



## **Yavneh Day School**

### **Head of School Search** ***Information for Candidates***

#### **Yavneh's History**

In 1980, a group of dedicated lay and educational leaders recognized a growing need for a community Jewish day school in Silicon Valley's South Bay community. Our founders believed that this new school would represent the merging of the modern world with the great traditions of the Jewish people. The name "Yavneh" was chosen as both a tribute to the ancient city of learning and as an acronym for the ceremony of Havdalah, which marks the distinction between the Sabbath and the rest of the week.

Yavneh welcomed its first students to campus in 1981 at Congregation Beth David. It relocated shortly thereafter to its current location at the Gloria and Ken Levy Family Campus in Los Gatos which is the site of the former Berry School. Yavneh was originally founded as a Solomon Schechter affiliated preschool through 5th grade program. Over the years, it evolved into a non-denominational, K-8 Jewish community day school, with the transfer of its preschool to the auspices of the Jewish Community Center in 1987 and the addition of a middle school in 2005.

Yavneh Day School embraces a wonderful synergy by virtue of its location on the Gloria and Ken Levy Family Campus, which also houses the Addison-Penzak Jewish Community Center and Preschool, Jewish Family Services, and the Jewish Silicon Valley. Yavneh's focus on community is strengthened by its proximity to and interaction with these agencies that are so important to local Jewish life and learning.

Since its inception, Yavneh has been on the cutting edge of pedagogical best practices, and to this day is committed to academic excellence in all areas of study within a strong, vibrant Jewish community where each child is celebrated and challenged. In recognition of these

practices, Yavneh was designated an Exemplary High Performing National Blue Ribbon School in 2020.

A Yavneh education is about discovering how a child learns in order to maximize each student's potential while fostering curiosity, encouraging risk taking, and ingraining a love of learning. Through a commitment to relevant learning, inclusion of all students, intentional study of Jewish values, and a focus on community, Yavneh fulfills its mission and its commitment to the next generation.

## **Fundamental Beliefs**

Yavneh's community of exceptional educators develops programming and curriculum with intentionality that is rooted in the school's four Fundamental Beliefs. These core beliefs offer the "why" behind our vibrant curriculum and rich learning environment:

1. Learning is meaningful when it is relevant.
2. Everyone benefits from a diverse learning environment.
3. Dynamic Jewish learning is integral to a purposeful life.
4. Understanding is profoundly deepened through learning in relationship with one another and within the support of a community.

## **Jewish Life at Yavneh**

Yavneh Day School is a laboratory for Jewish life. Every day students have the opportunity to bring the stories, lessons, and values of Jewish tradition to life and apply them to 21st-century situations. At Yavneh, the Torah is more than a scroll that resides in an arc; it lives in how our students treat each other on the playground, ask inquisitive questions in class, and help those in the broader community.

Living Jewish values daily takes many forms at Yavneh: critical thinking and interactive learning of sacred texts and academic curriculum, solving challenges on the playground through the lens of Jewish values, using the lessons of our Jewish tradition to repair the world around us, and communal joyous celebrations of Jewish holidays. Through opportunities like leading their peers and parents in prayer, being a teacher and buddy to a younger student, or presenting their thoughts on a Jewish holiday or text to the entire school, Yavneh students also develop confidence and public speaking skills that last a

lifetime. Through each of these activities, students engage with Jewish life in powerfully authentic and integrated ways that shape their Jewish identities well into the future.

## **Future Leadership**

Yavneh Day School has a proud history, a compelling mission, a supportive community, and a bright future. We seek a talented and community-oriented leader with a passion for education and a deep commitment to Jewish life and learning. The Head of School must be able to ensure the stability and growth of Yavneh. Yavneh Day School is at an exciting inflection point and our next Head of School will need to harness that potential and establish a meaningful vision for the future.

### ***Strengths of Yavneh Day School:***

- Yavneh is a strong and vibrant community where learning comes to life.
- Our integrated curriculum and commitment to Hebrew learning inspires students to develop strong Jewish identities and a connection to Israel that lasts a lifetime.
- Teachers, staff, and administrators are deeply committed to excellence in education and meeting students where they are with tools to help teach diverse learners.
- Yavneh truly believes everyone can learn - this growth mindset serves our community well.
- Yavneh is warm, welcoming, and inclusive with a culture of collaboration and a supportive parent body.
- At Yavneh, children are seen and known within the entire school community and student interests play a critical role in advancing the core curriculum.
- Yavneh's curriculum is innovative and robust across all subject areas.

### ***Opportunities Awaiting the Next Head of School:***

- Increase enrollment and retention to ensure steady growth within the South Bay community.
- Increase fundraising efforts and diversify the school's donor base ensuring a more stable future.
- Continue to attract and retain high quality educators and improve the organizational staffing model.
- Bolster the community culture and inspire more opportunities to connect.
- Codify Yavneh's pedagogy and educational philosophy.
- Professionalize school operations and strengthen overall leadership.

## Head of School Responsibilities

- Implement, embody, and articulate the school's mission to all constituencies including students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, donors and the broader community.
- Embrace the mission, philosophy, and traditions, including the core values that flow from its Jewish identity. Promote this "magic" daily both within the community and externally.
- Deliver Yavneh's mission with excellence and work in partnership with the Board of Trustees to direct its strategic future.
- Oversee and expand fundraising and development by working closely with the development director, committee, and staff to cultivate donors and enhance the school's overall resources.
- Provide administrative and fiscal oversight with bottom line accountability to ensure the long-term stability of the school. This includes development of a comprehensive budget and successful operation within its parameters.
- Ensure the tuition assistance process is sustainable and reflects our values.
- Oversee all Advancement efforts, including enrollment and retention to expand the school. Bring a sense of urgency to this process, ensuring that Yavneh is a leader in the community it serves.
- Ensure that the school's commitment to academic excellence and Jewish learning is well executed.
- Support the school in its effort to attract, retain, and develop talented and qualified faculty and staff.
- Attend to the voice and perspective of parents, faculty, staff, and students, always seeking to be responsive and collaborative while also being able to set expectations.
- Develop strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders of the school, work cooperatively with other Jewish institutions throughout the area, and participate in community-wide strategic initiatives.

## Qualifications

### **Leadership Qualities:**

- An inspiring and visionary leader who can gain the trust of a vibrant community.
- A warm, welcoming, and dedicated leader who is eager to engage with students, faculty, and parents and is talented at relationship and community building.

- Excellent communication skills and the ability to partner across the various constituencies of the school community.
- A clear decision maker who listens supportively and is able to effectively address concerns and challenges.
- An effective problem solver, strategic thinker, and decision maker who operates with humility and appreciates the value of teamwork, delegation, and empowering others.
- Personable, authentic, and sincere, with the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

***Experience and Education:***

- Proven experience partnering with a Board to direct the strategic vision and mission.
- A successful fundraiser capable of building relationships with community leaders, alumni, and other donors and prior experience with campaigns and donor solicitations.
- Strong ability to understand financial reports, build and manage a sustainable budget, and manage expenses within the budget.
- Experience building high performing teams with the ability to set goals, integrate feedback, and inspire growth.
- Experience either devising and implementing or being involved in a growth plan for a school or organization.
- Experience working with a diverse community, welcoming those of all backgrounds, and inspiring a joyful expression of Jewish life and learning.
- Proven success as a senior administrator.
- A bachelor's degree in an education field or commensurate experience is required. Those with a higher level or rabbinical degree are encouraged to apply. Familiarity with contemporary models of pedagogy and best educational practices is a plus, but not required.

**To Apply for the Role**

*To apply to become Yavneh Day School's next Head of School, please send a cover letter, resume, and list of references to [headsearch@yavnehdayschool.org](mailto:headsearch@yavnehdayschool.org).*