



JEWISH ACADEMY

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Dear Kohelet Prize Committee,

My teaching team and I are applying to two categories of this year's prize; Interdisciplinary Integration and Differentiated Instruction. This is the application for Interdisciplinary Integration, entitled "Unity in the School Community".

I humbly submit to you that The Jewish Academy is revolutionary. We are radical in our approach to Jewish education, integration and 21st century learning. We have torn up and tossed out the routine sage-on-the-stage frontal teaching.

So what are we doing?

We adopted a new model of education developed at Harvard by Dr. Shimon Waronker. The model won the 2009 Phi Delta Kappa award for Innovation in Education. The New American Academy (TNAA) model is a bold departure from typical education styles that takes into consideration the needs of both the student and the teacher to create a vibrant learning environment. Key elements of this practice are research-based and classroom tested. Each element offers value individually but when used in concert, the result is a truly innovative approach with the potential to radically transform the culture, climate and overall impact of school.

The TNAA model has been implemented in both public and charter schools. The Jewish Academy is the first private school to adapt its ideals and methodology. To be honest, it has been an uphill struggle. Parents (and students) are used to and expect frontal teaching wherein students are spoken to, asked to repeat, remember, and reply.

Business-as-usual education has not worked in Suffolk County. Three Jewish Day Schools have come and gone in the past four decades; Solomon Schechter, Torah Academy and The Hebrew Academy of Suffolk County, even though the number of Jewish families in our area of Suffolk has grown. We are a Community Day School, endorsed by the Suffolk Board of Rabbis, and the last one keeping the Jewish flame alive.

We are fanning those flames through innovation. Our plan is to share our innovative practices with you and Jewish communities around the country so that we all thrive and grow.

With blessings,

Chaya Teldon

Mrs. Chaya Teldon
Head of School

Dean of Academics

Dr. Shimon Waronker

Head of School

Mrs. Chaya Teldon

Master Teachers

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Miss Colleen O'Brien, AP

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