

Thank you for being a Builder of Jewish Education!

*Your support empowers BJE to provide Jewish educators and children with innovative approaches, cutting-edge skills, essential resources, and transformative educational programs to help them flourish. Your donations help BJE continually enhance the quality of, increase access to, and encourage participation in Jewish education throughout Greater Los Angeles. Thank you!*

## BJE Responds in Time of Crisis: War in Israel and Rise of Anti-Semitism

The October 7th terror attack and war in Israel, and the rise in anti-Semitism presented new challenges to L.A.'s Jewish schools and families. When they turned to BJE for immediate help and resources, BJE was there.

In multiple settings (early childhood, religious school and day school) school administrators, faculty and parents needed support and help to effectively address students' anxiety and confusion. In response, BJE immediately consolidated information and resources on how to support children, making the information available to all. At the same time, BJE convened its networks of school administrators to identify and begin to address their new realities and challenges.



Soon after October 7, BJE rolled out an advanced teacher training program in Israel Education with award-winning author, Dr. Sivan Zakai, and invited parents across L.A. to a training session with Dr. Zakai on how to speak with children about the war and Israel. When over 100 Israeli children arrived in L.A. amidst the crisis, BJE helped relate to the absorption and support of these children by our schools. BJE is providing on-going teacher training to help children face the challenges of today's world, and is continually investigating additional ways to meet our schools' and families' escalating needs.

## BJE Presents 5-Year Strategic Plan



BJE has completed a year-long study to develop a plan outlining the goals and strategies that will guide the agency from 2024-2029. The resulting plan will proactively and effectively address current and emergent Jewish educational needs in the changing landscape of Greater Los Angeles. The plan was facilitated by 2B Communications & Strategy Group, which interviewed and surveyed hundreds of stakeholders. BJE is now developing an implementation plan, with benchmarks, for 2024-2025. The strategic plan can be accessed at [www.bjela.org/about](http://www.bjela.org/about).

## Mentor Teacher Training to Strengthen Jewish Education



Teachers from 10 BJE-affiliated early childhood centers set course on BJE's two-year Mentor Teacher Training Program, an opportunity for educators to learn how to be successful mentor teachers. The program includes mentoring a teacher within their school site and being part of a cohort of educators. Participants will receive ongoing support as they become established mentor teachers. They have committed to a two-year program: year one at American Jewish University's (AJU) Jewish Education Excellence Project (JEEP): Mentor Teacher Training, and a second year with the support and guidance of BJE's Director of Early Childhood Education, Carly Rosenstein. The program is subsidized by both BJE and American Jewish University (AJU).



**Innovative Program to “Bring Torah to Life!” for Children**

This summer, 27 educators from 13 different part-time religious schools participated in BJE’s professional development sessions in Torah Godly Play, an approach to religious education that seeks not so much to “tell” stories of faith so that children will “know” them, but to impart them as spiritual action from which each child may find meaning, identity and God through storytelling and listening. *Torah Godly Play* uses specially created artifacts and symbolic objects to enable a trained storyteller to powerfully engage children in the wonderment of sacred stories and text. BJE brought expert Rabbi Dr. Michael Shire to Los Angeles to conduct the training. Participants experienced the pedagogy from start to finish, experimented by learning a story and teaching it to their peers, and received practical guidance for implementation in the classroom.



**Engaging Teens in Jewish Experiential Learning**



L.A.-area teens have been busy with BJE teen experiential education programs. Dozens participated in **BJE’s Teen Service Corps** programs – hands-on service and Jewish learning at the North Hollywood Food Bank and at Para Los Niños. Additionally, 133 students from 6 schools across Los Angeles are preparing for their upcoming experience on **BJE’s Spring 2024 March of the Living** trip. BJE typically makes up the single largest U.S. delegation participating in the international March.



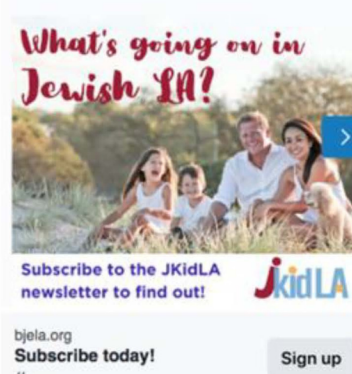
**BJE Secures Title Funding on Behalf of Day Schools**



BJE represents 28 Jewish day schools in a consortium to access government-funded Title services through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Between July and December 2023, BJE helped schools secure more than \$1 million in services to help students falling behind academically or in need of counseling, and provide professional development opportunities with the aim of advancing student learning.

**Boosting BJE’s JKidLA Boosts Participation in Jewish Life**

In late July, BJE relaunched a new, powerful and vastly more robust JKidLA.org website, immediately seeing deeper and extended site usage. It then launched a comprehensive marketing program which introduced JKidLA to 30,000 new target people in L.A., drove hundreds to the site, increased Facebook usage 201%, Instagram 100% and newsletter sign-ups by 100 new members. JKidLA connects families to Jewish schools and a full calendar of programs and events for kids. JKidLA’s Concierge provides custom, private Jewish educational guidance at no cost to families. BJE thanks the Diane & Guilford Glazer Foundation, the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, and the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation for supporting grants, and Tiny Windows Consulting for their valuable expertise.



**BJE is grateful to the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles for partnership grants toward support of BJE's March of the Living, JKidLA/Concierge, securing public funds, and strengthening day school and part-time Jewish education.** →