

June 2, 2011

Dear Yavneh parents,

I am so excited to welcome you to the start of our 2011–12 academic year! Our goal this year is to go from “great to even greater”, building our outstanding educational programs and reputation for excellent middot and broadening experiences for our students!

I am excited to be working with our new board president Joey Goldstein, and with our dynamic duo PTA co-presidents, Jacqueline Kuppermann and Rachel Greenfield to build on the efforts and successes of their predecessors.

I join you in welcoming three outstanding educators to our faculty. Firstly, is Rabbi Chaim Friedman who will be the Rebbe for second and seventh grade boys. Rabbi Friedman is well known in our community for his outreach and devotion to his talmidim. Secondly, we welcome Ms. Jamie Schwartz, our third grade general studies teacher. Ms. Schwartz is an experienced, creative, and dedicated teacher and we look forward to her being part of our team.

The third teacher is Mrs. Dassi Weiner, who will be our seventh grade Morah, and also serve full time as our “Yoetzet Ruchanit”, watching over the social, emotional, and spiritual development of our talmidot. Those who know her share my excitement to have such an outstanding role model in Yavneh. Mrs. Dassi Weiner joins Suri Nowosiolski (Curriculum Coordinator) and Ariella Agatstein (Programming Director) on our Judaic Studies Leadership team. I am also pleased that Mrs. Ruhama Muskin will continue her association with Yavneh being available to meet and reach out to parents on a variety of issues. On the

General Studies side, we have, of course, our GS Leadership Team consisting of Debbie Davis (Director of Lower School), Stella Lerner (Director of Upper School), Jenny Zacuto (Director of Language Arts), and Sharon Ryan (Director of Mathematics). Yavneh boasts a rock solid staff with hundreds of cumulative years of experience in delivering a quality education!

Other highlights for the upcoming school year include:

- *using the results of our Parent Survey conducted last March to help formulate our “Action Plan” for the next few years. This is part of the WASC re-accreditation process to be completed February 2012. Our goal, as stated, is to go from “great to even greater”!

- *technology upgrades – our website and internal tech progress have been upgraded and tweaked, making it simpler for our parents to use and get information. Additionally, thanks to a gift from the Harwitt Foundation, our library will be upgraded with 25 Kindles, on which hundreds of approved volumes can be added to our wonderful library. We also have added two laptop carts for the classroom use of our 7th and 8th graders, as needed. This significantly increases the skills of our students to use 21st century tools effectively. For parents, Yavneh will be continuing to educate parents on how to be aware of the “digital dangers” so that technology can be a productive tool and not interfere in the kedusha of our students!

- *We continue to introduce upgrades to our curriculum, this year rolling out upgrades to the Math, Language Arts, Dinim and Yediyot Klaliyot curriculum. Each year,

we take a close look at a number of subject areas, and make sure it is top-notch and rigorous.

A few months ago, a subcommittee of board members, Administration, and advisors had a six hour briefing of the recent parent survey conducted by Marketing Success, to understand the results, draw meaningful conclusions, and to begin an Action Plan to address perceived weaknesses, build on strengths, and use the survey as part of our WASC Accreditation process this year. This was a wonderful and useful meeting which, as was mutually agreed at our meeting, will bring Yavneh “from great to greater” and to enhance our communication and inclusion of parents.

Some of the significant results were:

- 86% of parents either “agree” or “strongly agree” that they would recommend Yavneh! Our goal would be to increase this figure.
- 80% of parents either “agree” or “strongly agree” that Yavneh is “caring and warm”. While this is a “good” result, it is an area we highlighted for critical improvement, to get our parents more connected to the school and to each other socially.
- 96% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that Yavneh prepared their children for high school. This was an outstanding strength compared to our peer schools.
- 89% of parents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that Yavneh instilled moral character. While this is a good figure, there was discussion at our meeting as to where parents felt this question referred to “middot” or to varying levels of hashkafa.
- 82% of parents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that teachers understood individual student needs. While this

result is stronger than our peer group, it is an area for us to strengthen.

- 90% of our parents agreed or strongly agreed that our Torah and Tefillah education was excellent. Results were also on the high end for Ivrit, Math, and Science!

As usual, should you have any questions, feel free to contact me or your children's teachers. Please take a close look at the calendar – first day of school for Pre1–8 is Thursday, August 25th!! Until then, have a safe and wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Moshe Dear
Headmaster
Yeshivat Yavneh