

# Schools

## Charlotte Jewish Day School Completes SACS-SAIS Accreditation

By Mariashi Groner, director

On February 5 through 7, CJDS completed a year-long process of accreditation with the SACS (Southern Association for Colleges and Schools) -SAIS (Southern Association of Independent Schools) organizations. This is the second accreditation that the school received and besides being relieved that it is completed and accepted, we are thrilled that our accreditation has been unanimously recommended by the Team.

The accreditation looks at seven standards which contain over one hundred indicators to prove that the school is in compliance. More importantly, the standard of excellence is judged by the school's commitment to its mission in all areas reviewed. The areas of governance, board and financial health, curriculum, administrative and faculty structure, and culture are all studied through a combination of an initial on site visit, reams and reams of documents and papers, and a final three day visit by a team made of four educators from the Southeast region. We had the Head of School of The Duke School in Durham, the principal from Cliff Valley in Atlanta, the principal from B'nai Shalom in Greensboro and (we were fortunate) the director of SAIS. During their visit, they met with the CJDS board of directors, parents, teachers, administrators, alumni, and students. They were observing in classrooms, on the playground, in the lunchroom and in the halls.

The self-study that the school completed included a profile update, surveys of the school's stakeholders (parents, faculty, students), as well as an improvement plan in eight different areas. The school continues to examine new ways to strengthen our curriculum and our ability to differentiate instruction for each individual student. Using data to measure our growth was also a part of our plan and it is already being utilized successfully. Although the accreditation process takes place every five years, we are planning to implement a stakeholder survey and self-study review annual to ensure the work plan remain fresh and relevant.


We received the written report describing all of the commendations and recommendations for growth in a number of areas.

They spoke strongly of the caliber and quality of teachers they saw when they observed in the classroom. They were immediately able to recognize that the school's claim to meet the needs of children who are able to move faster or for children who need some extra support was truly happening. They repeatedly mentioned at our exit report how clearly our board was committed to the mission and to the school and that one could see that they are all on one page. They also noted the poise and confidence of our graduates and encouraged us to use their sense of self and success to help tell our story. One of the



more interesting areas they addressed and recommended was the school marketing. They felt strongly that the school was not sharing all that it had to offer. And, they specifically mentioned that we needed to "shout" the benefit of it being a Jewish school. They sensed that there was not enough pride in what makes us stand out, unique, and special. Only one of the members of team was Jewish so it was ironic that they recognized the outstanding gift of Judaism our kids and community receive from a school that truly serves all of the Jewish children in the community who desire a full-time Jewish education. We were a little taken aback, but certainly took it to heart. In fact, what was truly heartwarming is that one of the team members, on his way home could not get it out of his mind how we were losing such a precious opportunity to share the treasure we have, that he emailed us a marketing tagline that came to mind.

This was certainly an opportunity to learn and reflect and left us the chance to ponder that we teach Jewish pride to our children, but are we demonstrating our own Jewish pride? ✨



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## From Generation To Generation ... At The Charlotte Jewish Preschool

On February 17, Charlotte Jewish Preschool experienced one of our favorite days of the year: Grandparent's Day. Sabas and Savtahs, Bubbes and Zaydes, all flew in from different parts of the country to help their little one celebrate this special day.

Preparation for Grandparent's Day is always interesting as the children discuss with teachers and friends as to what makes their grandparents so special. For some, it's baking cookies together. Maybe even hamantaschen for Purim. Others enjoy special outings to the park, holidays meals, or vacations together. Traditions build as years

go on and memories are made along the way. As the children talk about what makes their grandparents special, a gleeful look emanates from their eyes as they remember times spent. At Charlotte Jewish Preschool, we were even lucky enough to enjoy the company of great grandparents who made the trip for this occasion. It was truly a wonderful experience for everyone to enjoy this generational event.



As the RSVP's came in, we knew this was going to be the best attended Grandparent's Day yet. We were ready to shine.

We planned a wonderful Shabbat for our visitors along with a special snack and of course, challah and grape juice. Clergy from both temples were present. From Temple Beth El, we had Rabbi Judy and Rabbi Jonathan. From Temple Israel, Rabbi Ezring, Rabbi Noam, and Cantor Roochvarg were in attendance. The clergy always help to add excitement to our service by



Grandparents enjoyed their visit to CJP on Grandparents Day.

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