



JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School

Watertown, MA

Head of School

for July 2011

JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School seeks an experienced, dynamic and inspirational educational leader who is committed to the school's pluralist mission and is excited by the opportunity to help lead JCDS as it continues its successful growth.

Introduction

JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School (www.jcdeboston.org), located in Watertown, MA, part of metropolitan Boston and adjacent to Cambridge and Newton, serves students in Kindergarten through grade 8. Since opening its doors in 1995, JCDS has thrived as a strong community where students, parents and faculty find academic fulfillment, intellectual stimulation, Jewish meaning and personal connections. From an enrollment of 11 students in its inaugural year, the school's enrollment has increased each year, with enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year projected to be approximately 200 students. As an independent, pluralist, co-educational Jewish day school, JCDS attracts students and families from many different cities and towns in the Boston area. Families span a wide spectrum of Jewish beliefs and practices: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Israeli, traditional, post-denominational, unaffiliated, and secular. Additionally, the school has a strong philosophic and financial commitment to economic diversity. The curriculum and school culture are very respectful and embracing of the diversity represented within the school's community.

Intentional pluralism is the school's most distinctive cultural element and its organizing principle. The school enrolls young people from families across the range of Jewish expression to learn and live, to explore and examine, to celebrate and study their Jewish heritage together. JCDS teaches that it is imperative to listen respectfully and openly to the views of one's peers and that differences of opinion are inevitable and acceptable. Integral to the school's pluralism is a commitment to anticipate, and attend to, the needs of those who compose the JCDS community. Because pluralism is a principled choice rather than a pragmatic one, the school works to approach diversity from a place of learning, consensus, productive compromise, discovery, and respect. Hebrew and English are used throughout the day as languages of instruction and communication. Children learn to converse well in both languages and develop a strong cultural connection with Israel.

JCDS is at an exciting time to welcome new and energetic leadership. The school has impressively established itself in its fifteen years of operation and has moved through many of the phases that young organizations face. The school owns its building, has room for expansion, and has seen its enrollment grow every year. The school is a place that encourages parental

involvement and where parents linger in the halls after drop off, enjoying one another's company. There is a committed, hard-working and sophisticated Board and talented faculty who are very dedicated, many of whom see JCDS as a second home. The new head of school will inherit a strong school community, with many invested stakeholders, that is eager and ready to continue its forward momentum.

Mission Statement

The mission of JCDS is to provide a premier education that:

- Nurtures each student's capacity for intellectual discovery and decision-making within a respectful, pluralist, bilingual Hebrew-English environment;
- Gives its graduates the ability to create their futures informed by Jewish values, texts and culture, and to make a difference in their communities and the world;
- Kindles the flame of life-long learning in all its constituencies and serves as an inspirational model of innovative, effective and joyful teaching and learning beyond the school.

School Structure, Governance and Facilities

JCDS owns a well-outfitted school building along with eight acres of land, the majority of which are not yet developed. After leasing for a number of years, the school had the opportunity to purchase the property in 2008. The additional acreage certainly affords the school great flexibility for future expansion.

The school building is a bright, welcoming space that is enhanced by colorful and plentiful student art, a clear visual representation of this school's vibrancy. In grades Kindergarten through Four, there is one section per grade level with 20-25 students in each classroom. Each class is taught by a two teacher team, one of whom is a native Hebrew speaker. This approach enables integration of general, Jewish and Hebrew language studies throughout each school day, and students have the benefit of learning Hebrew through formal instruction as well as informally by hearing the language spoken throughout the school. JCDS's commitment to this approach to Hebrew language study has become a model program. The 5th grade program is designed to transition students from the lower school program to middle school where students move between subject specialists.

Under the leadership of the current head of school, JCDS has successfully focused on examining and strengthening its educational program, and there is commitment throughout the faculty to ongoing work in this arena. Each year JCDS welcomes and mentors teaching interns from Brandeis University's Mandel Center's Delet program and a number of faculty are alumni of the program. For this upcoming school year, the school received continued funding to provide professional development for math and science teachers and to review the science curriculum to ensure that it promotes sophisticated and engaging science education. Additionally, JCDS has received a grant to strengthen its learning/student support services, which is enabling the school to enhance its strong commitment to differentiated instruction and serving students with a spectrum of learning styles. While parents certainly choose JCDS for its community and

for the opportunity to enhance their children’s Jewish education and connections, most important to the parents is that their children receive an excellent academic education.

In addition to 53 current full and part-time faculty, the professional staff includes an Assistant Head of School and Rabbi, Assistant Head of School for Development and Communications, Director of Lower School and Coordinator of General Studies and Curriculum Integration, Director of Middle School and Coordinator of Jewish Studies and Curriculum Coordination, Director of the Hebrew Language Program, Director of Admissions, Director of the Learning Center, and Business Manager.

The Board of Trustees is composed of 21 individuals including parents and grandparents of current and former students as well as a significant number of outside community members. The Board operates with an Executive Committee and has a well-defined committee structure. It understands and adheres to best practices for school governance.

JCDS is an affiliate of PEJE, a member of RAVSAK, and is accredited by AISNE.

Long Range Plan

The school recently completed a Long Range Plan, with the thoughtful involvement of the entire JCDS community. The LRP identifies the school’s priorities and options for the next five years, focusing on the academic program, financial stability, and facilities. The specifics of the plan all derive from an overarching goal: “To move JCDS from its first fifteen years to an equally exciting future, a future that is highly inspirational, sustainable and enriching.” Additionally, the LRP recognizes the need to maintain, nurture and develop the school’s core: excellent general studies and Jewish education and a vibrant and pluralist community. Key foci of the LRP include:

- Academic Excellence (with specific reference to science, Jewish Studies and learning support services)
- Enrollment (not only size of school but also optimum lower and middle school enrollment)
- Pluralism (how it continues to be a central and intentional defining principle)
- Faculty and Staff (including salary and benefits)
- Campus (building and land master plan)
- Communication and Marketing (transparency and outreach)
- Accountability

The new head of school will bring key leadership, partnering with the Board as the school continues to move forward on goals identified in the LRP.

Opportunities and Challenges

As a new head of school joins the school community and partners with the many invested stakeholders in leading JCDS in addressing these challenges and opportunities, ensuring a mindfulness and preservation of the school’s current strengths and unique culture will be essential.

The successful candidate will:

- Continue to strengthen the school’s academic program, including the coordination of scope and sequence and the meaningful integration of general and Jewish studies.
- Implement the school’s five-year long range plan to invest in curriculum and professional development, further grow institutional structures, and increase revenues. This is an opportunity to lead and collaborate with a highly committed, hardworking and talented faculty, administrators and board.
- Secure steady revenue growth by expanding enrollment and fundraising while maintaining the school’s strong commitment to affordability and an economically diverse community.
- Inspire and mobilize the energies of the many individuals pledged to JCDS's success. This person must effectively work with the school’s existing foundation of dedicated individuals who possess an informed entrepreneurial spirit and a commitment to the establishment of a strong, self-sustaining, pluralist Jewish day school.
- Be active in the larger Boston Jewish community to ensure that JCDS is not a “well-kept secret”: the new head of school needs to serve as an energetic ambassador, ensuring that JCDS is well and accurately known in the surrounding communities and must work with the school’s advancement professional on outreach and marketing.
- Consider and establish the optimal faculty staffing and administrative structure, including salary and benefits, for JCDS’s current and future needs. This needs to move forward in conjunction with a commitment to establishing appropriate and instituted evaluation and supervision systems along with a commitment to on-going professional development.
- Work with faculty and administration to develop effective and timely lines of communication and protocols – both internally and externally.
- Build successful partnerships with staff, parents and trustees that value and advance the concerns of each.

Leadership Needs

JCDS is at an important juncture in its young history, and future growth and success will in large part be dependent on a great next head of school working proactively in conjunction with other stakeholders, including faculty, staff, board of trustees and community members. The school is seeking an energetic and confident leader who will passionately embrace the school’s mission, core values, school community and collaborative culture and who is excited by the opportunity to make a difference at an already terrific school that also has great potential.

JCDS's next head of school will:

Leadership Style:

- Be a coalition and team builder who is a listener and a facilitator but also a decision-maker
- Be a visionary and strategic thinker who is committed to high standards, continuous improvement and who utilizes action plans to achieve clearly stated outcomes and goals
- Thrive in a fast-paced and evolving environment, establishing, prioritizing and achieving goals, and multi-tasking with ease and flexibility
- Be an accessible and involved leader, possess wisdom, tenacity, energy and confidence

Experience:

- Come with a proven and successful track record of success and be a person with educational vision and follow-through
- Bring a record of successful leadership and the ability to manage, delegate, empower, inspire and motivate
- Have a strong grounding in teaching and learning and be prepared to strengthen, inspire and lead an administrative team and experienced faculty

Personal Qualities:

- Be sincerely respectful and embracing of the individual practices and perspectives represented within the pluralist school and the larger Jewish community
- Be comfortable in leading and engaging in discussions that explore and enhance JCDS's commitment to being a vibrant, intentional pluralist community
- Be honest, respectful, trustworthy and a person of impeccable integrity who values serving as a role model
- Effectively build relationships, interact joyfully with people of all ages and demonstrate a deep commitment to students and all aspects of their learning
- Be articulate, effective and confident as a communicator, both in speaking and in writing

Additional:

- Embrace the role of chief ambassador, bringing good-humored, visible, strong leadership to the internal and external communities and building strong relationships that support the school's fundraising and marketing efforts

- Be excited about working with the Board to establish JCDS as a pre-eminent educational institution and community focal point for area Jewish individuals

This is an outstanding opportunity for an experienced, energetic school professional to build on and enhance a school which already possesses many strengths. The ideal candidate will be an inspirational and dynamic leader and a team builder, an organizer and manager as well as a delegator. She/he will be a thoughtful risk taker, a fundraiser, a diplomat, and a true mensch.

For Consideration

All inquiries are confidential. Please send:

- Resume
- Letter of Interest
- Educational Philosophy and/or Personal Statement

To:

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