



From Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, Head of School

This year's schoolwide learning theme is **THRIVING**. Throughout the year, faculty are using the theme to discuss and facilitate learning in which individual students and our entire community can thrive. Over the past decade, studies indicate that American children's well-being has spiraled downward. In a recent CDC survey, 37% of high school students reported regularly struggling with mental health. And it is not just teenagers, but lower and middle school students who are facing significant challenges. Prior to the pandemic, data suggested that today's students face social and emotional challenges in more significant ways than any generation on record.



Yet, Dr. Michele Borba's research indicates that kids who thrive exhibit seven character traits that set them apart. Thrivers have self-confidence, empathy, self-control, integrity, curiosity, perseverance, and optimism. And not only are these traits associated with thriving, they may be cultivated and taught.

CESJDS's educational philosophy balances a rigorous academic program with social, emotional, and spiritual learning. Through this balance, we cultivate students who can excel academically because they are developing the personal traits that Borba's research indicates are so critical and because our students ground themselves in Jewish values and ideas.

Through this year's school wide learning theme, our faculty and staff are further focusing on developing Borba's seven traits in students so that they may thrive in all aspects of their school work and lives. In the pages of this edition of *The Lions' Roar*, you will read how our Lower School students thrive spiritually; how JDS Middle School students develop the skills to thrive through Student Led Conferences; how our High School students are thriving athletically due to our integrated curriculum, and last, you will read how our larger JDS community is thriving.

Dr. David Bryfman, CEO of the Jewish Education Project, asserts that "for Jewish learning to be both meaningful and relevant it must **empower** (my emphasis) Jews to thrive – in their personal success and happiness, **in being more socially connected** (my emphasis) to each other and their communities – and better **equipped to make the world a better place** (again, my emphasis)." While Bryfman is not familiar with our School's core values and the Portrait of a CESJDS Graduate, he articulates many of the same ideas you will find in the School's core documents. Through our educational philosophy and teaching, JDS is empowering students to bring Jewish values, texts, and ideas to life. Through our School's core values of *K'hillah* and *Tikkun Olam* we are deeply connecting students and families to each other and to making the world a better place. As we do these things, we foster the growth of students and a Jewish community who are able to thrive - something that is often in short supply in our fast-paced, digital, and uncertain world. I hope you enjoy this edition of *The Lions' Roar*.

THRIVING



כל הכבוד (Accomplishments)

SCHOOL

- **The Lion's Tale** newspaper received an All-American rating from the National Scholastic Press Association, earning marks of distinction in all four judged areas of Coverage & Content, Text, Visuals, and Presentation.
- **Sulam@JDS** welcomed its first cohort of 6 students to the three-year pilot program for students with diverse learning needs.
- During the **Lehman Day of Service** trip, Middle School students collectively gathered 75 bags of trash and recycling across five parks.
- The **Varsity Girls Tennis** team won the PVAC Championship.
- The **Varsity Boys Cross Country** team won the PVAC Championship.
- The **Varsity Girls Cross Country** team won the PVAC Championship.

STUDENT

- **Ali Acosta** (Grade 8), **Rose Kane** (Grade 6), **Sydney Kane** (Grade 6), **Sara Landau** (Grade 8), and **Rina Libbin** (Grade 6) participated for Team Ali in the *Just Tryan It Kids Triathlon* to raise money for Pediatric Cancer.
- **Eitan Barak** (Grade 4), **Sagi Alovich Grinbom** (Grade 4), and **Yahel Vardi** (Grade 4) received the first *Middot Menschen* awards for demonstrating behavior that is in the spirit of the CESJDS values.
- **William Cashon** (Grade 12), **Joshua Einhorn** (Grade 12), **Oliver Ferber** (Grade 12), **David Fritz** (Grade 12), **Jonah Gross** (Grade 12), **Joshua Kelner** (Grade 12), **Ezra Melkin** (Grade 12), **Kate Morgan** (Grade 12), **Kai Schreim** (Grade 12), and **Zachary Singerman** (Grade 12) were designated as Commended Students by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for their high PSAT scores in the 11th Grade.
- **David Fritz** (Grade 12), **Coby Malkus** (Grade 12), **Ella Sheintal** (Grade 12), and former JDS student **Isaac Kriesler** received the Hyman M. and Phillip D. Perlo High School Athlete Award at the Bender JCC 30th Dinner of Champions.
- **Bee Kotler** (Grade 9) was accepted into Broadway Artists Alliance, an NYC theater program for young actors, singers, and dancers.
- **Ella Kotok** (Grade 12) was awarded the Sheila Berner Teen Leadership SIT of the Year Award at Perlman Camp.
- **Kate Morgan** (Grade 12) is overseeing a partnership with the ORT Arad School in Israel where students are conducting a water quality and monitoring project while working with water professionals from the Izaak Walton League.

FACULTY

- **Benjamin Barer**, High School Jewish Text Teacher, wrote an article, "What does Pursuing Tzedek Actually Entail?" that was published by *The Lehrhaus*.

- **Lori Leatherman Belke**, Director of Human Services, completed the Wharton Executive Education Program.
- **Rachel Bergstein**, Director of the CESJDS Center for Excellence and Engagement in Jewish History, wrote a blog post for Jewish Education Innovation Challenge about the importance of Jewish history in the classroom as part of the larger Jewish identity.
- **Aaron Bregman**, former Evonne and Elliot Schnitzer Family Jewish History Department Chair, was one of three primary facilitators featured in a conference sponsored by the Center for Israel Education about defining Israel Education.
- **Michal Friedman**, 2nd Grade General Studies Teacher, spent 3 weeks at Brandeis University wrapping up her year long studies in the Teacher Leader Fellowship program.
- **DJ Kaplan**, Director of Sulam@JDS, and **Erica Stein**, 4th Grade General Studies Teacher, were invited to join the 2022-2023 cohort of You Lead, Prizmah's signature leadership development program.
- **Ellie Kettler**, Educational Support Services Assistant, was awarded a Master of Social Work from University of Maryland.
- **Kirsten Kirimlis**, General Music, Strings Orchestra, and CESJDS Singers Specialist, welcomed a son Efstratios "Stratis" Stylianos Kirimlis.
- **MollyBeth Rushfield**, 3rd-5th Grade Judaic Studies Teacher, was featured on the cover of *Washington Jewish Week*.
- **Lisa Vardi**, High School Principal, was invited to join a cohort of 13 Women to participate in the AISGW Leadership Initiative: Advancing Women's Impact In Independent Schools.

ALUMNI

- **Emily Bobrow '94**, **Jake Mintz '13**, and **Nick Miller**, long-time current CESJDS faculty member, will be honored at the CESJDS's annual Head of School Circle Celebration.
- **Yuval David '96** won an Emmy Award for Talent – Program Host/Moderator/Correspondent for his "One Actor Short" series.
- **Russell Lubin '20**, founder of the CESJDS Rocketry Team, helped Case Western's Rocket Team get second place at the 2022 Intercollegiate Rocket Engineering Competition at Spaceport America.
- **Yosefi Seltzer '89** won the American Bar Association's LAMP Distinguished Service Award as the Army's representative.
- **Jason Zuckerman '92** was named to *Washingtonian Magazine's* "Top Lawyers Hall of Fame."
- **Nicki Brodie '05** and **Ezra Fishman** welcomed a daughter.
- **Ariel Clemons '08** and **Brian Mayrsohn** welcomed a daughter, Lila Zara.
- **Tamar** and **Justin '04 Epner** welcomed a son, Matan Harel.

- **Lindsay** and **Scott '07 Goldfarb** welcomed a daughter, Hallie Madeline.
- **Aliza (Fishbein) '07** and **Alex Silver** welcomed a son, Gavi Ezra.
- **Rebecca** and **Jonathan '13 Galitzer** welcomed a daughter, Aliyah Chaya Bracha.
- **Joel Kliksberg '03** and **Jess Carbino** welcomed a daughter, Emmie Blake.
- **Sara (Slater) '04** and **Nick Block** welcomed a daughter, Leah Ella.
- **Erica Strudler '05** and **Isaac Snyder '06** welcomed a son, Cooper Darwin.
- **Anna (Wood) '05** and **Shay Cohen** welcomed a daughter, Miley Ziv.
- **Melissa (Zissman) '09** and **Avi Golub** welcomed a daughter, Ava Daniella.
- **Bari Friedman '09** and **Zach Eisenberg** were married.
- **Eran '08** and **Carrie Friedman** were married.
- **Elana Handelman '13** and **Cam Somers** were married.
- **Elisheva Layman '08** and **Scott Salant** were married.
- **Danielle (Gordon) Yeger '13** and **Haim Yeger** were married.
- **Rina Bardin '14** and **Noah Gorstein** were engaged.
- **Aaron Handelman '15** and **Yarden Shuminer** were engaged.
- **Annie Schtevie '13** and **Ethan Barnett** were engaged.
- **Michelle Shevin-Coetzee '11** and **Zack Laven** were engaged.
- **Emily Shoyer '13** and **Matt Javitt** were engaged.

COMMUNITY

- Former CESJDS board president, **Paul Berger** was featured in the *Washington Jewish Week* about his leadership in the Jewish community.
- **Sara Brenner** was hired as The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's first Executive Director of the Jewish Community Foundation.
- **Sarah Osborne** was featured in an article in *EJewish Philanthropy* for her program, "A Mitzvah to Eat."



Lower School Log:

Thriving Spiritually at the Lower School

◆ By **Lisah Bernstein '82**, T'filah & Israeli Dance Specialist | **Sara Roark**, Head Media Specialist & T'filah Specialist | **Daniella Friedman**, Judaic Studies & Hebrew Language Coordinator



The book *Thrivers* outlines seven character strengths that give humans the ability to thrive psychologically and emotionally (self-confidence, empathy, self-control, integrity, curiosity, perseverance, and optimism). Each of these attributes is strengthened by Judaism. Through our religious studies, we teach *middot*/values, Torah (Jewish text), and *t'filah*/prayer. Judaism is a spiritual practice as well as a culture and history. We hope by engaging learners in the study of our people, we give them a grounding which makes them feel they belong in the larger community of *k'lal Yisrael*. This sense of worth, place, and belonging builds self-confidence.

Middot are the underpinnings of a strong moral code. The expectation that one is to live by this code is the definition of integrity. *Middot* are taught directly and specifically during lessons at every grade level. They are also woven holistically throughout the school by the ways we interact with each other. For example, empathy, the *middah* specially designated for the month of April, might be taught through analyzing the behavior of a Torah character (How do you think Leah felt when she married Jacob knowing that he really wanted to marry her sister?). It would also be taught through actions on the playground when a child sees a peer sitting on the “buddy bench” and goes over to ask them to play because they know how it feels to need someone to play with at recess. Likewise, when you participate in a prayer community next to a friend who is saying the *Mi Sheh-beirakh* prayer for healing for a loved one who is sick or *Kaddish* (a prayer said by those in mourning) for one who has passed away, one feels empathy.

◆◆ We hope as they grow through the School, they feel a sense of connection to something bigger than themselves. ◆◆

Other attributes in *Thrivers* are self-control and perseverance. Students in the Lower School engage in daily prayer. To be comfortable in a traditional Jewish prayer service takes practice. Self-control is required to prioritize the needs of the whole community over one's own needs. The learning of the words, meaning, and structure requires perseverance. Most students may enter kindergarten not knowing the Hebrew *alef-bet* and leave fifth grade able to chant from the Torah. We hope as they grow through the School, they feel a sense of connection to something bigger than themselves. The historic structure of the daily prayer service has optimism built into it: we start our school day with Israel's national anthem *Hatikvah* (meaning “The Hope”) and we start our prayer service with *Modeh Ani*/I am thankful. We give students plenty of opportunity to reflect on the big questions, to feel a sense of wonder, and to express deep gratitude. The types of questions we ask when we are in our prayer community are rarely the kinds that have one correct answer. There is plenty of room for the curiosity and self-confidence it takes to form and express one's own views.

The seven attributes outlined in *Thrivers* are not “add-ons” to the way we observe and celebrate Jewish life or the way that we teach the Jewish practices of Torah, *t'filah*, and *middot*. They are integral to the ways we teach, learn, and behave as Jews. Daily life in school strengthens our students' sense of Jewish identity and supports them in thriving spiritually.

Middle School Musings:

Student Conferences - Developing Students Who Thrive

◆ By **Aileen Goldstein '96**, Academic Dean | **David Carrington**, Middle School English Teacher



“Our role is helping our kids learn to handle life someday without us. We must unleash so that they can learn how to make choices, good decisions, and solve their own problems” (Borba 127).

As educators, we strive to empower our students to become confident, thoughtful, and reflective individuals capable of paving their own way. Student-led conferences provide the opportunity to exercise *ah-rayut*, or personal responsibility, for their learning as students lead their parents and teachers in conversation about their strengths, challenges, goals, and vision for learning. Students thrive as they engage with “growth mindset, goal setting, and learning from failure,” what Michelle Borba identifies in her book *Thrivers* as the “three teachable abilities that nurture perseverance” (Borba 205).

From the very start of the year, students in the middle school are engaging in active self-reflection exercises, evaluating themselves in eight core life skills reflected in our Portrait of a CESJDS Graduate, as well as three skills specific to each class. Students learn to assess their own development in each of these areas as they set goals for further growth. Through this process, students become more independently responsible for their learning, developing growth-mindset, and self-advocacy.

This reflection culminates in the student-led conferences, held twice annually in November and March. This year, as we introduce the process, students will be active participants in the fall and will become leaders of the conversation in the

spring. In these conferences, students discuss their strengths and challenges with their families and teacher, share samples of their work, and identify concrete, measurable goals for moving forward. They also advocate for how the adults in their lives can support them in achieving their goals.

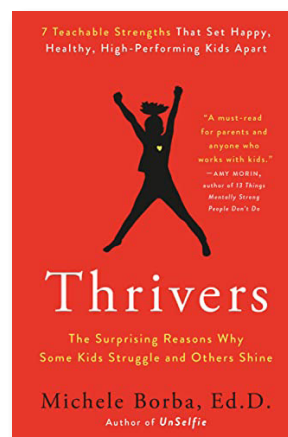
This process is a true partnership between home and school with the student at the center. The week after conferences,

students spend time reflecting on the conferences as a whole, looking for patterns and trends across disciplines. Families are also encouraged to engage in metacognitive reflection with their child to identify possible new strategies, executive functioning skills, and different mindsets that

can help them move forward. At school, teachers will continue the conversations with students as they coach them in achieving the goals students have set for themselves.

This ongoing process of reflection, goal setting, meta-cognition, and conversation is a critical tool in helping students thrive and to become the best versions of themselves, both at school and out in the world. It’s “how we raise kids who are confident that they can handle whatever comes their way and thrive” (Borba 127).

◆◆ Through this process, students become more independently responsible for their learning, developing growth-mindset, and self-advocacy. ◆◆



High School Highlights:

Thriving in Athletics in the High School

◆ By **Becky Silberman**, Director of Athletics & Upper School Health and Exercise Science Chair



When we talk about thriving in athletics at JDS, where do we start? Do we count the numerous PVAC championship banners hung up in the rafters of our gym? Do we read the names of the collegiate athletes JDS has produced that are proudly displayed on our “Lions at the Next Level” board? Do we list every individual medal or honor our athletes have won? No. All you have to do is venture out onto the court, the field, the mat, or the track to feel what thriving truly means in athletics. From the instant you step into our athletic environment, thriving comes to life.

In order to get to the bottom of thriving in athletics though, you have to dig deeper into the values that are integrated in our student-athletes daily lives. In the morning, our students begin their day with *Zman Kodesh* and then attend a mix of academic classes, club meetings, and college meetings, before wrapping up their day in athletics. The group project they work on in math teaches our students lessons that guide them for their history presentation which provides a foundation for them to lead a Sports Medicine club meeting. By the end of the day, the students have been living the values necessary to be a successful athlete.

Our students learn how to persevere through adversity in the classroom which translates directly to their successes on the field. The self-confidence gained through being a class leader during a student council meeting gives them the tools necessary to score the match point in volleyball. The self-control practiced during a heated debate about the American Judicial System teaches our students how to regulate their emotions when the official makes a bad call in a soccer match. Thriving comes naturally when it is ingrained in our daily routine. The ability to maintain a rigorous academic schedule while still competing in a demanding athletic environment is basis enough to thrive in a stressful environment.

◆◆ Our students learn how to persevere through adversity in the classroom which translates directly to their successes on the field. ◆◆

We kicked off our Fall 2022 athletic season with a bang, bouncing back from an abbreviated COVID schedule these past two years. We are in full swing with Varsity Girls Tennis, JV Girls Tennis, Varsity Girls Volleyball, JV Girls Volleyball, Varsity Boys Soccer, Varsity Girls Soccer, Cross Country, and our recreational Strength and Conditioning Club, Yoga Club, and Walk/Run Club. So far this academic year, our 115 High School student-athletes (35% of our student body) have had many accomplishments. Our Varsity Girls Soccer program defeated powerhouse Washington International School for the first time in over a decade. The Varsity Girls Volleyball Team, led by a star quartet of freshmen, has had their best season since 2008. For the first time in CESJDS history, every single Fall sport in the Upper School has a Head Coach and an Assistant Coach. Our program is only as strong as the coaches and captains who lead our teams. Our coaches not only thrive as leaders in the athletic arena but they come from all walks of life and help instill important values that guide all of our students to be their best selves.



Ignite the Night Was A Huge Success!

Over 350 school parents and guests of our sponsors gathered at the Annette M. and Theodore N. Lerner Family Upper School Campus to celebrate and unite at Ignite the Night 2022. The building was transformed into an extraordinary event space with lighting, seating, gathering spaces, and a dance floor! Our guests were in their best “dressy attire” and enjoyed valet parking, a DJ playing dance tunes, delicious dinner stations including pulled brisket, mushroom risotto, chicken pastillas, and signature cocktails (Lions on Fire & Smokey Old Fashioned). We had a delectable dessert table with a s’mores bar, creme brulee, and a variety of rich, sweet, homemade cookies, all created by our own Director of Food Services, Mark Glauser.

In between dancing and talking with school parents and sponsors, Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, Head of School, and Ayala Nuriely Kimel, Board President, shared with everyone their gratitude for this opportunity to be together and celebrate CESJDS. In particular, we recognized our Medical Advisory Committee, Drs. Lee Blecher, Rebecca Musher Gross, Veronique Nussenblatt '95, and Enrique Schisterman, for guiding us safely through the pandemic.

Thank you to our event Co-Chairs for their stellar leadership in making Ignite the Night a reality! Joy & Ross Demain, Lisa & Gideon '93 Blumenthal, and Rebecca Musher Gross & Jonathan Gross. And a special thank you to all of our sponsors for their financial support and friendship.

View the full photo gallery at <https://bit.ly/3FzjuqK>.





Thank You to Our Sponsors

PLATINUM IGNITE SPONSORS:



VISIONARY IGNITE SPONSORS:



CHAMPION IGNITE SPONSORS:



INVESTOR IGNITE SPONSORS:



IGNITE SPONSORS:

Marissa & Justin Baer	Shelley & Adam Ducker	Marcum, LLP
Camps Airy and Louise	Freed Photography	Morgan Language Services
Drs. Sara and Paul Cohen,	Gesher JDS	NAI Michael
Isabelle Lass, and	Green Room Speakers	Stacy '87 & David Schlactus
Brooke Miller DDS	Heather and Ben '97 Greenblum	Schreiber Allergy
Congregation Har Shalom	Law Offices of Krauthamer & Stahl, Chartered	Stein Sperling Bennett De Jong Driscoll PC
Critical Systems, LLC		Vista Cova

Ignite the Night
GATHER | CELEBRATE | UNITE



בית מדרש צוריאל

Administrative Offices & Lower School Campus
1901 East Jefferson Street
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Annette M. & Theodore N. Lerner Upper School Campus
11710 Hunters Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **NOVEMBER 24-25:**
SCHOOL CLOSED Thanksgiving
- **NOVEMBER 29:**
Head of School Circle Celebration
- **DECEMBER 8, 10, 11:**
Joan and Marvin Rosenberg High School Musical
- **DECEMBER 18-25:**
Hanukkah
- **DECEMBER 21:**
Lower School Fanaroff Family Hanukkah Musical



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Rabbi Mitchel Malkus.....	1
<i>Kol HaKavod</i> (Accomplishments).....	2
Lower School Log: Thriving Spiritually at the Lower School.....	3
Middle School Musings: Student Conferences - Developing Students Who Thrive....	4
High School Highlights: Thriving in Athletics in the High School.....	5
Ignite the Night.....	6-7
Upcoming Events.....	8

