

MJDS CHAVERIM

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



SUMMER 2020 / 5780



LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear MJDS Friends and Family,

As the Head of School, it is my honor and privilege to lead us into our 39th year filled with the excitement of learning, and the health and safety of our staff and students as our top priority. We continue to infuse our core values into all aspects of school, providing a student-owned approach that develops confidence, essential skills and behaviors that prepare children for a lifetime of Jewish engagement, leadership and success in the world.

The last six months have been like no other, yet the staff and families at MJDS continue to come together in the safest possible way, committed to ensuring the highest quality education for our families, whether learning from home or in the building.

As we prepare to welcome 25 new families and 175 students back to school, we are deeply committed to the physical, social and emotional well-being of our community. Our reopening plan includes the following key components:

- High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters installed in every classroom and gathering space
- MERV 13 filtration upgrade on our HVAC units and increased fresh air exchange throughout the building
- Daily health screener for all staff, students and other essential personnel
- Student cohorts of fifteen or less students who rarely travel around the building
- All staff and most students masked when in the building
- All staff maintaining six foot distance from students and other staff members
- Rigorous cleaning and disinfection routines in every room
- Multiple tents to maximize outdoor space

The support of the MJDS community keeps us strong in challenging times. Your continued investment helps our faculty remain a step ahead of area schools while our students are guided on their road to success.

Bivrachah,
Aaron Lippman
MJDS Head of School





STUDENT SHOUT OUT

Sixth grade student Matan S. recognized early on during quarantine that there were people in Milwaukee really struggling and he could do something about it.

"My goal is not to end world hunger, but to do my part as a human being and make this world a better place," he explained. He started an organization called Baked for Goods, baking cakes, cupcakes and cookies that he sells online. One hundred percent of the proceeds benefit Hunger Task Force, a local food bank.

In his first week of business he made 108 cookies and spent full days in the kitchen. He occasionally receives volunteer support, but Matan loves to bake. His favorite thing to do is frost cakes! He will continue to bake during the school year. "The effort is nothing compared to the way it makes you feel," he said. "When you're helping people who really need it, the rewards are great."

Homemade treats can be ordered online at bakedforgoods50.wixsite.com/bakedforgoods.



MAZAL TOV MJDS CLASS OF 2020

Joseph Antonoff
Hanna Boland
Mia Crawford
Maya Graupe
Eado Ishak
Ethan King
Hannah Kleinerman

Madeline Kranitz
Sophia Levitas-Goren
Shira Safer
Rebecca Sattler
Isabel Wertz
Indiana Widlansky
Sarah Yudkovitch

reJEWvenation at MJDS

Last spring, second grade students learned about "maggid," the part of the Seder that recounts the story of the exodus from slavery to freedom. Rabbi Schaller challenged the students to find other meaningful stories by interviewing "a person who has lived a long life" about "a time when they went through a big change."

Then second grader, Eitan, interviewed his 95-year-old great-grandmother and asked her about her big change: when and where it happened, what she learned and how she felt about it. Beeba, as she was called, was living independently in a retirement community that was not allowing visitors due to COVID-19.

The assignment gave Beeba a beautiful opportunity to connect with Eitan and their family during a time of isolation and loneliness. Beeba reflected on several big changes in her life including leaving Germany on a kindertransport and the death of Eitan's great-grandfather. She wrote about how she felt during each change and how she adjusted in a way that Eitan could comprehend.

Beeba died this summer and her interview with Eitan was incorporated into her eulogy. What seemed like a simple assignment ended up being an incredibly special experience for Eitan, Beeba and his entire family, and one they will never forget.

MJDS ALUMS IN ACTION

Emmy Higgs Matzner ('97) lives in Minneapolis, which became the epicenter of the Black Lives Matter movement in the summer of 2020.

"While I work to raise anti-racist kids and create change in my community, I remind myself that learning, reading, and discussing are valuable, but they are not enough. I am compelled to take action because of my sense of *tikkun olam*," she said. Thanks to the values that were reinforced during her years at MJDS, Emmy works to heal our world, "striving not for a reformed iteration of our previous one, but for a courageous future, one where we can all prosper and lift each other up."



Zak Wernecke ('95) teaches math at Mallard Creek High School, a public school in Charlotte, NC.



"While at MJDS, I was inspired by countless loving and passionate adults who knew me as more than just a student. For example, Geveret Meyers, my fourth-grade teacher, knew each member of my family, how to make me smile if I was having a rough day, and that my favorite baseball player was Jim Abbott. I respected her so much for valuing me that when it came to subjects I didn't like, I did the work just to make her happy.

"These are the personal connections that I value as a teacher. Every day I am reminded of the important role that teachers have in shaping students' lives as they push past comfort zones to discover their new potentials. In the way that MJDS inspired me, I am driven by love and passion to provide an environment that empowers students to embrace the values of leadership to make a difference in the world."



ALUMNI SHABBAT SING

In late June, more than 60 alumni and staff emeritus gathered with their families on Zoom for MJDS's first Alumni Shabbat Sing. MJDS Shabbat Sing founders Sandi Dunn (Morgan) and Merzy Eisenberg joined MJDS's newer Shabbat Sing leaders Wendy Cohen and Mara Kleiman for 30 minutes of singing some classics and some new songs. They even gathered former staff and students from around the world, including a special visit from Adina Altshull in Israel. We hope to hold another Alumni Shabbat Sing this year and continue this new tradition annually.



MILWAUKEE
JEWISH DAY
SCHOOL

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save the date

BRIGHT FUTURES GALA

hosted by Milwaukee Jewish Day School

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

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