

In the fall of 2014, I walked through the doors into JPDS for the first time in over ten years. That day and in the weeks that followed, I was struck by how much had changed since I was a student, and how much my own perspective had changed as an adult and as an employee. But I was also gratified to see how so many of things that make my memories of JPDS so cherished remained the same.

All but a handful of my old teachers had moved on, but seventh- and eighth- grade alumni would visit and gush about all of their favorite teachers from whom I never had the privilege to learn. Fifth graders no longer race clipper ships around the Horn, but they do dress up in bonnets and three-corner-hats to take on the personas of Colonial coopers, cobblers, and candlestick makers. Even the halls themselves were unfamiliar, as I attended JPDS in its old locations at Adas Israel and on Linden Lane; but every morning, teachers and administrators still warmly welcome students to the new school day. The particulars have changed, but not beyond recognition, and the feelings of friendship, support, and genuine excitement for learning that truly define JPDS in my memory – these most central aspects of the school—continue to flourish.

In my role as Academic Affairs and Communications Assistant, I spend a lot of time hearing and writing about classroom events, student council *tikkun olam* projects, holiday celebrations, soccer games, and – well, everything. I get an excellent “big picture” view of life at the school, and I love being able to watch current students’ future memories as they are being made. I know that those memories will differ from mine in many ways as the school continues to change – JPDS is going to have a middle school, for goodness sake! – but after two years back “home,” any lingering feelings of nostalgia that I have only increase my excitement for what changes the future will hold.

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