



# Chicago Jewish Day School News

## A Message from Judy Finkelstein-Taff, Head of School

August 25, 2005 was just another day on the calendar for most of Chicago, but for Chicago Jewish Day School it was a very special occasion: the first day of the 2005–2006 school year. We opened our doors in our newly renovated home at Emanuel Congregation to 34 students in grades Junior Kindergarten through Second Grade. You could feel the excitement in the air as students, parents, teachers, board members and staff began to create memories from that very first day.



Judy Finkelstein-Taff,  
Head of School

CJDS is happily moving along with the voices of children learning, singing and playing, creating a positive rhythm and routine in our new facility. After only a few weeks, it feels like we have been here forever.

There are many, many people who deserve our thanks and appreciation in connection with our move. Please see the “thank you” section of this newsletter.

Excitement about our school is extending far and wide. I am receiving calls from schools all over the country wanting to know about Chicago Jewish Day School. “How did we persuade Rabbis from three denominations of Judaism to work together in a leadership role in our school community?” “How did we increase enrollment from 7 to 34 in two years?”

“What is shared leadership on the faculty level and how does it work?” “How is the philosophy of ‘responsive classroom’ adding to the culture of our school?” and “What can we share about Hebrew immersion and how the integration of all disciplines works?”

As I talk to educators and listen to their questions and comments, I realize that we are truly on the cutting edge in both Jewish and General education.

As we begin this new school year, my message to you is as follows:

First, we extend to you an open invitation to contact us, schedule a visit, and come feel the magic of Chicago Jewish Day School. Even if you’ve visited us before, we invite you to tour our new home. Bring your friends and family to see the vision of



בית הספר היהודי בשיקגו  
Chicago Jewish Day School

*Educating our children in the richness  
of their past, the diversity of their present,  
and the possibilities for their future*

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Judy Finkelstein-Taff

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Rabbi Asher Lopatin

Rabbi Aaron Petuchowski

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Chicago Jewish Day School admits students of  
any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

## Thank You!

We greatly appreciate the generosity of all of our donors.

*(Contributions from January 1, 2005 through July 31, 2005)*

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## Responding to Katrina

In response to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, our students are collecting *tzedakah* and we are partnering with RAVSAK (the Jewish Community Day School Network) and with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago to distribute the funds. In just a few days, they have already raised over \$300! In addition, our students are collecting stuffed animals and clothing in partnership with Emanuel Congregation. Finally, our students are creating a Heroes Wall, sharing with each other what they have learned about true heroes from this tragedy. To contribute *tzedakah*, stuffed animals, or clothes, please contact the school office.



Rabbi Zedek of Emanuel Congregation blowing shofar for our students during tefilah in the chapel.

## CJDS Defied Gravity!

On Sunday, June 5, 2005, over 200 members of the CJDS extended community came together to see an amazing show and participate in our first major benefit: *Wicked!* Marc Platt brought the idea of producing *Wicked* as a Broadway musical to his family dinner table the same evening that Wendy Platt Newberger discussed the idea of a new Jewish Day School in Lakeview. The two dreams have become reality and on that Sunday we saw CJDS and *Wicked* “defying gravity”! Attendees ranged from 5 to 85 years, and clergy from all three Lakeview synagogues attended the show with their families. After the show, participants in the CJDS benefit, wearing our signature green bracelets, joined together in the Orchestra section for a post-show conversation with Producer Marc Platt as well as cast members Stephanie Block (*Elphaba*) and Derrick Williams (*Fiyero*). The *Wicked* Benefit raised over \$50,000 thanks to our incredible Event Committee chaired by Maxine Handelman and the support of our Angels Julie & Marc Platt and Wendy & Scott Newberger, Patrons Shari & Mike Weiner, and our board members, parents, and friends throughout the community.

### A Message from Judy Finkelstein–Taff, Head of School *(continued)*

our founders articulated in the day-to-day operation of our school. Come and meet our faculty and staff. We have been blessed to bring together an outstanding team of educators and administrators, and together as a PEJE grant recipient, we are building a Partnership of Excellence in Jewish Education.

Secondly, we thank you for your continued support. We welcome volunteers to set up and help supervise our student lunch, to help in the office and on the playground, and to serve on our board committees. Continued community support through in-kind donations, purchase of our tribute cards and your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated.

Each morning during the month of *Elul* prior to *Rosh HaShannah* we gathered as a school community to hear the sound of the *shofar*. Our students have told me that sounding the *shofar* is like hearing an alarm clock, “Ms. J, it’s like a wake up call telling us that we can do better.” We have been so honored to share these special moments together as a school community. Let the *shofar* remind all of us that “we can do better,” that we can make a difference in the lives of our friends, family, community, and even in the world. Let the sound of the *shofar* serve as a reminder of the difference a day school education can make in the life of a child and his/her family and ultimately in our Chicago Jewish Community.

*Shana Tovah u’Metukah.* Wishing you and your family a happy, healthy and sweet new year,



It's reading time in JK!

## Our Newest Families

We welcome our new families for the 2005–2006 school year:

Rabbi Donni & Rabbi Scott Aaron  
**Nitzan (JK), Meitav (K)**

Chava & Michael Bloom  
**Sarah (JK)**

Lisa & Jeremy Brown  
**Rebecca (JK)**

Susan Grosky & Ben Harris  
**Ethan (JK)**

Lori Kaufman & Oliver Jankelovics  
**Liam (JK)**

Neera & Michael Kaufman  
**Sophia (JK), Eliana (1st)**

Rachel Tessler Lopatin &  
Rabbi Asher Lopatin  
**Shayna (JK)**

Michele & Seth Meisler  
**Ilana (K)**



Parents at Back to School Night talking about their children's experiences at CJDS.

Julie Ross & Howard Oppenheimer  
**Leah (JK)**

Deborah Hamilton & Jim Rosenberg  
**Ellie (JK)**

Shoshana Waskow & Michael Slater  
**Yonit (K)**

Mairav & Eytan Stein  
**Ari (JK)**

## Recruitment for Fall 2006

The year has just begun and already it's time to start looking to next year.

**We've scheduled Prospective Parent Informational Meetings on the following dates:**

**Thursday, November 3rd at 7:30pm**

**Wednesday, November 16th at 7:30pm**

Please call Michael, our Office Administrator, at 773-271-2700 to R.S.V.P. for these dates or to schedule a private tour.

## Box Tops for Education

Chicago Jewish Day School joins with schools all over the country collecting Box Tops for Education. Each box top earns our school money! Simply clip the specially marked box tops from your favorite General Mills Cereals, Betty Crocker baking goods and more, and bring them or send them to Chicago Jewish Day School.

## Our E-Newsletter

"Chicago Jewish Day School Happenings," our e-mail newsletter, is sent out periodically to share important information about our school. To subscribe to the list, send an email to [ChicagoJewishDaySchool-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ChicagoJewishDaySchool-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

## Celebrations/Memorials

Send a CJDS tribute card in honor of a *simcha* or in memory of someone who has passed away by sending a minimum \$18 donation to the school. Or, you may purchase 10 cards for \$150. Please call the school office at 773-271-2700 for more information.



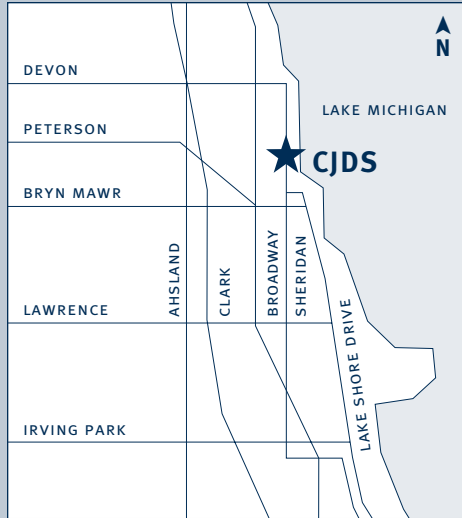
Please visit our website at  
[www.chicagojewishdayschool.org](http://www.chicagojewishdayschool.org)

# We've Moved!

Come visit our new home.

**5959 North Sheridan Road**

Call 773-271-2700 to schedule a visit.



# Todah Rabah!

Relocating our school to our new home at Emanuel Congregation was completed with the help of many wonderful volunteers and businesses. We thank all of you very much, and hope that you will continue to support us and help us grow.

## Volunteers

Mort Balaban, grandfather of  
Ben Hirsch (K)  
Danit Steinbach & David Hirsch,  
parents of Ben (K)  
Bennet Kaplan  
Scott Newberger  
Elizabeth Roche

## Business Partners

Baby Solutions  
Seth Frieden and Constructive Playthings  
Dolgin and Co. Construction  
IKEA and QWR Installers  
PC Discovery  
Samson Movers

## Special Thanks

Judy Wodika, Executive Director  
Rabbi Michael Zedek, Senior Rabbi  
Marlene Dovidal, President  
Rabbi Donni Aaron, Religious  
School Director  
Everyone else at Emanuel Congregation

*Thank you for your help with the move and  
for making us feel so welcome in our new space!*

## Our wonderful faculty and our community Rabbis during Orientation Week.

Back Row L to R: Sarah Engel (JK), Penina Berdugo (Hebrew and Judaic Lead Teacher JK-2nd), Jill Kushnir LeVee (Lower School Director and K), Amy Saltzman (JK), Sarah Fox (2nd), and Rachel Zar-Kessler (1st)

Front Row L to R: Rabbi Asher Lopatin, Rabbi Aaron Petuchowski, Judy Finkelstein-Taff (Head of School), Rabbi Michael Siegel

Second graders working collaboratively on an assignment.





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**Chicago Jewish Day School**

5959 North Sheridan Road  
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**Chicago Jewish  
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wishes you a  
Shana Tovah!**