MJDS not only shows appreciation, but also ensures that future children and families are able to have the same opportunity as we did.”



2019-2020 Annual Report Honor Role of Donors

Keepers of the Light - Lifetime gifts of \$50,000 or more

Anonymous (5) Bader Philanthropies, Inc. Helen Bader Foundation Linda and Daniel Bader Daniel and Linda Bader Foundation Isabel and Alfred z”l Bader Beverly and Ervin z”l Colton <> Penny and Jim Deshur <> Nina and Richard Edelman The Eugene J. Eder Charitable Foundation, Inc. Laura Peracchio and Daniel Eder Louise Eder z”l Milton Ettenheim z”l Jaynie Skadron and Howard Frankenthal Howard Frankenthal Family Foundation Jane Gellman Kristin Bozza and Larry Gellman Geertruida z”l and Eric z”l Gidan	Mimi and Robert Habush <> Isaac z”l and Eva z”l Hochman Family Foundation Jewish Community Foundation Debra and Moshe Katz <> Sarah Schott and Brian King <> Debra and Steven Koenig Allen D. Kohl Charitable Foundation, Inc. Stacey and Daniel Kohl Herb Kohl Philanthropies Anne and Stephen Kravit Dr. Joshua and Lindy Liberman Marianne and Sheldon Lubar Susan A. Lubar Susan A. Lubar Charitable Fund Milwaukee Jewish Federation Northwestern Mutual Foundation Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education Eileen Perlson z”l	Audrey F. Ross Charitable Lead Trust Richard Ross Holly and Michael Russek Julie and Michael Sadoff <> Rabbi Shari and Dr. Corey Shamah Jodi Habush Sinykin and Daniel Sinykin Helen and Bernard Soref Memorial Endowment Daniel M. Soref Charitable Trust Jodi and Peter Sprinkmann <> Deb Altshul-Stark and Brian Stark Amy and Gary Stein Clarice S. Turer Charitable Fund Dr. Mark and Susan Wichman Maurice Wolkomir Revocable Trust Marilyn z”l and Marvin z”l Zetley Nancy Zetley Soli and Howard Zetley
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Tree of Life - Legacy Gifts

Anonymous (2) Jan Rosenberg and Marty Barnes <> Donna and Robert z”l Berg <> Dr. Deborah and Aaron Bernstein <> Marlene and Bert Bilsky <> Maris and Harvey Bock <> Cheryl and Mark Brickman <> Susan and Allan Carneol <> Beverly and Ervin z”l Colton <> Penny and Jim Deshur <> Melanie and Joseph Devorkin <> Karen Shapiro and Douglass Frazer <>	Sharon and Michael Grinker <> Mimi and Robert Habush <> Christy and Adam Horn <> Thelma Hurwitz z”l Debra and Moshe Katz <> Sarah Schott and Brian King <> Sari Luber <> Felicia and Jamie Miller <> Elizabeth and James Neubauer <> Sarah and Kevin Packman <> Michaela and Jeff Peck <> Estelle Swerdlow Pump z”l <>	Dr. Werner and Carol Richheimer <> Dr. Robert and Lauri Roth <> Julie and Michael Sadoff <> Judy and Gerald Salinsky <> Sandy Schmidt <> Doris Shneidman <> Trudy and Stephen Sirkis <> Jodi and Peter Sprinkmann <> Barbara Stein <> Julie and Yonatan Zvi <>
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Tree of Life – Named Endowment Funds

Eighth Grade Israel Trip Endowment Fund Adina Altshull Israel Education Endowment Fund Ateret and Jacob Cohn Judaic Enrichment Fund Donna and Robert Berg Endowment Fund Benjamin “Baki” Muchin Athletic Memorial Endowment Fund Bar Mitzvah Year Endowment Fund Colton Charitable Endowment Fund Sol and Eva Dorf Education Endowment Fund Nina and Richard Edelman Family Endowment Fund Louise A. Eder Memorial Endowment Fund Morris and Olga Eder Endowment Fund Toni Ettenheim Memorial Art Education Endowment Fund Merzy Eisenberg Endowment Fund	Marge Meyers Scholarship Endowment Howard Frankenthal Family Fund Gellman Family Endowment Graduation Endowment Fund Joseph and Ruth Hirschberg Teacher Appreciation Endowment Isaac and Eva Hochman General Purpose Endowment Leo “Sunshine” Hochman Endowment Fund Debra and Moshe Katz Family Fund for MJDS Staff Travel to Israel Esther and Alvin Kernis Endowment Fund Michael Kovnar Memorial Special Needs Fund Larry Lieberman Memorial Jewish Life and Learning Endowment Fund Milwaukee Jewish Day School Endowment Fund	MJDS Unrestricted Endowment Fund Sharon Muchin Rotter Endowment Fund Reva Loeb Theater Arts Fund Eileen A. Perlson Memorial Endowment Fund Lillian P. Heffernan and Eileen A. Perlson Scholarship Endowment Fund Judee Ross Memorial Endowment Fund Jay Schmidt Computer and Technology Memorial Fund Doris Shneidman Chai Endowment Fund Dr. Nathan and Flora Sonin Educational Endowment Fund Stark Family Fund Armin K. Taus Scholarship Fund Maurice Wolkomir Endowment Fund
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Tree of Life - Special Purpose Funds

Gollin Family Special Education Fund Jacqueline Kravit Fund for Reading and Computer Literacy	Sandy Mitz Technology and Innovation Student Project Fund	Judee Ross Imagination Grant Judee Ross Memorial Education Fund Jordan and Patti Weigler Fund
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2019-2020 Annual Report Honor Role of Donors

Benefactor Gifts \$4,999 - \$1,800

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Anonymous 36 Donor Advised Fund
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Bonnie Klein-Tasman and Marc Tasman
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Create a Jewish Legacy: A legacy gift to MJDS is a wonderful way to demonstrate your belief in the importance of Jewish education for generations to come. Learn the many ways you can leave a legacy gift for MJDS by contacting our Development Team at 414-967-8380.

Special Purpose Funds: A gift made for a specific purpose such as staff professional learning. Funds are spent as needed.

Endowment Fund: A donation to help sustain MJDS in perpetuity. Interest from the fund generates income for the school’s use. MJDS’ greatest endowment need is Affordable Customized Tuition (ACT).



MJDS teaches our children that they really can do hard things. They are confident and strong, every single day they are thriving, learning and growing. It’s incredible to watch.”

— Toni Davison Levenberg, parent of junior kindergarten and second grade students





save the date

BRIGHT FUTURES GALA

hosted by Milwaukee Jewish Day School

*April 29, 2021 | 5:30 p.m.
Saint Kate - The Arts Hotel*

MJDS MILWAUKEE
JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

