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Your Weekly "Connection" from
Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School.
Friday, September 2, 2011
3rd of Elul 5771

IN THIS WEEK'S KESHER

1. Kol Hakavod to the Graduating Class of 2011
2. Mazel Tov to Paul Penna DJDS SK Graduates
3. From the Principal
4. From the Executive Director
5. A Special Thank You from the Parents' Association
6. The Parents' Association Wants Your Input
7. Videographers Wanted
8. Last Call for Lost & Found
9. Weekly Calendar
10. March with Kulanu Toronto on Sunday, July 3rd

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

B'ruchim Habaim - Welcome!!! In four days, your children will walk into the hallways of Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School wondering what this new year will bring. What's my new teacher like? Whom will I sit next to? Whom will I play with at recess? Where will I put my coat?

This past Monday, the teachers similarly arrived wondering what they would find on their Day One. Where is my new room? Have the new desks arrived? The Smart Boards? Did my supplies arrive? Who are my new colleagues? Where will I put my coat?

Today, teachers are putting the finishing touches on their rooms, enjoying the last of their August workshops - including one called Play in the Middle of the Day about integrating into their curriculum creative movement and refocusing exercises - and working in teams to plan year-long investigations into Math, Science, Tanakh, and Performance Assessment in all areas.

Last year, we set out to improve educational delivery, improve parent and student experiences, improve the employee experience, and incrementally grow the school. Our educational and operational teams have been working toward these objectives, and we believe you'll notice some tangible outcomes right away:

- A better organized (and eco-friendly) electronic Parent Handbook including a chart of whom to reach with what questions and concerns;
- Safer starts and ends to each day;
- Discipline and behaviour practices that reflect our social justice values, set a high standard of civility, and can be well implemented at every level;

- A Director of Curriculum and Instruction and a group of teacher leaders investigating best educational practices in key areas;
- A middle school faculty that has collectively gestated a compelling, meaningful, and challenging curriculum;
- Two SK classes; and
- Classrooms on all three floors of the school wing.

All this, planted firmly on the foundation of our school's purpose, vision, and values:

Purpose: To build strong foundations for individual accomplishment, community engagement, and Jewish identity in a diverse student body.

Vision: To deliver an intellectual, creative, Jewish and general education for our students and their parents; to deepen our celebration of diversity; and to further focus our thoughts and actions on social justice within our school, local, national, and global communities.

Values: inspiring curiosity, honouring diversity, and creating community.

I wish you all a restful and fun Labour Day weekend, and a happy return to school.

We cannot wait to see you!

Shabbat Shalom

Best, Rhonda

NOTES FOR A SUCCESSFUL DAY ONE

1. Practice going to bed and waking up at school night/morning times this weekend.
2. Offer your child(ren) a good breakfast and then send plenty of food to school for the day. Enough for lunch and two snacks. (Remember: nut free, and either dairy or "pareve" which means neither milk or meat. Fish, oddly, is considered pareve and is permitted.) Please ensure that your child has a reusable water bottle at school each day. Please refrain from including pop to drink.
3. Arrive on time, and then, parents, please leave the school wing. Students should start entering their classrooms at 8:35 am. At 8:45, doors will close and learning will begin. Feel most free to catch up and schmooze in the lobby or at Second Cup, downstairs.
4. Drop off/Pick up
 - **Grades 3, 4, and 5 Parents:** Children may enter the third floor classroom wing from the 3rd floor lobby or through the 2nd floor and up the South Stairwell. In the afternoons, all pick up is from the 2nd floor.
 - **Middle School students** and parents will always enter and exit through the second floor and use the south stairwell. The first floor doors to the classroom wing may never to be used by Paul Penna DJDS.
 - This year, all students being picked up in person (other than car pool) will be brought out to the second floor lobby with their belongings. We

are tightening up safety in the school wing AND promoting independent preparation among the children.

- Park cars only in allotted spots and only for a few minutes. Beyond that, use the paid parking lots nearby or the street parking.
 - **Please bring photo ID for Pick up!!!!** There are new teachers, new nannies, new parents. In order to ensure that we release children only to persons whom you have authorized, we will ask to see photo IDs. We beg your patience and ask you to appreciate that we are putting children's safety before adults' convenience.
5. Please remember to return the **Parental & Student Acceptance of School Behaviour and Discipline Practice** as well as any other outstanding forms to Cheryl in the school office on Tuesday, September 6th. If you did not receive a copy of this form please [click here](#) to open a copy.
 6. Reminisce about the freshness and excitement (and anxiety) of the first day of school, and invite your child to tell you all about it when you get home.

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

1. **Theatre Arts Program launched at Paul Penna DJDS.** Thanks to parents/theatre professionals Diane Flacks and Anton Piatagorsky, and special drop in guest, author and actor Mary Anne MacDonald for helping to plan a Theatre Arts Program at school. We are thrilled with the addition of actor and director Mary Ellen MacLean to our faculty. Mary Ellen will teach Grade 5 and Middle School drama, run a "process drama" lunch club and an after school theatre club that will work toward performance.
2. **We Won! Our school won a FLIP video camera from the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE)** for social media marketing. **Rhonda will observe No Office Day on Friday, September 16.** Promoted by the ConnectedPrincipals.com community, No Office Day frees up the school's leader to hang out with students and in classrooms all day long. She'll be carrying the school's new FLIP video camera with her all day, so it will be fun to see what she captures in a "day in the life" of Paul Penna DJDS.

B'RUCHIM HABAIM

[Mariana Catz - Executive Director](#)

Mariana brings twenty years as a senior executive in the public and private sectors working in Canada, the United States, Latin America and Europe. Her roles have included Chief Information Officer and Vice President of Information for a number of teaching hospitals including Baycrest and the Center for Addiction and Mental Health, Technical Officer for the World Health Organization in Geneva, and Chief Advisor for eHealth for the Federal Government. She has also been involved in a number of international ventures related to third world development and microfinance. She began her career at the Ontario Science Center in the Education Department. She enjoys teaching and is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Health Management. She holds a Masters in Administration (Health) from UofT. She is a Board member of Sage Care, a Jewish

home for seniors with dementia, and of the Downtown Jewish Community School. Mariana lives in the neighbourhood with her husband and son.

Laila Lipetz - Director of Curriculum & Instruction

I am Director of Curriculum and Instruction, a role similar to the one I had here a decade back, during the very early years of the school. I come to Paul Penna with a professional and educational background that spans Hebrew, Judaics, and General Studies, that has been put to use here in day schools in Toronto and in a kibbutz high school in the north of Israel. I was born and educated here in Toronto, but only began work as an educator after moving to Israel, along with my husband, my toddler daughter, and another child on the way. There I taught high school English and was in charge of a grade of 200 students. Upon returning to Toronto eleven years later, now with four kids in tow, I became a Hebrew teacher at Leo Baeck, then Vice-Principal at the newly-founded Downtown Jewish Day School, then back to Leo Baeck as a Language Arts teacher, and now back to Paul Penna. In the meantime, I continued my studies as a teacher, both Hebrew and English, and also completed a Masters of Education.

During the tiny snatches of time that were not spent working, studying, raising my children, or running my home, I read, wrote, and had fun with any and all who were in my life. I am thrilled to be back at Paul Penna, and so pleased to see the meaningful growth, both literal and figurative, that has taken place since I left.

FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION



Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School
INSPIRING CURIOSITY HONOURING DIVERSITY CREATING COMMUNITY



Join us at Wonderland on September 18th!

Bring your family & friends to the PA's fun-filled fundraiser and start the year off right!

Tickets are \$45 each and should be reserved now! Please email your name and the number of tickets you would like to purchase to:

parentsassociation@djds.ca

All profits will go to the PA's ongoing initiative to establish a Theatre Arts fund and to acquire a 2nd portable computer lab for the 2012-2013 school year.

A great day for everyone... Support our school!!

Can't make the date?

You can still support our school by purchasing tickets that will be donated to families in need through Jewish Family & Child!

What: Parents' Association Fundraiser

When: Sunday September 18th, 2011

Where: Canada's Wonderland

Cost: \$45.00 per ticket

Other: Please pay for your tickets by bringing your cheque (payable to Paul Penna DJDS Parents' Association) to the school office during the first week of school.

PAUL PENNA DJDS ALL-YEAR CHESS CLUB!!!

We are thrilled to announce that this year, for the first time, we will be running a weekly chess club for the duration of the school year! The club is welcome to beginner, intermediate, and advanced players, and to all grades. Students will be

assessed, then grouped according to proficiency level.

Chess is not just a board game. Chess makes kids smarter. It does so by teaching the following skills:

- Focusing
- Visualizing
- Thinking ahead
- Weighing options
- Analyzing concretely
- Thinking abstractly
- Planning
- Juggling multiple considerations simultaneously

None of these skills is specific to chess, but they are all part of the game. The beauty of chess as a teaching tool is that it stimulates children's minds and helps them to build these skills while enjoying themselves. As a result, children become more critical thinkers, better problem solvers, and more independent decision makers.

We welcome Ted Winnick, who has been teaching chess at DJDS for many years. Ted is president of the [Chess Institute of Canada](#), which provides chess education in schools across the GTA, including many in the Toronto District School Board. The Chess Institute of Canada is a non-profit organization with the singular goal to use the game of chess to teach kids essential life skills and improve the world. In addition, we are thrilled to have Tal Granite co-instruct with Ted this year. Tal is the owner of [Chess World Canada](#), which offers a unique, unconventional and creative method for chess instruction. Chess World Canada is a unit of Chess World Israel, which has been implementing chess programs in Israeli schools since 2000 that offer innovative methods for teaching math, language and life skills. Tal holds a Certified Chess Instructor degree from the Israel Chess Federation, a well as a certificate specifically for teaching chess to elementary school students from the Kasparov Chess Academy and the Levinski College for Education. He has thousands of hours of chess teaching experience, assisting many children in improving their chess skills through his enthusiasm and love for the game. Tal received his Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and General Studies from The Hebrew University in 2003. In addition, he has been a member of The Israel Chess Federation Chess Instruction Committee, and is a World Chess Federation (FIDE) certified International Chess Instructor. Tal is also certified to teach Hebrew as a second language, and is looking forward to helping Paul Penna students improve their conversational Hebrew while they have a great time learning chess! Tal is the creator of "Thinking Different"™, an in-curriculum chess enrichment program for schools. Watch Tal teach at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CU8-S8GAB8g>. The DJDS Chess Club will run on Tuesdays from 12:00pm-1:00pm, beginning on September 13th, 2011.

If your child is interested in participating, please contact Jennifer Salter at jennifer@lifelinepersonaltraining.com, or 416.944.8366.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2011

WELCOME & WELCOME BACK!

PA Welcome Back Breakfast

Room 318

8:15-10:15am

Regular Dismissal at 3:45 for ALL Grades (SK-8)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2011

New Parent Orientation

Room 218

9:00-10:00am

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2011

Waste Free Lunch

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