

2023-2024/5784 Impact Report

Thank you for partnering with us to make Seattle Jewish Community School's (SJCS) mission and vision a reality. Together, we welcome students, families, and educational professionals to our warm and inclusive school, inspired by Jewish values and intellectual traditions, and make a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Here is some of what your generosity has made possible in the last year:

Educating Our Students

- We reinvigorated the practice of presenting students with their first personal *Siddurim*/סידורים (Prayer Books) at a special *Chagigat HaSiddur*/חגיגת הסידור (Celebration of the Prayer Book) and added a *Chagigat HaChumash*/חגיגת החומש (Celebration of the Five Books of the Torah), where older students received their first personal Torah texts.
- We enriched our programming on Shabbat and Jewish holidays:
 - We participated in *Shabbat* services at Temple Beth Am and Congregation Beth Shalom
 - On *Hoshanah Rabbah*/הושענא רבא (The "Great Please Save Us" Day), we learned about ancient rain rituals in addition to our ancient Jewish ritual with willow branches



- On *Tu B'Shvat*/ט"ו בשבט (The 15th of *Shevat*, Jewish New Year for the Trees), we explored our local urban forest
- On *Yom HaZikaron*/יום הזיכרון (Israel's Memorial Day), we were visited by active soldiers and parents who are veterans
- On *Yom HaAtzma'ut*/יום העצמאות (Israel Independence Day), we held our cherished SJCS "Trip to Israel"



- We took advantage of our city's resources on multiple field trips:
 - T-Mobile Park, which the entire school traveled to via public transportation
 - Climate Pledge Arena
 - Seattle Fire Station 16
 - The Seattle Aquarium
 - The Seattle Art Museum
 - The Washington State History Museum
 - Discovery and Marina Bay Parks
 - And more!
- We addressed difficult events, upholding our commitment to authentic, experiential education, including:
 - Gathering as a community following the devastation of October 7
 - Teaching, in age-appropriate ways, about Jewish mourning practices, following the death of our Head of School's mother—giving the children opportunity to provide *nichum avelim*/ניחום אבלים (comfort to mourners), which they accomplished with notable grace and sweetness

- Opportunities for celebration included:
 - The arrival of our new mascot, *Sasson HaSna'ee*/הַסַּנּוֹן הַשְּׂנַא'עִי (Sasson the Squirrel)
 - The accomplishments of our new Chess Club, as students took home multiple trophies and became state champions at their first tournament
 - Our fifth grade's heartfelt *tekes siyyum*/תּוֹקֵס סִיּוּם (graduation ceremony)



Welcoming Our Families

- The Parents Association (PA) established new traditions:
 - A lively *Shabbat* Family Camp at Camp Solomon Schechter
 - The playful and educational Math Night
 - A Celebration of Pluralism, highlighting the diverse heritage and background of our families

"We are so grateful for the community at SJCS. The school has been like an extended family and has nurtured our daughters, helping them grow on a path of development as learners and members of the Seattle community and Jewish people."

– SJCS Parents

- With abiding concern, we reached out to graduates and their families as they faced significant increases in antisemitism at middle and high schools and on college campuses.
- Over 230 people attended our *Chanukah* party, including PJ Library families, current SJCS families, and SJCS alumni as our students sang *Chanukah* songs in English, Hebrew, and Ladino.



- We significantly increased our outreach efforts in recruiting new students and families:
 - Establishing a strong partnership with PJ Library, hosting several events for families of young children
 - Drawing on the enthusiastic participation of parent ambassadors
- We enrolled a full kindergarten for 2024–2025/5785 and opened this fall with a 15% increase in overall enrollment.
- We retained 98% of non-moving students for the second year in a row.

Elevating Our Professionals

- Our professional team completed a self-study as part of our re-accreditation process through the Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS). This work, coupled by a peer-visit from the Association, generated highly affirmative major commendations of our school for:
 - Joyful living of our mission
 - Maintaining a warmly welcoming, diverse, pluralistic, and inclusive space
 - Personal dedication and commitment of our strong faculty and staff
 - Extraordinary alignment of the board of trustees and its committees

“[SJCS makes] courageous and transformative decisions and demonstrate strategic thinking, which have breathed vibrant life back into [the] institution; and leadership decisions that are “creating and harnessing a powerful and talented new administrative [team].”
– NWAIS Visiting Team Report

🍅 We secured 96% staff retention, a very rare achievement in these restless times across the education sector.

🍅 We bolstered our Hebrew program by:

- Adding a native-speaking Hebrew enrichment specialist to our team
- Welcoming back *Morah Shoshana* for choral singing
- Joining Hebrew language teachers from across the Pacific NW to create a professional learning community under the *Ivrit B'Merkaz/עברית במרכז* (Hebrew at the Center)—the leading professional organization on Hebrew language instruction in North America



🍅 We added an occupational therapist to our Student Support Team, in collaboration with the Samis Foundation and three other Jewish day schools.

🍅 Guided by partnerships with leading fundraising and marketing consultants though Evolve Giving Group and Voice for Good, our staff took steps to advance the professionalism of our communications:

- Establishing templates for a repertoire of five different publications (including this one!)
- Regular posts on social media reflective of our program and communal connections
- Updating our website and implementing clear style and messaging guides

Making a Positive Difference for Our Community and Beyond

- Our distinctive *Kehillah M'Shulevet*/קהילה משולבת (Integrated Community) program, brought together SJCS and JDS fifth graders. Highlights included:
 - A multi-generational *Sigd* program about the history of the Ethiopian Jewish community and its special holiday along with an Ethiopian feast
 - A Purim Shpiel, written and performed by the students
 - Monthly meetings with senior citizens at the historic Kline Galland Home, learning, making art projects, playing Bingo, and even baking Sephardic treats (*biscocho* and *boyikos*) together
 - The launch of the *Inisiativa de la yerushá Sefaradith de Siatli*/איניסיאטיבה די ירושה ספרדית די סיאטלי (Seattle Sephardic Heritage Initiative). Through this program, students:
 - Learned with Devin Naar, Isaac Alhadeff Professor of Sephardic Studies, at the University of Washington and visited the Sephardic Archives at the UW's Stroum Center for Jewish Studies
 - Took a walking tour of the original Sephardic neighborhoods in the Central District guided by the Seattle Sephardic Network
 - Visited our city's historic Sephardic cemeteries
 - Read a graphic novel about the relationship of Sephardic Jews and Japanese-Americans during World War II and met its author
 - Came together with students from all of the city's Jewish day schools for a Sephardic *Shabbaton* in Seward Park



- We welcomed several displaced Israeli students, providing a deeply appreciated safe haven for them as long as their families remained in our area.
- Our students and families came together to engage in service work:
 - Packing 576 pounds of food for Jewish Family Service (JFS) to distribute to Seattlites in need
 - Gathering winter clothing as part of the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice NW's clothing drive for unhoused refugees seeking asylum
 - Mulching and collecting trash in Green Lake Park
 - Securing funds to participate in the Ridwell program, which makes it easier for our school to recycle a wider range of items
 - Collecting *tzedakah*/תְּדָקָה (money for righteous giving) weekly and designating different worthy causes monthly



- We expanded our communal connections:
 - We became an institutional member of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)
 - We were the first among day schools to join *Adamah's* Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition (JCLC)
 - We became a founding member of People of Color in Independent Schools (POCIS) Seattle
 - We completed a second year as members of Thrive: The Jewish Coalition to Defend Trans and LGBTQ+ Youth
 - Our Head of School completed his second year representing Jewish schools on the Board of the Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS)
 - Our fifth graders participated in our former Head of School Ron Waldman's presentation at *Limmud* Seattle

Advancing Our Resources

With the generosity of supporters like you, we achieved inspiring fundraising results in 2023–2024/5784, advancing our capacity to deliver on our mission:

- 100% of current parents contributed to the *Hafitzu Et HaOr*/ הפיצו את האור (Spread the Light) *Chanukah* fundraising campaign
- Members of the community from across the school's 32 years came together for the delightful *L'Sasson*/ לששון (To Joy!) brunch, raising funds that helped SJCS exceed fundraising goals for the year
- We received more than 500 gifts from over 200 donors, including 81 new supporters and 58 returning ones who had not made a gift in several years
- The number of gifts in honor or in memory of loved ones nearly doubled, generating over a 50% increase in funds raised through tributes
- SJCS received gifts that exceeded totals for the prior year by 80%
- SJCS also applied for and received grants from multiple sources, including the Better Together program, the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, the Washington State Department of Ecology, and, most especially, the Samis Foundation

"We feel it is critical to support SJCS. Giving children a strong, positive, safe, and nurturing exposure to Jewish life and identity is more important than ever. SJCS students become lifelong learners, with a solid moral foundation in their lives."

– SJCS Supporter



We Are So Grateful for You

Together with our community, we continue to provide a welcoming educational community that combines the timeless wisdom of Jewish intellectual heritage with contemporary insights into children's learning and growth. Thank you for your generosity!

Please note that any omissions or misspellings on this list are entirely unintentional, and we sincerely apologize for any oversight.

Foundation & Institutional Funders

Better Together Program
Congregation Beth Shalom
The Feinberg Foundation
The Grinspoon Foundation
Harris Northwest Advisors
Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle
The Kavana Cooperative
The Landmark Group
Rosen Properties
Prizmah
The Pruzan Foundation
The Samis Foundation
Swanson Gardner Meyers Cohon, PLLC
Temple Beth Am
Washington State Department of Ecology

Community Builders (\$10,000 and above)

Anonymous
Joann and Carl Bianco
Theresa and Ben Glatstein
Deva and Orin Hasson
Monica and Eric Heinberg

Workplace Giving/Matching Funders

AT&T
DocuSign
Expedia
Google
Microsoft
The Gates Foundation
Sterling Realty Organization
United Health Group

Connection Creators (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Rebecca Ringer and Bill Cohon
Kristen and Dylan Cohon
Barbara Daniels
Will Daniels
Kobi Reiter and David Montero
Rebecca Finkel and Eli Pristoop
Ilana and Jeff Wodlinger
Ollie and Brandon Yarbrough
Laurie Mendelson and David Zimand

Curiosity Generators
(\$3,600–\$4,999)

Ayelet Goldin and Frode Johannesen
Leslie Feinzaig and Micah Kornfield
Julie Lyss
Elaine Sachter and Michael Newman
Ellen and Brad Spear

Confidence Boosters
(\$1,800–3,599)

Ivy Riffkin and Aric Bomsztyk
Ellice Ellenhorn and Michel Chriqui
Brenda Kurland and Mitchell Dernis
Efrat Diesendruck
Miryam Frieder and Don Doering
Danielle Schneider and Keith Eaton
Carol and Harold Finkel
Inna Dashevsky and Jeff Gabster
Joanne and Larry Glosser
Jessica Graybill
Kim Isaac
Eileen and Howard Klein
Deb Sopher and Daniel Markowitz
Yael and Julia Sachs
Claire and David Smith
Yulia Lesov and Yoav Srebrnik
Tamar Benzikry and Ronnie Stern
Shiri Graff and Shay van Creveld
Andrew Wald
Sara Jensen and Jonathan Weinstein
Shira Rosen and Ron Yancey

Kindness Kindlers
(\$1,000–\$1,799 and above)

Anonymous
Yael Chotzen
Noa and Oded Dvoskin
Lisa Dykstra
Cheryl and Joe Piha
Kurt Chesko and Brett Smith
Zach Snyder
Nora Burton and T.J. Stutman
Juju Ishmael and Doron Weisbarth
Cheryl and Ron Waldman

Creativity Cultivators
(Up to \$999)

Deb Frockt and Steve Alter
David Berkovitch Amar
Rebecca Piha and Paul Amato
David Appel
Robin Aronson
Rabbi Jill Borodin and Cary Atlas
Gabrielle Azose
Terry and David Azose
Brett Barbakoff
Mihal Bat-Or
Micaela and Yoav Ben Simon
Beth Huppin and David Bennett
Evelyn Rubinstein-Benzikry and
Michael Benzikry
Einav Yemini and Jonathan Berant
Linda and Herschel Berg
Idil Beri

Daniel Bloom
Gabby and Andrew Bloom
Jenn and Aaron Bobb
Yonah Karp and Harold Bobroff
Todd Bowers
Jerry Brodkey
Laurel and Peter Brodkin
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Marikit Calderon
Emily and Be Cameron
Sarah Castoriano
Julie and David Chivo
Debbie and Dave Clement
Melissa Rivkin and David Cohanin
James Packman and Andrew Cohen
Sarah Kopelovich and Charles Craver
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Robert Hovden and Ron DeChene
Sarah LaFreniere and Ross Diamond
Jade Dikelsky
Jay Downs and Hillary Gillick
Barbara Drosnin
Amanda Ebbin
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Julie and David Ellenhorn
Brett and Sabrina Endres
Abbie Spear and Michael Erickson
Hazel Estrella
Galit and Sol Ezekiel
Helen and Richard Feder
Lisa and Warren Fein
Tamar Libicki and Sergey Feldman
Nancy Finkelstein
Elizabeth Krakow Frasch

Daniel and Betty Gabel
Talya Gillman
Rabbi Bruce Ginsburg
Tamar Newman and Amir Golan
Robin Beckman Goldberg
Max Green
Beth and Marshall Green
Alexis Kort and Josh Greenberg
Marcia and Eliot Greenberg
Steven Greene and Peggy Mesnik
Amber and Casey Griffin
Arthur and Leah Grossman
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Mari Halpert
Emeri and Brad Handler
Kimberly and John Hasenberg
Marguerite and Eddie Hasson
Abraham Heyman
Devorah Signer Hill and Jerry Hill
Mitchell Hymowitz
Marc Isaac and Suzie Dadoun
Lesley and Jeremiah Isgur
Talya and Howard Jeffries
Karma and Marty Joseph
Danielle Journo
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Solly Kane
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Larry Katz
Vladimir Katz
Darya Khalili
Natasha Grossman and David Kleweno

Amy Kogon
Brooke Pinkham and Edward Kringsman
Etana Dykan Kunovsky and
Alan Kunovsky
Pamela and Robert Lavitt
Anna and Aaron Lemchen
Seth Leslie
Davis Lich
Daniel Low
Stacy Lundstedt
Lara and Caleb Lyness
Norma and Richard Mahler
Kyra Butzel and Joel Martell
Tali and David Maslan
Ruthey Borg Maxwell and
John Maxwell
Doug McIntosh
Jordana Merkin
Jana Miller
Paul and Danielle Nacamuli
Roxana Norouzi
Ariel and Steven Novick
Ray Opatowsky
Laura and Peter Orser
Shoshana Packer
Peg Hall and Moss Patashnik
Pat Pawelak-Kort
Laurie and Bruce Pritchard
Tamar and Glenn Puckett
Hila Regev
Adam Reiter
Liz and Lorne Richmond
Ander Robinson
Candice Teague and Ariel Rokem
Doug and Deborah Rosen
Rachel Rosenfeld

Esther and George Rubin
Yoav Sachs
Amy Duncan and Julian Sachs
Joani Diskin Saran
Amy Schiffman
Beth Schustek
Debbie Dick Shuster and Jerry Shuster
Gregory Gutterman Scruggs
Mark Seigle
Sarah Kaplan and Howard Shalinsky
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Jessica Sloan
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Eileen and Harris Stutman
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Cindy Katz and David Volk
Janet and Craig Warnick
Michelle and Perry Weinberg
Devorah Weinstein
Jay Weisbrod
Kathrin Winkler
Treebyleaf McCurdy and
Eric Wolfsbruder
Gwenn Garden and John Yuse
Rachel Zell
Alex Zhitnitsky