

#### MISSION STATEMENT

Pardes Jewish Day School prepares students to become outstanding members of society through a rigorous secular and Judaic education, a nurturing community, and a foundation in Reform Judaism that welcomes all Jewish traditions.

*Approved May '08*



## From Head of School

### Results of the 2008 - 2009 Parent Survey



To refresh your memory, in January, we asked all parents to participate in an anonymous on-line parent survey conducted by Measuring Success in Cambridge, Mass. in conjunction with PEJE (Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education). Our participation rate was 79%. Thank you so much for taking the time to complete the survey. We have a tremendous amount of data which will help shape decisions the leadership team will make for the 2009-2010 school year.

I will highlight some of the information we received and will provide you with additional information at a later date. Thirty six Jewish Day Schools throughout the country participated in the survey with a total of 6500 parents participating. Our data is compared to data from schools with 200 - 400 students with a total of 17 schools. Data provided for each question included the percentages of the three highest performing schools, the three lowest performing schools, and the data from our school. The question that Measuring Success equated with highest parent satisfaction was, "Would you recommend Pardes to a family member or friend?" We were the highest performing school within the 17 schools in which we were ranked with a percentage of 73%. This was the key outcome variable for the survey, used for all statistical regression analysis. Here are the percentages for most influential factor in choosing Pardes by category:

**Strong secular academics - 71%**

**Commitment to Jewish education - 75%**

**Balance of Jewish education and secular academics - 79%**

**Warm community environment - 69%**

The area in which we scored lowest was in technology. Please know we are actively working on our technology curriculum and infrastructure for next year. More information will follow regarding our progress prior to the start of the 2009 - 2010 school year.

Additional areas in which we were very strong were caring, respect, and trust, clarity of school philosophy, supporting Jewish development, and responding to parent concerns. Additional areas to work on are facility upkeep and Hebrew. Please know how grateful we all are that you took the time to participate in this survey and provide us with ample feedback. Thank you again for your commitment and dedication to our school. You are much appreciated.

*Jill Kessler*  
Head of School

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## Jewish Life with Rabbi Erica



When I was in high school I did not get into trouble that much with my parents. Really, I was a good girl! My only problem was that I really loved to talk on the phone to my camp and youth group friends. These calls were long distance. My family's phone bills were fairly high so my parents sent me out to get a job. I got a job working at the Limited clothing store. I learned quickly how to convince people to accessorize their outfits. I was working on commission you know. I really loved my job. Unfortunately, after I paid off my phone bill and bought an entire new wardrobe I was financially bankrupt. Yet, I did acquire a new skill that I use today as a rabbi. I learned to sell.

Everyday, I try and sell Judaism. I try to prove that there is a point to what we are doing and that we'll get something out of this. But sometimes there just is no good reason and we ALL JUST NEED TO HAVE FAITH.

So what does it mean to have faith? We are taught as Jews to seek out the rational explanation. I believe that sometimes, however, looking for the rational explanation is taking the easy way out. If everything in the Torah made perfect sense it would be easy to believe. But it does not take commitment to believe the obvious, rational explanation. It takes courage to take that leap of faith. Although we have interpretative explanations for keeping kosher and for circumcision—*brit milah*, the truth of the matter is that no one really knows the practical reasons why we observe these traditions. We do, however, need to hold on to our traditions to feel a (connection) *kesher* with our ancient ancestors, and to continue our covenantal relationship with God.

In *Parashat Ki Teze* it states that when collecting the eggs of a bird, we should first send away the mother bird before taking her eggs "in order that it may go well with you and you may prolong your days" (Deut. 22:6). What does driving the mother bird away from the nest before taking her offspring have to do with prolonging your days? Medieval philosopher and commentator Maimonides stated that God certainly has concrete reasons for commanding us to drive away the mother bird, but that these reasons are simply beyond our scope of understanding.

We learn that *Pardes* is an acronym where each letter describes a tool to decipher text found in our *Torah* and in our (Oral Law) *Mishna*. The last letter of *Pardes*, a "*samekh*," defines the (secrets) *sodot* that we cannot understand. It is often with a sense of difficulty, and sometimes with a sense of peace, that we accept that some matters are not within our realm of understanding. Maimonides teaches us that occasionally we just need to have a little faith.

May this month be one where we are able to renew our faith in order to observe the *mitzvot* and uphold the traditions that define our (covenant) *brit* with God as the Jewish people, and may our days be prolonged. (May this be God's will) *Cain Yahe Ratzon*.

Rabbi Erica

## Important Dates

### May 7

Spring Showcase  
6:00-7:30pm

### May 11

8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to  
Washington DC

### May 14

Author Joanne Stern  
Speaking in the  
Sanctuary  
7:00 pm

### May 17

Pardes Pool Party  
JCC  
Grades K-4;  
10:00 am-Noon  
Grades 5-8;  
Noon-2:00pm

### May 20

Sports Banquet  
6:00-8:00 pm  
U.S. Airways Center

### May 25

**NO SCHOOL**  
Memorial Day

### May 29

**NO SCHOOL**  
*Shavuot*

### May 31

Pardes Poker &  
Family Fun  
3:00-6:00 pm

### June 4

Graduation  
Congregation Beth Israel  
6:00 pm

### June 5

Last Day of School  
**11:00 Dismissal**

## GENTLE REMINDER

We ask that parents not collect money for teacher gifts for the end of the year. Part of your tuition goes to our Keshet parent/teacher organization. Keshet pays for the end of the year teacher appreciation lunch and class gifts to all faculty and staff. Should you wish to do more, we ask that you do this on a personal basis. This keeps gifts to our faculty equitable and fair. Many thanks for your understanding.

## ON A SAD NOTE...

We offer our condolences to Stephen and Eve Bressler on the passing of Stephen's father, Rubin Bressler.

## A NOTE OF THANKS

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade car wash was a great success! Thanks to everyone for their support. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be leaving next Monday, May 11 for their trip to Washington D.C. We wish them a safe and fun-filled trip!



## Yearbooks

Yearbooks can still be purchased for \$39. They are currently being printed and delivery is expected by month's end. Only 220 are available for sale. Get yours now! (or see Bonnie Verne in Room 103 to check if you have already ordered one). Payment options? Cash, checks made payable to PJDS or see the online order form on the school website. Return orders (other than online purchases) to the front office. Thanks for supporting our school!

## BOX TOPS

Box Tops store for kids in K-4 will be open Wednesday, May 20, so keep clipping those Box Tops coupons! For a detailed list of Box Tops participating products, please visit [boxtops4education.com](http://boxtops4education.com). For more information on our school's Box Tops program, contact Vered Kogan at [koganfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:koganfamily@yahoo.com).



## SAVE THE DATE



Many exciting events have been planned for the last few weeks of the school year. Please open the invitations that were emailed home to you. All invitations are posted on our website. Be sure to check the dates in which you have to RSVP. We look forward to having you join us for these special occasions.

## PARDES SPRING SHOWCASE



Thursday, May 7 ~ 6:00-7:30 pm

Enjoy the street fair atmosphere with entertainment and food as you stroll through the various displays of Science, Math, Hebrew, Language Arts, History and Technology projects and exhibits.



**"PARENTING IS A CONTACT SPORT"**

Thursday May 14 ~ 7:00 pm; Sanctuary  
Joanne Stern, author of "Parenting is a Contact Sport: 8 Ways to Stay Connected to Your Kids for Life" will be speaking on the Pardes campus. This incredible opportunity is **FREE**, however we ask that you RSVP. Visit Dr. Stern's website at [www.parentingisacontactsport.com](http://www.parentingisacontactsport.com)

**PARDES POOL PARY**

Sunday, May 17 ~ JCC  
Middle School: 10:00 am-12:00 pm;  
Lower School: 12:00-2:00 pm. Buffet style  
lunch \$9 per person. Send in your lunch order before you miss out!



**SPORTS BANQUET**



Wednesday, May 20 ~ 6:00-8:00 pm; US Airway Center  
Join us for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Pardes Sports Banquet for presentation of awards at center court. Cost: \$12 per person; includes Kosher dinner. RSVP to the front office.



**PARDES POKER & FAMILY FUN**

*No-Limit Texas Hold'Em*

**Poker Tournament**  
\$40 buy-in

PARDES JEWISH DAY SCHOOL  
3916 E. PARADISE LN • PHOENIX, AZ 85032

**SUNDAY, MAY 31**  
**3:00-6:00PM**

- ★ PROFESSIONAL DEALERS/TABLES/CHIPS
- ★ POKER LESSONS FOR THE INEXPERIENCED PLAYERS
- ★ GRAND PRIZE
- ★ SMALLER PRIZES
- ★ RAFFLE
- ★ REFRESHMENTS

*Invite your friends outside of Pardes to come and play!*

*RSVP:*  
RESERVE A SPOT AT THE POKER TABLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE  
BY EMAILING ADAM ZWEIBACK AT [AZWEIBACK@PARDESSCHOOL.ORG](mailto:AZWEIBACK@PARDESSCHOOL.ORG).

LET US KNOW HOW MANY PLAYERS AND CHILDREN WILL BE ATTENDING.  
DEPENDING ON AVAILABILITY, YOU MAY PURCHASE TICKETS THE DAY OF THE EVENT AS WELL.

**★ FOR THE KIDS ★**  
ARTS & CRAFTS  
WII GAMES  
SNACKS

\$5 PER CHILD WILL COVER EXPENSES FOR 3 HOURS OF SUPERVISED FUN!



You are cordially invited to celebrate the  
CLASS OF 2009/5769  
ALIYAH

Thursday, June 4, 2009  
12 Sivan 5769  
6:00 pm

Congregation Beth Israel  
10460 N. 56<sup>th</sup>  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253

#### TRIBUTES

*Thanks to the following individuals who recently made tributes to The Jarrod Goldfarb Memorial Scholarship Fund.*

*In memory of: Henry Gilman*  
Pook and Philip Bellini  
Jill and Daniel Kessler

*In memory of: Jarrod Alexander Goldfarb*  
Herb Dominguez

*Thank you for making a meaningful gift that impacts every Pardes child!*

#### IN THE COMMUNITY

The following students are participating in the JCC Youth Theatre Department presentation of the Wizard of Oz: Shir Amitai, Maya Cohen, Ashlyn Fentem, Gabrielle Kahn, Berkely Lock, Evan Tessler, Sarah Tessler, Avital Tzur, Danielle Tzur, Jenny Swift, Eden Wein and Morgan Zall

#### The Wizard of Oz

Saturday, May 16 • 8:15 pm; Sunday, May 17 • 1:00 & 4:00 pm  
ASU Kerr Cultural Center • 6110 N. Scottsdale Road

For more information contact Sierra Ramm at 480-483-7121 x 1275  
or [sierrar@vosjcc.org](mailto:sierrar@vosjcc.org)