

U.S. Department of Education
2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[] Public or [X] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Zvi Weiss
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Yavneh Day School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 14855 Oka Road #100
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Los Gatos State CA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 95032-1957

County Santa Clara

Telephone (408) 984-6700 Fax (408) 984-3696

Web site/URL https://www.yavnehdayschool.org E-mail Jennifer@yavnehdayschool.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Cindy Schlesinger E-mail cindy@yavnehdayschool.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name N/A Tel. N/A

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Arnon Geshuri
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 0 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 0 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	12	13	25
1	16	12	28
2	10	14	24
3	12	13	25
4	4	11	15
5	8	7	15
6	9	7	16
7	10	5	15
8	9	12	21
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	90	94	184

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 3 % Asian
 - 0 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 64 % White
 - 30 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 3%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	0
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	6
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	202
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.03
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 0 %

Total number students who qualify: 0

8. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
20 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>6</u> Autism | <u>2</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>1</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>4</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	5
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	30
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 6:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	93%	90%	94%	94%	93%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Yavneh Day School is committed to academic excellence in General and Jewish studies within a strong, vibrant community where each child is celebrated and challenged. 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.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III - SUMMARY

In 1980, a group of dedicated lay and educational leaders founded Yavneh with the belief that the school would represent the merging of the modern world with the great traditions of the Jewish people. Originally founded as a Solomon Schechter affiliated (Conservative Judaism) preschool-5th grade school, Yavneh evolved into a K-8 “community” Jewish day school (non-denominational). The school’s location on the Levy Family Campus also houses a Jewish Community Center, Preschool, Jewish Family Services, and the local Jewish Federation. Yavneh’s focus on community is strengthened by its proximity to and interaction with these agencies. In addition to Yavneh’s school facilities, students benefit from access to the JCC’s gym, tennis courts, swimming pool, athletic fields, and auditorium.

Located in the southern portion of Silicon Valley, most of our parents relocated here to work in the technology industry, many holding jobs as software engineers. Given the high cost of living in this area, the majority of our families have two working parents. While Yavneh’s student population is historically Jewish, after a recent change in policy, the school began admitting students who have no direct Jewish lineage, but who support the mission of the school. Today, approximately 5% of current Yavneh students do not identify as having Jewish affiliation. Within our student body, students represent a variety of national origins, including Argentina, Brazil, France, Canada, Ukraine, Israel, Russia, Australia, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. There is great socioeconomic diversity at the school, with nearly 70% of students on financial aid, including several extreme cases who are granted nearly full tuition assistance.

In the age of technological revolution, we are keenly aware of the continual changes in knowledge, communication, and careers. What hasn’t changed is the need for our students to develop their skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity; in fact, these 21st-century skills fit perfectly with our Fundamental Beliefs:

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 and community.

We view these beliefs as the “why” of our curriculum and believe that our focus on these beliefs is what will best prepare students to excel academically and live meaningful lives. Yavneh Day School is a living laboratory for Jewish living. Every day students have the opportunity to bring the stories, lessons, and values of our tradition to life and apply them to 21st-century situations. At Yavneh, the Torah isn’t a book that sits on a shelf; it lives in how the children treat each other on the playground, ask inquisitive questions in class, and help those in in the broader community.

Living Jewish values daily takes many forms at Yavneh: critical thinking and interactive learning of sacred texts, solving challenges on the playground through the lens of Jewish values, and 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 develop confidence and public speaking skills that last a lifetime. Through each of these activities, students ask questions, create interpretations, and make their own meaning and Jewish choices for their future.

In line with these beliefs, the school has adopted several approaches including:

Integrated Learning: We understand that outside of our school walls, the subjects of math, science, and language arts do not exist in separate silos. Therefore, we have been working towards a more integrative approach to education that is better aligned with the world beyond school. Our specialist teachers in STEAM, Environmental Science, PE, Art, and Music work with the faculty to integrate their lessons with

student interest and curricular units, and our lower school immersive language program incorporates Hebrew language usage across multiple disciplines.

Design Thinking: A few years ago, the majority of our staff underwent training at Stanford's D-School to adopt an approach that facilitates student learning through solving real problems. The results of this approach are evident throughout the school, including an outdoor stage for outdoor assemblies, reimaged public restrooms that feel more welcoming and safe, and soon, lobby installations designed to set the tone for a learning environment through interactive and engaging experiences for visitors of all ages.

Growth Mindset: To better prepare our students for the skills they will need for the future world, our staff spent time engaging in Carol Dweck's work on Growth Mindset and Jo Boaler's work on Math Mindset. Throughout the school, teachers encourage students to take on challenges, share their thinking, and make good mistakes. Failure is celebrated as an opportunity to learn and grow.

Keshet of Kavod: Equally important to these educational approaches are the middot (values) that we strive to instill in our students. Our world needs citizens who understand that everyone is responsible for taking care of themselves, each other, and the world — these three guidelines, informed by Responsive Classroom, are taught and reinforced schoolwide. We teach the necessary values through our Keshet of Kavod (Rainbow of Respect) Program. Each fall, our students, parents, and faculty vote on which values to focus and the 8th graders teach those values in a monthly assembly. Those values are reinforced in classrooms, posted all over the hallways and classrooms, and referenced as students are asked to "repair the rainbow" when they make a choice that doesn't follow our guidelines.

Dual Language Immersion: Second language acquisition at a young age significantly improves cognitive functioning beyond the domain of the second language. Therefore, five years ago we created a unique immersive model with one English speaking and one Hebrew speaking teacher in each classroom. These co-teachers share the responsibility of planning, implementing, and assessing the curriculum. Hebrew speaking teachers speak only Hebrew to students, even when teaching math or reading. While Hebrew Language Arts is often taught in small groups for a period a day, students are exposed to Hebrew throughout the day including lunch and recess when Hebrew speaking teachers continue speaking Hebrew only.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Yavneh's mission states, "Yavneh Day School is committed to academic excellence in General and Jewish studies within a strong, vibrant community where each child is celebrated and challenged." 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. Yavneh's curriculum is designed to emphasize academic and social-emotional development, self-responsibility, becoming a positive community member, and being an active participant in one's own learning. Yavneh's outstanding teachers emphasize four key 21st-century skills: collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination, critical thinking, and problem solving.

With a small student-to-teacher ratio, teachers utilize formative assessments multiple times a day. Classroom summative assessments take various forms: presentations, videos, reflections, quizzes/tests, and projects. Teachers share student progress with parents through family conferences, report cards, emails, and phone calls.

In addition, we administer a variety of standardized assessments. The school views the primary purpose of standardized test results as a resource to strengthen our understanding of individual student learning profiles and analyze overall results to help determine curricular changes that might be beneficial. As such, since 2014-15, we have committed to administering assessments that are more informative and help move our organization in the right direction.

1b. Reading/English language arts

The language arts curriculum is designed to help students develop their critical and interpretive thinking skills. Through reading projects, students build up their reading comprehension skills and analysis of literary concepts such as plot, conflict, character development, and figurative language. They concentrate on the writing process in order to write research papers, expository essays, persuasive papers, response to literature essays, and narratives. Students expand their internet research, note-taking, and vocabulary skills. In addition, students work on their public speaking and listening skills. Alongside the reading and writing curricula, the students also receive direct instruction in grammar, mechanics, and style. The goal is to help the students become masterful and creative users of the English language. In addition to examining poetry, myths, and nonfiction text related to the novels and themes, students read a selection of short stories and novels.

In grades K-2, we administer the Children's Progress of Academic Assessment (CPAA) three times a year. This test of literacy and mathematics is both informative and instructional — students are given hints and immediate feedback. The narrative reports that we receive show how each student answered the questions as well as a graph that tracks progress over time. In addition, there are instructional resources for teachers and recommended groupings of students that could benefit from similar instruction based on their profile from the responses. We internally analyze our results and also contract with external evaluators like Hanover Research to provide in-depth analysis across our assessments.

1c. Mathematics

Yavneh's math program, based on Singapore Math, is rich in problem-solving investigations and emphasizes a depth of mathematical reasoning skills. The curriculum is built to empower each student with the tools and methods that will enable the application of mathematical thinking to real problems. Teachers of this program make use of manipulative and self-discovery investigations to help students fully understand why the mathematical concepts are true. These include hands-on projects and other fun activities that develop the precise cognitive functions to lead the students to success. Each grade has multiple math levels

to better meet the needs of the student population. These levels are structured to challenge students to develop their potential and to extract high-level cognitive functions.

Differentiated thinking methodologies, such as the use of metacognitive reflection (thinking about the way one thinks), enable students to improve upon their own intellect and break mental barriers that hinder their progress in math and possibly other fields as well. All students have opportunities for skill practice and enrichment, as needed.

We also administer the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) in 3rd-8th grade, which provides a very detailed report about each child and what they are ready to develop next. We can utilize these informative reports to guide instruction and provide individualized learning experiences for students. The students are able to get useful feedback while the assessment is ongoing, and the teachers can see useful instructional tips and differentiated learning groups. We have done one-on-one training sessions between administrators and teachers to examine specific classes of students and their needs. For example, in one teacher's first year of teaching at Yavneh, we noticed that students did not show the same kind of progress in mathematics that they had in literacy. In reflecting on the number of instructional minutes devoted to math, the teacher decided to change her daily class routines to accommodate more time for math. As a result, her students the following year showed more consistent progress in both areas.

Three years ago, we added the MARS assessment from the Silicon Valley Math Initiative (SVMI), as we believed it was a good measure of the Eight Standards of Mathematical Practice. We were using a Singapore Math program K-5 and a more traditional program for our Middle School Students. We were surprised to learn that our lower school students did significantly better than our Middle School students; some of our "top" students struggled with simple performance based tasks. In response, we changed our math curriculum so that all students, K-8, now use Singapore Math as the basis for their curriculum.

1d. Science

Yavneh students are educated in an environment promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) using a curriculum based on the new Next Generation Science Standards. As often as possible, students have a practical application of the theoretical work by either hands-on or virtual labs. Students are empowered to carry out inquiry based activities where they determine the correct approach to gather experimental evidence to support phenomena they are investigating. Students practice 21st-century skills (such as collaboration, teamwork, research etc.) in small team-based project groups. Students use their senses (and other tools) to make detailed observations about the world around them. Students become more proficient in designing and conducting experiments to answer questions about scientific concepts. By gaining a familiarity with measurements and different units, students estimate relative and absolute sizes. Using their lab notebooks, students practice organizing and collecting data. Students decode science articles or passages that are written using grade-level appropriate academic language. After students have made their scientific discoveries, they practice clearly communicating their findings both verbally and in writing. Students are presented with open-ended questions that they answer using their own approaches. Through various design challenges, students practice the fundamentals of the engineering process.

Each year, our Middle School students participate in a Science Fair at Yavneh. For the past two years, the requirements have matched those of the Synopsys County Science Fair which enables multiple groups to enter. In addition to classroom summative assessments, lab reports, presentations, and building models, the science fair provides an authentic opportunity to evaluate our students' understanding of scientific methodology, analysis of data, and supporting conclusions with evidence.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Yavneh's global research curriculum teaches skills and concepts that are essential to the study of history and social studies. Students develop writing skills using their own voice and unique point of view while collaborating with others. They develop important skills that include note taking, researching and analyzing sources, summarizing, using primary sources, geography, critical thinking, text analysis, discussion and political debate, and speech. Some big ideas explored include: studying the past helps us to understand the

present; physical geography plays a role in how civilizations develop and decline; geography shapes the political, economic, and political challenges our region faces; people's social status affects how they live; a constitution reflects the values and goals of the society that creates it; and reactions to social injustice can lead to reform movements.

Our students often engage in simulations and/or lead schoolwide programs (as a performance assessment) to culminate a unit of study. After studying the historical events leading up to the Holocaust in social studies and concurrently reading a memoir or piece of historical fiction in English Language Arts, the seventh graders create a ceremony for Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah, that shares their learning with the community. Our eighth graders learn about the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. This study leads them to analyze working conditions in the garment industry as well as connect the basic rights to Jewish text. For Human Rights Day, these students lead a Shabbat service for our school that connects some of the prayers to the Human Rights Declaration.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Jewish Studies:

Jewish learning at Yavneh builds an appreciation of traditions and values in a relevant and integrated manner, from ritual and meaningful holiday celebrations to inquiry-based explorations of ancient texts on how to lead an ethical Jewish life. Students also build self-confidence, mastery of public speaking and leadership skills through the consistent leading of Jewish prayers and rituals for their peers and the school community at school services and holiday events. A Jewish method of study that we employ in many subject areas, not just Jewish Studies, is called chavruta. Chavruta is student-centered partner learning that deepens intellectual, social, ethical, and spiritual capacities while exercising the core practices of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity through the study of texts. In addition to learning about Judaism through academic studies, Yavneh students also take field trips to local synagogues and social service organizations where they can put their faith into action to help others. Finally, in eighth grade, the students travel to Israel to experience first-hand much of the history and culture as it relates to their studies, building a relationship with the country and its people.

Hebrew Language Education:

Five years ago, our school pioneered a dual-immersion approach to Hebrew language instruction in our elementary grades. This co-teaching model employs Hebrew speaking teachers with teaching credentials from Israel who co-teach classes with English speaking California credentialed teachers. The model allows the formal instruction of Hebrew language to be reinforced throughout the day across academic subjects, including math, social studies, Jewish studies, and science. A recent standardized assessment of two grades demonstrated that the proficiency of our third grade immersion students surpasses that of the sixth grade students who continue to receive instruction using a traditional second language instruction approach. Since that assessment, the school began piloting a new approach to Hebrew language education in middle school using a language lab model that allows for greater differentiation of instruction to better challenge and meet student potential as well as opportunities for collaboration and creativity to maximize student engagement.

Co-Curricular learning:

Part of our mission statement is to "foster curiosity, encourage risk-taking, and ingrain a love of learning." In addition to the school's curricular programs, sometimes it is through art, music, STEAM, or elective programs that our students have an opportunity to shine. In grades K-5, students learn art, music, PE, environmental science, and STEAM on a weekly basis. In music classes, 3rd and 4th grade students are taught ukulele to prepare them to learn more advanced modern band instruments in 5th grade. In middle school, students can choose PE classes as well as three elective classes from a list of fifteen. These co-

curricular programs and others are an essential part of a Yavneh education.

Tied to both our mission and our fundamental beliefs, these programs provide an opportunity for our students to share their work with an authentic audience. Each spring we hold the Art Walk and Modern Band Extravaganza in our Beit Kehillah (Community Room); hallways are filled with examples of student art from all grades while each modern band group has an opportunity to perform. The variety of mediums, art forms, and subject matter is so impressive that visitors often return multiple times to absorb it all. In the fall, we invite the community to a Family Day of Code, Tinkering, and Play. Over 300 visitors come each year to celebrate STEAM at this event. We boosted Middle School student participation in the last two years by providing robotics, an escape room, and volunteer opportunities. In middle school, our dance elective performs at various ceremonies, our robotics team came in first place in California in the Wonder League competition, the Yavneh Radio elective broadcasts live (in Hebrew) on a monthly basis, and we regularly offer new sports team opportunities in which students can compete. Just a few years ago, our middle school students designed a Menorah which was selected as a finalist by the White House and featured on the White House Blog.

The continual growth and diversification of our programs is in itself a metric of effectiveness. The more options that are offered, the better we are able to make learning relevant while meeting the needs of our diverse population. Our school also continues to grow; our attrition decreases while the number of new students increases. The success of our co-curricular programs makes Yavneh a more desirable school as evidenced by an increase in program enrollment of 77.4% since 2016. In addition, Hanover's analysis of our annual Parent Survey suggests that at least 93% of responding parents are “very” satisfied with the visual arts elective, art education, design thinking and engineering elective, and STEAM (Computer Science and Engineering) education.

3. Academic Supports:

3a. Students performing below grade level

In the last five years we shifted our educational leadership structure from having a single K-8 principal to having two Deans as well as a Director of Learning and Student Support. This has allowed us to meet the needs of all of our students. We have also expanded the role and hours of the school’s Rabbi to focus on the integration of Jewish learning and general studies instruction.

Our Director of Learning and Student Support (K-5) and our Dean of Learning and Instruction (6-8) provide support for our students. Our K-5 Director provides reading intervention for some of our first grade students using the Reading Recovery model designed to assist students in improving their decoding and fluency skills. The goal for these students is to reach grade-level expectations and integrate back into their classroom reading groups. Our support team pushes into the classrooms, providing support and guidance both for the teachers and for the students in a variety of subject areas. Our Dean of Learning and Instruction (6-8) provides individual support, by pushing into the classroom, pulling out an individual/small group, and supporting teachers.

3b. Students performing above grade level

Our small student-teacher ratio provides us natural opportunities to support students who struggle as well as enrichment opportunities for students who excel. From math stations, to book groups, to academic choice, we are able to meet individual learning needs within the context of a heterogeneous class. Starting in 4th grade, we offer Hebrew and math classes that are grouped by level. Being able to offer a native-speaker Hebrew group not only meets the needs of students who have recently emigrated from Israel but also allows gifted linguists to rise to the challenge of being with native speakers. For math, we use a Singapore program for all students. The grade-level groups use the materials from the textbook, workbook, extra practice book, and challenge book. The advanced group primarily focuses on the challenge and intensive practice books. In addition to going deeper, this group moves at a faster pace, completing Algebra I in 7th grade and Geometry in 8th grade.

3c. Special education

Over the last five years, we have worked to create relationships within the community to provide outside services with specialists such as occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and speech therapists. We have partnered with various third parties to provide on-site observations. We identify students that need support, collaborate with families, and partner with the school district and private practitioners to provide information and support to our families. We provide a space for these individuals to work with our students on campus if it best suits the individual and their programs. Our educational administrators join in the Student Success Team Meetings with representatives from the school district to create an action plan.

3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

The school's leadership engaged in a process involving many stakeholders to establish four fundamental beliefs which are the foundation of school culture. These beliefs are rooted in Jewish texts and help shape the basis for the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students.

The first belief states that "learning is meaningful when it is relevant." The science behind this belief is based on research that shows the benefits of relevance as an intrinsic motivator for achievement. The second belief states that "everyone benefits from a diverse learning environment." A community of diverse learners helps encourage students to understand what makes them unique as a learner and how to leverage time and resources to learn effectively. Whether it be using noise canceling headphones to help a student focus, listening to an audiobook in addition to visually reading, or using a standing desk, students realize and respect each others' needs and advocate for what they need in order to be most successful. The third belief, "dynamic Jewish learning is integral to a purposeful life," creates relevance for students to engage in religious studies beyond reasons of familial affiliation. The fourth belief, "understanding is profoundly deepened through relationship and community," is core to the climate of the school. A feeling of family, collaboration, and responsibility for self, each other, and the school environment permeates what happens at Yavneh. Assessment of student engagement happens anecdotally through regular morning meetings and council sessions (inspired by tribal American practice) in the lower grades, advisory classes and council sessions in the middle schools, as well as through weekly student council meetings in the upper grades. The school regularly distributes surveys to parents and teachers on matters of school culture and the administration and board review the results. Additionally, the Head of School meets on a regular basis with the Yavneh Parent Association (YPA) President to maintain an open line of communication. The educational administration has a weekly open Leadership Team meeting with any faculty interested in collaborating on school-wide issues. In addition, all meetings begin with a brief "huddle" prior to the agenda. During huddles, staff share personal or professional updates allowing for a weekly anecdotal check-in of morale and engagement and facilitating a caring community. At administration meetings the huddle is usually followed by sharing of perceived issues or rumors heard in the community that could potentially affect school climate, along with strategizing approaches to reduce potentially negative effects on school climate.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

To maximize the relationship between parents and teachers for student learning, a week prior to the start of the school year parents and their children have an initial conference to establish a partnership and set expectations. As a result, parents are comfortable reaching out to teachers with questions and concerns, and the teachers feel likewise. Weekly digital newsletters featuring classroom highlights and questions for family discussion bring the classroom experience home by making learning visible and encouraging parent connection. Additional conferences are held each year in the fall and spring in conjunction with narrative report cards.

A broader connection to the school is established through weekly school newsletters featuring columns by the head of school, administrators, and other teachers as well as updates on events and other school related news. Parents often respond to these columns with their own feedback and opinions. Surveys and town halls also promote parental partnership, and relationships continue being built through grade-based parent education programs.

Our school builds a broader community through recurring rituals and traditions that capture and express our school culture, fundamental beliefs, and values. These include school-wide prayer assemblies three times a week, regular holiday celebrations, and other community activities. Most of these activities involve students sitting and engaging with assigned buddies from different grades which helps build school community. All-school events are usually open to the broader school community and are often attended by groups of parents, alumni, and community supporters.

The Yavneh Parent Association (YPA) helps build community through family activities that include family picnics, bake-offs, talent shows, and children's clothing exchanges. They also raise funds for the school through annual book fairs and walk-a-thons and the sale of eScrip, gift cards, and weekly challah loaves. Its leadership is comprised of a board of parent volunteers who meet monthly and includes room parents (who help organize field trips, classroom volunteers, and teacher gifts).

An active development committee of the board involves parents and other community members who conduct an annual campaign that consistently achieves 100% participation by all families and that plans fundraising events to support the school such as galas and community conversations. A grandparent in the community will be hosting an evening with former Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig open to the broader community with all proceeds going to support the school.

Cooperative ventures with our campus partners, such as the Jewish Family Services, provide resources to support families and students in need as well opportunities for our students and families to volunteer and support others in the community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

We are very purposeful about creating a professional culture in which teachers are valued and supported. We hire and train for culture as much as we do for pedagogical and content knowledge. We look for collaborative, responsive, out-of-the-box thinkers who are not afraid to try something new and fail.

Always referring back to our Fundamental Beliefs, we look at all decisions in terms of how they align with the culture of Yavneh. We engage a Faculty Leadership Team, open to all, to meet and discuss everything from new initiatives, space usage, all-school programs, survey results, the professional development program, school calendar, and annual budget.

The greatest resource that teachers have for professional growth is each other. We view every weekly faculty meeting as a professional development opportunity, providing our teachers opportunities to present workshops to one another and time to share knowledge through collaboration.

Beyond our weekly meetings and collaboration time, we have focused our professional learning on initiatives that cross grade levels and curricular areas. Since codifying our Fundamental Beliefs, all of our training is tied to them. We assess the quality and effectiveness based on the feedback that we receive from the participants as well as from how the strategies are utilized in the classrooms. We find that having multiple teachers attend the same conferences helps keep our initiatives active and our teachers collaborating across grade levels. Close to half of our faculty have participated in a five-day workshop on the Pedagogy of Partnership through Machon Hadar in New York. While this program focuses on partner learning through a deep study of Jewish texts, our teachers utilize the same strategies for studying historical primary sources, scientific articles, and novels. As a faculty, we have "two minutes of Torah" during our faculty meetings to both frame our conversation and practice our skills.

In order to have an integrative, student-centered, dual-language curriculum, collaboration is a necessity. Opportunities for this essential collaboration does not happen magically; attention to the master schedule with time for these meetings is essential. Intentional grade level teams meet with administrators to discuss both curriculum and the co-teaching model. In addition, the math coach meets with teams of teachers at lunch, and our Hebrew specialist meets individually and in groups with the Hebrew speaking teachers.

We have seven days of faculty orientation before school begins with an extra day for new faculty. On numerous occasions, we have sent teams of teachers to engage in guided observations of programs at other schools, with follow-up reflection and discussions with members of the educational administrative team. Such observations have focused on a variety of subjects including models of progressive education, STEAM, and language immersion.

4. School Leadership:

Yavneh Day School is governed by a strategic board of directors who set mission, vision, and high level policy for the school. The board is also charged with employing and supervising the Head of School.

The faculty are led by the Educational Administrative team which consists of two Deans of Learning and Instruction (K-5 and 6-8), a Director of Integrated Learning who is also our school Rabbi, and a Chief of Finance and Operations, all of whom are supervised by the Head of School and help guide the curriculum, instruction, and assessment used to focus on student achievement.

The Head of School also created a Leadership Team of teachers as well as the Educational Administration Team (see above). This team meets weekly to address classroom and student issues, including retention, classroom needs/priorities, and school policies. The HOS then considers their input when creating budget and other school priorities.

In deciding that the mission of the school is to “celebrate and challenge” each child and “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,” the board committed to supporting structures and systems that encourage student achievement. This mission was studied by the Educational Administrative Team who proposed an initial version of four fundamental beliefs which call for learning that is relevant, classes that are diverse, learning framed by Jewish values, and the pedagogy of partnership (cooperative learning). These beliefs were tweaked by the Leadership Team and approved by the board. Since codifying Yavneh's Fundamental Beliefs, we have been very consistent with using them as a benchmark for everything from curricular decisions, professional learning priorities, planning and usage of newly constructed spaces, to how to prepare for and present at family conferences. These beliefs are the backbone of all of Yavneh's initiatives and programs — they are our "why."

The mission and beliefs have led the board to approve proposals for smaller classroom sizes and lower student-teacher ratios to support the individual and collective academic success of a student body of individuals with diverse learning profiles. It has led to the creation of the role of Director of Integrated Learning, whose job it is to facilitate interdisciplinary learning to promote student perception of relevance and purposeful learning and to guide teachers in creating opportunities for cooperative learning among our students, all of which are aimed at promoting academic achievement.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Yavneh is committed to "students at the center," empowering them to find their passions and advocate for the kind of education they want. One of the greatest strategies we can point to is the choice we offer students to be a part of their co-curricular integrated learning experience to provide relevance and meaning in their lives. We offer an extensive STEAM program, including Modern Band, Multi-Media Art, Robotics, Animation & Coding, Stock Market Challenge, Model UN, Innovation Lab, etc., which aims to make science relevant to all children and sharpen students' inquiry skills as they apply design thinking modules. The program encourages curiosity and lateral thinking within problem-solving. We have seen extended enthusiasm about learning due to more hands-on rather than lecture-based learning. Our students will have nine years of hands-on experiences in disciplines like coding, robotics, and design thinking by the time they matriculate to high school.

As the only Jewish School featured in Daniel Heischman's book, *What Schools Teach Us About Religious Life*, Yavneh Day School's Rabbi talks about the opportunity of connecting students' everyday lives to Judaism, "The Torah and Talmud were full of references to buildings and architecture, making it a natural bridge to the STEAM program" (155). In this spirit, four years ago Yavneh began integrating Jewish studies across the curricular program (e.g., English, Social Studies, and Science could be taught through a Jewish lens). For example, when the 1st graders were interested in learning about birds and migration, they focused on the birds of Israel. Or when the 6th grade studies Early Man, they read stories from Genesis to determine in what era of the Stone Age Cain and Abel might have lived. In language arts, sacred texts are studied alongside secular novels to reinforce universal themes and close reading skills. We have observed that after practicing chavruta study (traditional study of Jewish texts with a partner) for several years, the students are able to have self-led, high-level discussions about texts across the curriculum and are able to integrate skills and knowledge across disciplines. The aim of integration is to make all learning, and especially Jewish learning, relevant to all areas of study, thus deepening and enriching learning across the entire curriculum.

PART VII - NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. Non-public school association(s): Jewish

Identify the religious or independent associations, if any, to which the school belongs. Select the primary association first.

2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax-exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes X No
3. What is the educational cost per student? \$26300
(School budget divided by enrollment)
4. What is the average financial aid per student? \$17300
5. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction? 44%
6. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction? 65%