



FRANKEL JEWISH ACADEMY

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



OUR MISSION

Frankel Jewish Academy is a rigorous college preparatory high school pursuing academic excellence and Jewish literacy. We inspire students to think critically, creatively, and compassionately; to dedicate themselves to Jewish tradition, peoplehood, and the State of Israel; and to become lifelong learners and leaders.

DISCOVER YOUR TOMORROW.

Over the past year we have had the opportunity to appreciate how fortunate we are as a school community.

As a school, we often focus on academic content and pedagogy skills, on programs that help us achieve our mission and on a physically safe and emotionally supportive environment for our students. These are certainly always our top priorities and we devote significant resources and energy to ensuring we meet our parent and student expectations. But what happens when the landscape changes so suddenly that the mile signs marking your progress and the skyline suddenly disappear, and a foreign and unpredictable path appears in its place?

The very nature of schools changed to accommodate the most basic needs of families. At FJA our technology team, devoted staff, and committed teachers came together to provide a robust and engaging academic program as only FJA can. Teachers taught through multiple media at the same time. They engaged and guided students “schooling” from home while at the same time, challenging and supporting students in the classrooms. We adjusted our schedule to

allow for shorter days, a more sterile environment and less populated classrooms. Students and teachers thrived despite significant challenges including uncertainty and a profession - teaching and instruction - that required new technique and enormous flexibility.

We confirmed what we already knew that FJA is more than just a Jewish college preparatory high school; we are a community. So much of what we had given up over the past year is at the core and essence of who we are as a community. A robust athletic program, constrained due to Covid, performing arts, Shabbatonim (Shabbat retreats), travel, holiday celebrations, Town Hall, Spirit Week, clubs, national and international interscholastic competitions, dances and Prom, alumni visitors, and so much more, all contribute to our incredible close-knit and supportive environment. These are the ways that students develop lifelong friendships with each other, and sustain meaningful relationships with teachers long after they graduate.

The last year provided us with the opportunity to rise to a new challenge and continue to support our students academically and emotionally while



Rabbi Azaryah Cohen
Head of School

allowing us to reflect on the true value of an FJA experience. One that continues to sustain and nurture our students long after they've graduated. Thank you for supporting Frankel Jewish Academy and helping our students discover their tomorrow.

Rabbi Azaryah Cohen
Head of School



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Bob Canvasser
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WELCOME NEW FJA BOARD MEMBERS

MATTHEW (MATT) KURZMANN FJA '07

Matthew I. (Matt) Kurzmann is a Senior National Director at Affordable Housing Advisors (AHA) and Senior Vice President of Investments at Marcus & Millichap. Matt was instrumental in the creation of AHA's platform for nonprofit clients. In 2020, GlobeSt. Real Estate Forum named Matt as a member of their 50 under 40, and he was named to the Detroit Jewish News 36 under 36 in 2019. He is a graduate of Frankel Jewish Academy and Indiana University. Matt is married to fellow FJA alumna Katie Rosen '04 and they have two children.

STACEY LEE

Stacey has a long history of leadership within the Jewish community, and has most recently served on the board of the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor and Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. A Harvard alumna with a PhD from Cambridge University, she brings creativity and passion to her volunteer work. Stacey and her husband Evan Caminker have two daughters, a current FJA student, and a recent graduate. She looks forward to supporting FJA in its mission of preparing students to enter the world as confident and thoughtful Jewish leaders.

SAMANTHA PARTRICH

Samantha is devoted to Jewish education, charity and civic involvement. She graduated from Andover High School and the University of Michigan; she taught kindergarten at Brookside School, and served on the Board of Hillel Day School. Samantha and her husband Ross are the parents of three children, all proud FJA graduates. As a new member of the Board of Trustees, Samantha looks forward to bringing the gift of an FJA education to more families and supporting FJA's mission.

AARON SCHAER FJA '04

Aaron was part of FJA at the start, graduating with the first four-year class in 2004. After a gap-year in Israel, Aaron attended Michigan State (James Madison) for undergrad, and University of Michigan for Law School. Aaron, his wife Keren, and their daughter Eden recently moved back to Michigan from Seattle. They currently reside in Huntington Woods. Aaron is excited to be part of the FJA Board and help give back to a school and community that have played such a central role in his life.

FJA BY THE NUMBERS

100%



Of FJA students attend their 1st or 2nd choice college.



60%

Of students receive tuition assistance.

157 DAYS
OF IN-PERSON
LEARNING

during 2020-2021
(167 days of school)



Our student teacher ratio is
8 TO 1

40%

of FJA students come from public schools.

1:1 TECHNOLOGY

Every student gets a MacBook Air laptop with the full Adobe suite.



90%

of FJA students take at least 1 AP class during high school.

FJA's average ACT scores are
8 POINTS HIGHER
than the state average.



66%

of our students participate in athletics.

\$3.7 MILLION -

Scholarships earned by the class of 2021.



842

Alumni



2000

community service hours performed by FJA students annually.



4 +

experiential learning opportunities for students to explore the world.

167 DAYS

of school during the 2020-2021 school year!

With some ingenuity, and incredible teachers, our school adapted and innovated to create an optimal learning environment during the pandemic. Students were in school for shorter days to limit their exposure, and the learning continued at home with support from our dedicated faculty and staff. The health and safety of our community was our primary concern in making adaptations in order to have the best learning environment possible under the pandemic-related circumstances. We reconfigured spaces, moved classes, transformed previously used spaces for learning, and provided guidance with extensive signage, a Welcome Back Guide, and a daily health check. All of these changes made learning possible, and allowed our students to continue to thrive and grow.



FACULTY & STAFF LEADERS



BOSMAT DOVAS has been an FJA Hebrew instructor since 2007, and now serves as a Hebrew Department co-chair and Shinshinim supervisor. Her love of the Hebrew language and Israeli culture, poems, literature, history, and historical connection motivate her to share all of this with her students.

"Seeing my students speak Hebrew and learn about our Homeland is very gratifying. I love when they come back from Israel and tell me how much they've enjoyed being there and remember things they learned in class."

The Jewish environment, small class sizes, and personal relationships with students and parents are some of the things Morah Bosmat loves most about FJA. "I start class with a warm up in Hebrew, asking students to speak about their personal life. That way I get to learn more about them," she says.

Morah Bosmat is known for playing fun vocabulary games in class, cooking with her students in the FJA kitchen, and staying in touch with her students after they graduate.

"It's funny that I still remember where each student sat in class throughout the years and enjoy teaching their siblings and cousins who often sit in the same chair!"



NICK MANTAS is a science and math instructor and serves as both the Science and Math Department Chair. Currently in his 13th year teaching at FJA (his Bar Mitzvah year!), he explains that seeing students "figure it out" and develop problem solving skills helps motivate him in his teaching. "They also learn the value of hard work along the way," he says.

When asked what he enjoys most about FJA, Mr. Mantas expressed that he is able to share his personal life with students. FJA encourages strong relationships between faculty and students and enables them to build lasting bonds.

"They get to know you, and you get to know them much closer than at other schools."

A few years ago, Mr. Mantas was asked to teach algebra and has continued to do so in most school years since.

"It has been extremely rewarding to join the math department and see students from a different perspective. It has also tremendously helped my teaching."



GAME ON!

Athletics are an integral part of FJA's culture. More than 66% of students participate in athletics, and they cheer each other on, whether on the court or on the field. During the 2020-21 school year, some of our teams had the opportunity to compete, while others had to pivot and use the year without competition to prepare for the next season. Basketball, volleyball, and soccer coaches and athletes worked together to develop a plan for intramurals, enabling students to continue their athletic journeys.

In competition, the FJA Jaguars excelled. The boys tennis team finished second in the Catholic League, and fell just short of a state championship appearance. The boys bowling team challenged some of the top programs in the state at the MHSAA Bowling Regional competition. The girls tennis team had FJA's best showing of the year as they captured the Catholic League Intersectional Division Championship with an undefeated record. Boys baseball had an opportunity to play at the Detroit Corner Ballpark - formerly Tiger Stadium, and demonstrate their prowess on the diamond. Finally, Merrick Michaelson '23 became the first ever Frankel Jewish Academy student to qualify for the MHSAA Cross Country State Championships.



Elliot Salama, '24

During the 2020-21 school year, we were able to once again display student art pieces and musical performances on our website for Celebration of the Arts (frankelja.org/celebrateart). Community members from near and far were able to see the wonderful work of FJA's students. The FJA Performing Arts community kept the arts flourishing by launching a virtual coffee house, including classical and contemporary music, expressive dramatic vocal arrangements, monologues, and poetry. Instead of traditional theater performances, we created a Reader's Theater Club that provided meaningful opportunities to gather students and teachers to share their theater talents and passions as they reimagined classic movies and plays.

Anna Weinbaum, '21

Anna Weinbaum, '21

ADVANCEMENT NEWS



FJA's **POMEGRANATE SOCIETY** was created to thank the school's most dedicated donors. The Pomegranate Society recognizes donors of \$1,800 or more to Frankel Jewish Academy, who help to facilitate FJA's commitment to innovative education through their philanthropic support. Membership in the Pomegranate Society is renewable annually. Alumni donors become members of the Pomegranate Society with a gift of \$100 x the number of years since graduation or \$1,800. Inaugurated during the height of the pandemic with an online event, attendees had an opportunity to celebrate FJA, learn about the seven species of Israel, and hear from an acclaimed cookbook author.

The Better Together in a Box program grant created an opportunity for ongoing learning and interaction between FJA students and Jewish Senior Life residents. Through online meetings and activities, students and seniors created lasting friendships and learned about Jewish heritage and practice.



The generosity of the Ravitz Foundation has enabled FJA students to focus on leadership development and create more opportunities for ruach (spirit) throughout the school.



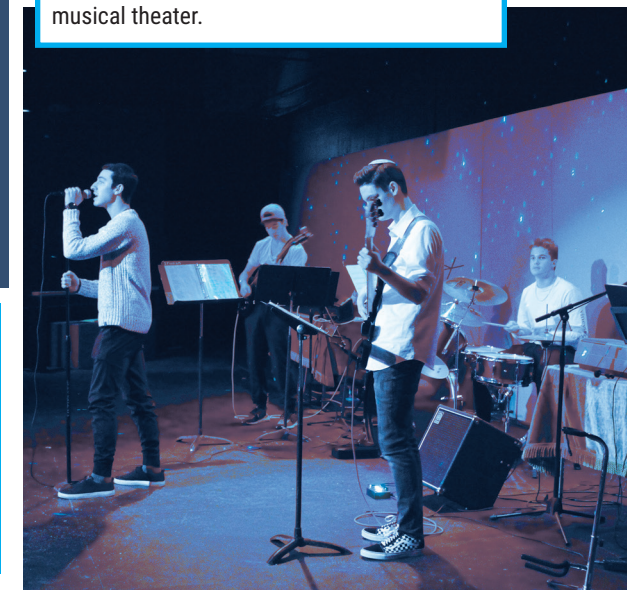
During Z'man Kodesh (sacred time of the day), a group of students worked with a teacher to focus on environmental issues. Supported by Hazon's Seal of Sustainability, students engaged in text-based learning, and then created plans for environmental sustainability throughout the school.

FJA's 21st Annual Gala

Thank you to all who joined our 21st Annual Gala, a virtual event recognizing longtime supporters and leaders Robin and Leo Eisenberg, alumnus Ryan Landau '06, and faculty member Nicole Kahn. The program was broadcast live from the halls of FJA to guests' devices worldwide. Hosted by Eli Newman '09, guests heard from students, Head of School Rabbi Azaryah Cohen, and the honorees. Community members toasted FJA from their own homes with celebration packages and swag. The program celebrated the achievements of a unique year, and the dedicated individuals who make FJA the warm environment it is every day.

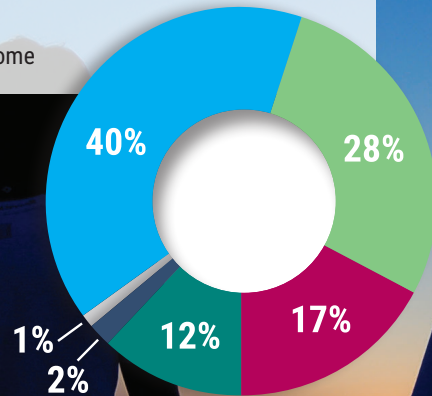
FJA's grant from the William Davidson Foundation was extended into 2022 due to the pandemic. It will give students an opportunity to learn from experiences outside the walls of FJA in the United States and Israel.

The Burton A. Zipser and Sandra D. Zipser Foundation made a multi-year gift to establish the Zipser Fund for Music Education and Performance at Frankel Jewish Academy. These funds will be used to support music education, classes, and event production for annual student performances in music and musical theater.

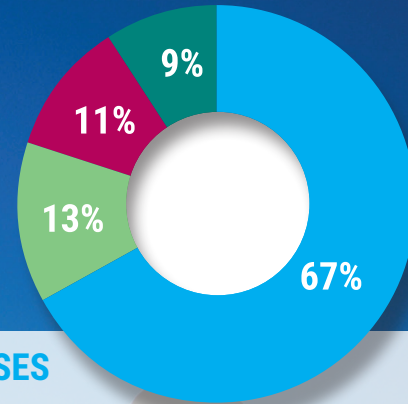
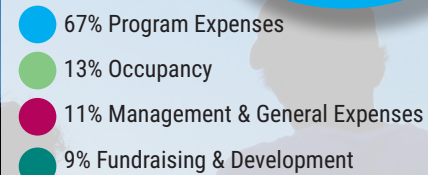


FINANCIAL REPORTS

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EXPENSES



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2020-2021 Annual Fund This list represents annual donations received between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021.



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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. If an error has been made, please accept our apologies.

***Alumni**

THANK YOU TO ALL THE DONORS WHO WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.

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Donations have been made to the following Designated Funds during 2020-2021

Baruch Scholarship Fund
 Sheri Traison Devries z"l Fund
 Jennifer Lanxner a"l Scholarship Fund
 Eli A. Scherr Scholarship Endowment Fund
 Zipser Fund for Music Education & Performance

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L'DOR V'DOR

We recognize and honor those who have made a legacy commitment by including Frankel Jewish Academy in their estate plans. If you would like to make a legacy commitment, please contact our Advancement Office.

We apologize for any errors or omissions.

Sheri and David Jaffa
 Beth and Steve Margolin

STAFF & FACULTY CAMPAIGN PARTICIPANTS

By any definition, the commitment of the faculty and staff to FJA is inspirational. We extend our deepest gratitude to the employees listed below for their generous support.

Patricia Anderson
Kathleen and Greg Angelosanto
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Christine Chadwick
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Laura and Ted Delie
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FJA DAY OF LEARNING SPONSORSHIP

Our learning was elevated last year with the addition of "Day of Learning" Sponsorships in memory of loved ones or in honor of children, grandchildren, teachers and staff. Donors not only supported the school through this sponsorship but gave more meaning to our learning.

Day of Learning Sponsors for 2020-2021 included: Nancy Berman, Leah and Joseph Bernstein, Aliza and Azaryah Cohen, Mary Gamer, Judith Holtz, Marsha and Darin Katz, Elissa and Jason Miller, Rachel and Herbert Yoskowitz, and FJA Faculty and Staff

JENNIFER LANXNER a"h SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED

To mark the 5th anniversary of Jennifer Lanxner's untimely passing, her family and friends established a scholarship in her memory that was awarded for the first time in May 2021. The scholarship is awarded annually to students who demonstrate hard work and commitment to the Hebrew language.

This year's scholarship recipients expressed appreciation and articulated what the scholarship means to them,

"I am extremely honored to have been chosen for such an award... After having learned at Hillel Day School for eight years, and Frankel Jewish Academy for three, I have developed a strong love for both Israel and the Hebrew language... I have always tried to approach my studies with effort and dedication, but especially Hebrew. Hebrew is one thing that helps to connect all Jews to one another, which is another reason why I have such a strong desire to continue to learn the language."

Andrew Tukel '22

"Receiving this award meant so much to me because I was able to honor the memory of Mrs. Lanxner who was such a special person in this community. I've always loved learning the language of Hebrew and by receiving this award, I will continue to learn this beautiful language with passion and in memory of Mrs. Lanxner."

Alli Feldman '23



WHY FJA?

Something that I really appreciate about FJA is the close relationships between students and teachers. I feel like I'm good friends with many of the staff. I'll stop by classrooms in the hall to say hi in the morning, or even eat lunch in a teacher's room while we watch a movie on the projector. I always feel like everyone at Frankel is supporting me, ready to help if I ever feel like I need it. It's a really special feeling, and I'm so grateful to Frankel because of it.

Samantha Caminker '24

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I am so thankful that FJA is able to bring Jewish students from so many backgrounds together. FJA is an essential part of the Detroit Jewish Community and my kids have all benefited from the exceptional teachers, plethora of extra curricular activities and creative and innovative methods of learning.

Nancy Berman, Parent

I appreciate FJA because the teachers go above and beyond just teaching. They always want us to succeed and even care about how we are doing outside of the classroom. Their rooms are always open for extra help or just a place to hang out. I feel so lucky to have such small classes where teachers really get to know you because it makes such a difference in coming to school everyday.

Camryn Katzen '24

Coming from public school, we were nervous about how he would acclimate to a private school and how our son would handle the Jewish studies part of the program. FJA did everything to make the transition seamless. The small class size and personal attention really made a difference for him. He is now getting ready to graduate, and we are so thankful to FJA for our son's growth over the past four years.

Josh Tobias, Parent

Here, I have the ability to forge strong relationships with each and every one of my peers, creating bonds that I am confident will remain strong even after my four years here. Here, I know that my teachers recognize me as a unique individual and can get to know me on a personal level. I know that every time I turn the corner, there's a friendly face waiting for me. It's cliché, but Frankel really does feel like one big extended family. I appreciate FJA because, here, I am among family.”

Evan Weitzman '23

WHERE DOES YOUR DONATION GO?



TUITION ASSISTANCE

More than 60% of FJA students receive tuition assistance. Your support ensures that any teen can receive a Jewish education.



EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Create opportunities for students to choose from an array of offerings including STEM, art, performing arts, sports and much more.



SUPPORT FACULTY

FJA's excellent faculty provide ongoing mentorship and close relationships with students that don't end at graduation.

EVERY GIFT MATTERS. EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A AN IMPACT.

ONLINE frankelja.org/give
CALL 248-592-5263
TEXT "GIVE" to 248-780-8337
MAIL 6600 W. Maple Rd, West Bloomfield, MI 48322

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Rabbi Azaryah Cohen *Head of School*
Rabbi Abi Taylor-Abt *Judaic Principal*
Erika Weiler *General Studies Principal*
Cynthia Baker *Chief Operating Officer*
Shana Kantor *Director of Advancement*

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