



Mission accomplished! We made it through our CAIS accreditation visit. After a three-year process, culminating in a four-day evaluation committee visit to our school, Penna Paul Downtown Jewish Day School is well on its way to becoming an esteemed CAIS accredited school. We anticipate full membership by early 2020.

CAIS (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools) is a community of independent schools that explores and pursues exemplary leadership training, research and international standards of educational excellence.

Stewarded by an internal evaluation coordinator and guided by rigorous CAIS standards of best practice, the school embarked on an improvement plan with a goal of meeting or exceeding all CAIS benchmarks. These criteria include not only academic program and teaching standards, but also administrative functions, physical infrastructure, and financial capacity.

Membership as a CAIS accredited school demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and our objective to achieve and maintain the highest standards of academic excellence. The visiting team saw myriad ways that our school shines, and their feedback was overwhelmingly positive. They loved and admired our school. We were exceedingly proud to show off our exceptional school, and deeply gratified to know that our vision and strength are seen and felt from without and from within.

WE MADE OUR CAIS



COMMENDATIONS

- Co-curricular and Learning Environment
- Academic Program
- School Leadership
- Human Resources
- Enrolment Management
- Commitment to School Improvement

THEMES OF RECOMMENDATIONS

School Program

- Continue developing the curriculum and allocated resources, both human and financial, to support the development of new integrated curriculum

Communication

- Develop and disseminate memorable phrases that convey mission and vision
- More frequent communication from the Board to the community
- More frequent communication regarding strategic plan and elements of change management

Governance and Finance

- Board needs to develop a more comprehensive approach to risk management
- Better align strategic plan, needs of the school, budget and board priorities
- A more balanced approach to the disposition of school assets, considering both the needs of the Strategic Plan, future growth of the school and the need for an unrestricted reserve.



It was clear that teachers were committed to providing opportunities for students to develop a range of thinking skills. Evidence of factual mastery through the delivery of content and practice of skills was observed as well as deeper thinking routines such as debates, critical thinking exercises, and inquiry.



Under the leadership of the Finance Committee, the school has developed a solid financial base which has contributed to a stronger sense of permanence and strength.



Much attention is paid in the Internal Evaluation Report and in the school's planning documents to the integration of curriculum in terms of the development of deeper understanding of concepts. This integration is evident in daily lessons as well as student work on projects which integrate Big Ideas.

David Thompson,
*Montcrest Head of School
Chair of CAIS Accreditation Committee*

