



# SITE VISIT EVALUATION – MAY 6, 2019

## JCC'S OPENING THE DOORS – DOORS TO THE FUTURE

### SITE VISIT LEADER: JANET SCHENK

#### JWF ATTENDEES:

Gayle Burstein    Sharon Resnick    Staff:  
Judy Elson        Janet Schenk        Susan Cassels Kamin  
Patti Phillips     Debbie Singer

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Helen Kohn, Program Director  
Ellen Maiseloff, Senior Director  
Julie Eisman Levy, Education Director, Temple Israel

- 1. *What is the organization's reason/rationale for requesting this grant? What is the problem or issue the grant addresses?*** There are seven partner pre-schools in congregations, day schools, and orthodox schools currently serving 120 students. The request asks for money to hire one or two additional para-pros to add 20-30 hours of assistance to help 18-30 more special needs pre-school students, ages 2 1/2 -6 yrs, in the upcoming year.
- 2. *What important details about the project did you learn during the site visit?*** The hope is to address the growing amount of aggressiveness and anxieties in special needs children. Each of the seven sites has a special educator on staff with para pros who come in for 6-8 weeks per student to address individual needs. Not only does this mainstream classroom approach help other students understand that children learn differently but also provides parents learn available resources in the community. Teachers learn skills about teaching children with special needs which also makes them willing to accept more such students.
- 3. *What is your overall impression of the grant?*** Overall impression of the grant is very positive, but the Trustees question the program's sustainability since most of its budget (\$46,000+) is Federation Annual Campaign money.
- 4. *What issues came up that trustees may want to consider in making their decision?*** The only issue that came up for the Trustees is the grant does not show the source of the challenge money to match our dollars. The program director discussed money already allocated to run the program and ways they will try to raise funds, but Trustees did not feel the concept of challenge dollars and that our rules require new money as the challenge. *(Susan spoke to Ellen, the money shown as committed is in the wrong column. This money is anticipated from the donors listed but the dollars are not in.)*
- 5. *Would the project happen if we do not fund them or if we could not give them their full grant request? What is their plan for sustaining the project in the future?*** If we do not fund the grant, the program will run at its current level i.e., without an additional para pro. Current anticipated money for the upcoming year is coming from the Dresner Fund, the Jewish Fund, the annual Campaign, and individual donors.
- 6. *Are there any outstanding questions requiring follow-up by the organization?*** No
- 7. *Does this grant further the goals of the JWF?*** Yes, the grant furthers JWF's mission.
- 8. *Recommendation/Additional Comments:*** The biggest concern was the real sustainability of this program since the Annual Campaign can change its priorities from one year to the next.

#### **Comments:**

- Three Madrichim participants funded by an earlier JWF grant are currently para-pros in the program.
- A few families in the program do provide money to the fund their child's participation.
- Funding special needs programs is a JCC priority.
- No other communities nation-wide have programs like "Opening the Doors" or "Doors to the Future".