

The story of your child's creation.

D'var Keshet from the Head of School

Dr. Tali Zerkowicz

August 17, 2018 / 6 Elul, 5778

Parashat Shoftim, Deuteronomy/Devarim, 16:18-21:9

Pictured below: Dr. Z leads a session to all staff and faculty at professional in-service this week, introducing Dr. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot's book "The Essential Conversation" as it will inform our theme for the year, Hevruta.



The Essential Conversation

Welcome back to our Ma Koreh or, "What's Up?", CJDS's weekly newsletter! We are thrilled to be reconnecting with all of you – including our current parents, our dear grandparents near and far, alumni families, local rabbis and community leaders, national educators, foundation professionals.

Enrollment is up this year. How great it feels to have more students filling the school with their voices, smiles, questions, and all the high fives and hugs after summer break. And oh, how each child has grown! We welcome to CJDS a new class of excited kindergartners who got to meet their fourth-grade buddies during today's first all-school Kabbalat Shabbat assembly of the year, which was followed by our annual Back to School Carnival!

In the 10 weeks since school ended CJDS has been busy!

- We hired 9 incredible [new CJDS staff and faculty members](#) (Mr. AG/Jeremy Arcus-Goldberg, Rabbi Sharon Barr Skolnik, Morah Ari Scheier, Ms. Mindy Galbreath, Morah Sheri Gittins, Dr. D/Denae D'Arcy, Ali Greenland, Ms. Jennifer Swetnam, and Ms. Julie Tilson Stanley)
- We welcomed Sheryl Sandberg to a full house at the McCoy Center for the Performing Arts, in an intimate and uplifting conversation with our own parent, board member, and VP of the Wexner Foundation, Rabbi Jay Moses. You can see pictures from this fantastic event [here](#).
- We premiered our new [CJDS video](#) with over 940 views! Please feel free to share the link far and wide with any friends and family.
- The Board approved a talented and dynamic new slate of [Trustees for the 2018-9 year](#)
- In collaboration with the JCC, we installed a state of the art media system in the gym
- CJDS was accepted to be one of about 20 schools in North America to participate in the third cohort of Prizmah's acclaimed *Atidenu* Program, an 18-month intensive designed to strengthen and enrich the school community (Prizmah is the Center for Jewish Day Schools).
- We redesigned the Ma Koreh to make it easier to read on any kind of device. Enjoy!

In *Hevruta*

One of the most important innovations of the summer was the selection of the theme for this new school year: *Hevruta*. Sometimes translated as friendship or companionship, because of its root, I believe Partnership is the best English equivalent. At the root of the word *hevruta* are the 3 Hebrew letters: *chet*, *bet*, *resh* which give rise to Hebrew words like *hibur* (addition and essay), *haver* (friend), *mahber* (stapler) *l'hithaber* (to join), *tahbura* (transportation). Can you tell what they all have in common?

CONNECTION.

True, lasting, and meaningful connections require partnership. That's *hevruta*.

This happens in various ways, among Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, and the Board. But one of the most focused initiatives for intensifying and deepening *hevruta* will be between Parents and Teachers, by taking a deep dive into what MacArthur Genius Award winning sociologist and professor of education, Dr. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, has called, "The Essential Conversation." From her interviews of parents and teachers around the country across public and independent schools, Lightfoot documents the best examples of parent-teacher collaboration and trust building.

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Every staff and faculty member at CJDS will be reading Lightfoot's book this year. We will study its insights and recommendations and explore and practice new forms and tools of communication. I invite all of you to be on this journey with us this year. Join the CJDS faculty and consider reading [Lightfoot's book!](#)

I know I speak for all of us when I say how eager we are to deepen our practice of *hevruta*, because we know that when we engage fully in this important act of genuine, open connection, even and especially when it can be difficult, transformative student learning triumphs. And that's why we are all here, after all.

Wishing you all a Shabbat of meaningful connection, and a wonderful new school year filled with discovery and growth for all.

Shabbat Shalom,



PS – To learn more about the work we will be doing around Lightfoot's book click [here.](#)