

The Calgary Jewish Academy Education Report

2025-2028



Accountability Statement for the Education Plan

Accredited Funded Private School Authorities

The Education Plan for the Calgary Jewish Academy, commencing May 2025, was prepared under the direction of the Board of Directors in accordance with the responsibilities under the Private Schools Regulation and the Ministerial Grants Regulation. This plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used its performance results to develop the plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved the 2025-2028 Education Plan on May 20, 2025.



Shannon Smith-Albert



Michelle Jacobson

Co-Chairs CJA Board of Directors

Message from Administration

Joyce Kerr - Principal, Head of School

The information included in this report celebrates the Calgary Jewish Academy and all it has to offer. We are an independent Jewish day school that is dedicated to following the Alberta Education requirements while fostering a love of Judaism and Jewish identity. Our focus every day is on each student arriving at a safe space (CJA) ready to learn. We take each student from where they are at, and provide learning opportunities that challenge and build curiosity. Our overall goal is to empower our students to be contributing members of the greater Calgary communities.

This Education Plan connects the results from the 2024 Provincial Accountability Pillar survey taken by students, parents, and staff to our CJA Strategic Plan.

A Profile of the School Authority

Who are we at the Calgary Jewish Academy?

The Calgary Jewish Academy (CJA) is an accredited private school. The CJA provides an excellent hybrid of the Alberta Education Program and Jewish Studies. This dual curriculum provides students with opportunities to connect to their Jewish culture and identity through their learning. Our school not only equips students with the essential skills and knowledge needed for the future, but also instills in them a unique perspective rooted in Jewish values and traditions, ensuring they navigate life's challenges with resilience, empathy, and a strong sense of identity.

The CJA's total enrollment is 249 students as of May 2025. The CJA is firmly rooted in the Calgary Jewish community. In its present and previous forms, it has been in existence for over 110 years, serving some families for as many as five generations. The CJA is more than just a school, we are mishpacha (family). We are a caring community that consists of faculty, staff, parents, grandparents, alumni and friends who work together to support each child's Jewish journey.

Families choose the CJA because they seek a challenging and supportive environment where they can be partners in their child's learning. An integrated curriculum guides students toward academic excellence, strong critical thinking skills, and pride in their Jewish heritage.

The CJA strives to be a leader within the Calgary Jewish community, working closely with the Calgary Jewish Federation, the Paperny JCC, multiple synagogues, Halpern Akiva Academy, and our friends in Israel at partner schools and organizations. We work to build partnerships with schools in Israel as well as Jewish Day Schools worldwide.

The CJA building sits on land that we acknowledge is traditionally not our own. The CJA is located on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional territory of the Blackfoot, which includes: the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations, the Stoney Nakoda, including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also the traditional homeland of the Historic

Northwest Métis and is home to Métis Nation of Alberta. At the CJA, our land acknowledgement is read at the start of every week during morning announcements, as well as at the beginning of all school assemblies.

At this time, the CJA does not have any students who identify as FNMI. The CJA students deepen their knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, FNMI culture and traditions throughout the year. Students are provided with educational opportunities which align with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations. We recognize that infusing Indigenous histories, cultures and perspectives into the educational curriculum is a way to contribute towards the goal of reconciliation by providing students with an opportunity to learn about the Indigenous people with whom they share the land, and on whose ancestral territories the CJA currently resides. We hope to make connections with First Nations elders/guests in the future to develop cultural bridges between the Jewish and FNMI communities.

As a Jewish Day School we are grateful that we get to use this space to teach many students their Jewish culture and religion, and to make lifelong memories through important connections, new activities and education. We promise to use this land kindly and that our students and staff will respect this land.

Stakeholder Engagement

How does the Calgary Jewish Academy actively engage stakeholders to inform the development of local priorities and plans?

We take great pride in the high level of parental involvement at the CJA. Both parents and teachers express a profound sense of satisfaction with this collaborative approach. The active engagement of parents in their child's educational journey is paramount to us, and we consider them essential partners in the learning process. Through regular communication channels, including parent-teacher conferences, open forums, and feedback sessions, we ensure that parents are well-informed and empowered to contribute their valuable insights and perspectives. This robust partnership not only strengthens the educational experience for each student but also fosters a sense of trust and confidence between the school and our dedicated parent community. Overall, the Alberta Education Assurance Measure Results, completed in the spring of 2024, demonstrated that 81% of CJA parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions about their child's school. (APORI, Fall 2024, p.125)

Looking Ahead

Calgary Jewish Academy's Three Year Plan

The CJA Board continues the extensive task of developing the next Strategic Plan, taking the CJA into 2025 - 2029. Our Board of Directors works to develop Strategic Plans for the Calgary Jewish Academy in collaboration with the Head of School. They are a Governance Board with operations solely left to the Head of School. Our Head of School works closely with the Leadership Team to ensure the implementation of curriculum and community building.

Key components of the new Strategic Plan include:

- ✧ Rewriting of the vision statement
- ✧ Rewriting of the purpose statement
- ✧ Outline the key values "Middot"
- ✧ Building Assurance Plan priorities
 - ✧ Enhance Jewish Identity & Cultural Connections
 - ✧ Support Student Growth & Achievement
 - ✧ Ensure Quality Teaching & Leadership
 - ✧ Board & Community Engagement
 - ✧ Ensure Financial Sustainability

In crafting our educational roadmap for the upcoming years, the CJA has meticulously analyzed the findings of the Alberta Education Assurance Survey in conjunction with the directives outlined in our Board's Strategic Plan, which is nearing completion. By synergizing these two vital sources of feedback and guidance, we aim to forge a comprehensive three-year plan aimed at enhancing every facet of our educational landscape. With a steadfast commitment to continuous improvement and a deep-rooted dedication to providing the best possible educational experience for our students, this collaborative effort will pave the way for transformative growth and innovation at the CJA. Annually, the CJA will review and publish a three-year plan, considering the latest results from provincial and local measures, and adjust based on changes to outcomes, measures, strategies and plan implementations.

Goal 1: Improve Student Behaviour and Create a Culture of Respect and Responsibility

Assurance Domains: Learning Supports
Student Growth and Achievement

Desired Outcomes:

As a Jewish Day School, we are committed to fostering a culture of respect, responsibility, and *menschlichkeit* in every aspect of school life. Over the next 3 years, we will implement a proactive and consistent approach to improving student behaviour, rooted in our shared Jewish values and supported by evidence-based practices. This includes refining our school-wide behaviour expectations, enhancing staff capacity through professional learning, and increasing student voice and leadership opportunities. By aligning our behavioural supports with our values of *כבוד kavod* (respect), *אחריות achrayut* (responsibility), and *שלום shalom* (peace), we aim to build a learning environment where all students feel safe, supported, and empowered to make thoughtful choices.

Timeline:

- ✧ **Year 1:** Refine school-wide behaviour expectations and introduce a shared language rooted in Jewish values like *כבוד kavod* (respect) and *אחריות achrayut* (responsibility).
- ✧ **Year 2:** Reinforce consistent behaviour supports and tie in these expectations with leadership opportunities.
- ✧ **Year 3:** Sustain through integration into curriculum, student-led initiatives, and ongoing staff development to ensure a respectful, responsible school culture.

Resources Needed:

- ✧ **Professional Development:** Training for staff on proactive behaviour strategies, restorative practices, and consistent implementation across grades.
- ✧ **Time Allocation:** Scheduled time for staff collaboration, planning, and behaviour review meetings.
- ✧ **Student Leadership Support:** Materials and mentorship for student leadership programs and middot-based initiatives.
- ✧ **Behaviour Framework Tools:** Visuals, signage, and templates that reinforce

behaviour expectations and Jewish values.

- ☆ **Family Engagement Resources:** Communication tools to align home and school behavioural expectations in order to strengthen home-school partnerships and increase engagement.
- ☆ **Data Tracking Systems:** Tools for monitoring behaviour trends and measuring progress over time.

Professional Learning:

- ☆ **Consistent Behaviour Framework:** Train staff in clear, school-wide expectations and responses, using practical strategies to ensure consistency.
- ☆ **Jewish Values Integration:** Support teachers in embedding middot (e.g., כבוד *kavod*, דרך ארץ *derech erez*) into daily routines and classroom culture.
- ☆ **Restorative Practices:** Equip staff to lead restorative conversations and circles that promote accountability and empathy (e.g., creating morning community chat time to set the tone for the day)
- ☆ **Trauma-Informed Approaches:** Provide tools to understand and respond to the root causes of student behaviour with empathy and structure.
- ☆ **Family Partnership Skills:** Train staff to communicate effectively with parents, emphasizing shared responsibility and positive collaboration.

Process to Monitor Progress:

- ☆ **Baseline Data Collection (Fall)**
 - Track frequency and types of behaviour incidents (e.g., office referrals, classroom disruptions).
 - Conduct a student, staff, and parent survey on school climate, respect, and responsibility.
 - Record anecdotal evidence from classroom observations.
- ☆ **Ongoing Monitoring (Monthly/Quarterly)**
 - Review behaviour data regularly with leadership and staff teams.
 - Track participation in positive behaviour initiatives and recognition systems.
 - Collect brief teacher feedback (via quick check-ins or short forms).
- ☆ **Mid-Year and Year-End Reviews**
 - Re-administer climate surveys to measure growth in perceptions and culture.
 - Analyze trends in behaviour data (improvements, recurring challenges).
 - Identify and celebrate areas of success; adjust strategies where needed.

☆ **Student Family and Voice**

- Invite student reflections (e.g., classroom circle feedback, leadership groups).
- Offer family feedback opportunities (e.g., surveys or focus groups) to assess engagement and accountability.

So...nu? Tachlis. What does this mean?:

This goal aligns with the objectives outlined in the CJA's November 2024 AERR, specifically addressing the need to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. By strengthening behaviour expectations and embedding Jewish values such as **כבוד** *kavod* (respect), **אחריות** *achrayut* (responsibility), and **דרך ארץ** *derech eretz* (appropriate conduct), we aim to create a culture where all students feel accountable for their actions and part of a caring community. Staff will receive targeted professional learning in consistent behaviour strategies, restorative practices, and trauma-informed approaches to support every learner. Families will be engaged as active partners, with clear communication around expectations and shared responsibility for student conduct. Student voice and leadership opportunities will reinforce positive behaviour and a sense of ownership over school culture. Progress will be monitored through data tracking, climate surveys, and regular review to ensure continued growth and alignment with the Calgary Jewish Academy's values.

Goal 2: Enhance School Culture for Staff, Students, Families and Community

Assurance Domains: Learning Supports
Student Growth and Achievement
Governance

Desired Outcomes:

At the heart of a thriving Jewish Day School is a strong, vibrant culture that nurtures connection, belonging, and shared purpose among staff, students, families, and the broader community. This goal focuses on enhancing our school culture by fostering meaningful relationships, celebrating our Jewish identity, and promoting collaboration and mutual respect across all community members. By prioritizing inclusivity, wellness, and active engagement, we aim to create an environment where everyone feels valued, supported, and inspired to contribute to our collective growth. Through intentional initiatives and ongoing dialogue, we will strengthen the bonds that make our school a warm, welcoming, and dynamic place to learn and grow together.

Timeline:

- ☆ **Year 1:** Launch staff wellness programs and establish regular family engagement events rooted in Jewish values and traditions.
- ☆ **Year 2:** Expand student leadership opportunities and develop collaborative community projects that bring together families, staff, and students.
- ☆ **Year 3:** Embed inclusive practices across all school activities and celebrate community achievements through celebrations and events (e.g., Grandparents/Grandpals Day, Junior High Awards Ceremony)

Resources Needed:

- ☆ **Staff Wellness Supports:** Professional development, wellness programs, and recognition initiatives to promote staff morale and resilience.
- ☆ **Family Engagement Tools:** Communication platforms, event planning resources, and parent education workshops to build strong home-school partnerships.

- ✧ **Student Leadership Development:** Training materials, mentorship programs, and opportunities for students to lead community-building activities. (e.g., Student Council, buddy bridges/cross-grade connections)
- ✧ **Community Event Resources:** Budget and logistical support for school-wide celebrations, cultural events, and collaborative projects that highlight Jewish identity and community spirit. (e.g., new families welcome event, Latke Lunch, Yom HaShoah Community commemoration)
- ✧ **Feedback Systems:** Surveys, focus groups, and tools for ongoing dialogue to gather input from staff, students, and families and guide continuous improvement.

Professional Learning:

- ✧ **Building Community and Inclusion:** Training for staff on creating inclusive classrooms and fostering a positive school climate that reflects Jewish values of כבוד *kavod* (respect) and שלום *shalom* (peace).
- ✧ **Family Engagement Strategies:** Workshops on effective communication and partnership with families, including ways to involve diverse family voices in school life.
- ✧ **Student Leadership and Empowerment:** Professional development focused on guiding and supporting student leaders to foster a strong sense of belonging at CJA and active participation in the broader community (Jewish and non-Jewish).
- ✧ **Staff Wellness and Resilience:** Sessions focused on self-care, stress management, and strategies to build a supportive staff culture.

Process to Monitor Progress:

- ✧ Conduct annual climate surveys with staff, students, and families to assess connection, engagement, and satisfaction.
- ✧ Track participation rates in wellness programs, family events, and student leadership initiatives.
- ✧ Collect qualitative feedback through focus groups and informal check-ins to identify successes and areas for growth.
- ✧ Encourage informal conversations to create ongoing dialogue about school climate.
- ✧ Review data regularly with stakeholders to adjust strategies and celebrate growth.

So...nu? Tachlis. What does this mean?:

This goal aligns with the objectives outlined in the CJA's November 2024 AERR, specifically addressing the importance of fostering connection, belonging, and pride across all members of our school community. Over the next 3 years, we will focus on strengthening relationships, celebrating shared values, and creating meaningful opportunities for collaboration among staff, students, families, and the wider community. Initiatives will include school-wide events rooted in Jewish tradition, staff wellness and recognition efforts, increased student leadership, and purposeful parent engagement. We will work to ensure that all voices are heard and valued, creating a culture of inclusivity, appreciation, and joyful learning. Through surveys, conversations, and reflection, these ongoing feedback loops will help us assess impact and refine our efforts. By nurturing a strong and united school culture at the Calgary Jewish Academy, we aim to deepen our collective identity and inspire a sense of purpose, connection, and community pride.

Goal 3: Improve Student Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy Across all Grade Levels Through Consistent Programming Across Divisions

Assurance Domains: Student Growth and Achievement
Learning Supports
Teaching & Leading

Desired Outcomes:

Our aim is to enhance student achievement in literacy and numeracy by establishing consistent, research-based programming across all grade levels and divisions. By aligning instructional practices and curricular expectations, we will ensure that every student receives a coherent and seamless learning experience that builds progressively year over year. This consistency will support targeted interventions, differentiated instruction, and collaborative professional learning among teachers, fostering a culture of high expectations and continuous growth. Ultimately, we seek to empower all students to develop strong foundational skills in reading, writing, and mathematics that prepare them for academic success and lifelong learning.

Timeline:

- ✧ **Year 1:** Establish baseline data; align curriculum frameworks across divisions; begin targeted professional development on consistent instructional strategies.
- ✧ **Year 2:** Implement consistent programming school-wide; introduce collaborative planning time for teachers; monitor student progress and adjust supports.
- ✧ **Year 3:** Refine instructional practices based on data; expand intervention strategies; celebrate student growth and share best practices across divisions.

Resources Needed:

- ✧ Curriculum alignment documents and planning guides
- ✧ Continued professional development on literacy and numeracy best practices
- ✧ Assessment tools and data tracking systems

- ✧ Time allocated for teacher collaboration and planning
- ✧ Intervention materials and support staff (e.g., Learning Leads, GAIN coordinator, literacy specialists)

Professional Learning:

- ✧ **Curriculum Alignment Workshops:** Facilitate sessions for teachers across divisions to collaboratively align literacy and numeracy curricula, ensuring clear progression and consistent expectations from grade to grade.
- ✧ **Instructional Strategies Training:** Provide targeted professional development on evidence-based teaching methods in literacy (e.g., guided reading, phonics, writing workshops) and numeracy (e.g., number sense, problem solving, math talks).
- ✧ **Data-Driven Instruction:** Train staff in using assessment data to inform instruction, identify student needs, and implement timely interventions.
- ✧ **Collaborative Planning and Professional Learning:** Establish regular opportunities for cross-divisional teacher collaboration focused on sharing best practices, analyzing student work, and problem-solving instructional challenges.
- ✧ **Supporting Diverse Learners:** Offer workshops on differentiation, scaffolding, and culturally responsive teaching to meet the needs of all learners, including English language learners and students with learning differences.
- ✧ **Ongoing Coaching and Mentoring:** Implement coaching cycles and peer/colleague observation opportunities to support the consistent application of effective literacy and numeracy practices.

Process to Monitor Progress:

- ✧ Collect and analyze baseline and ongoing student achievement data in literacy and numeracy.
- ✧ Conduct regular teacher check-ins and collaborative meetings to discuss instructional consistency and student needs.
- ✧ Use formative and summative assessments to monitor individual and overall growth.
- ✧ Gather teacher feedback through surveys and focus groups to identify challenges and successes.
- ✧ Review data and adjust programming annually to ensure continuous improvement.

So...nu? Tachlis. What does this mean?:

This goal aligns with the objectives outlined in the CJA's November 2024 AERR, specifically addressing the need to improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy through consistent, school-wide programming. By aligning curriculum and instructional practices across all grade levels and divisions, we aim to provide students with a coherent and progressive learning experience. Focused professional development and collaborative planning will empower teachers to deliver effective, evidence-based instruction tailored to diverse learners. Through ongoing data monitoring and responsive interventions, we will support every student in building strong foundational skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. This work reflects the Calgary Jewish Academy's commitment to high expectations, continuous growth, and preparing confident learners for future success.

Budget Summary

Allocating Resources to Achieve our Goals

As an Alberta independent school we will once again receive partial funding from Alberta Education for the 2025-2026 school year as do all accredited independent schools. The budget must serve as a planning, operational and control mechanism for results and resources, as well as the basis for board approval of school programs and resource deployment.

The CJA budget for 2025-2026 was approved by the board on January 28, 2025.

Revenue	2025/2026 Budget
Alberta Education	\$ 1,607,553
Tuition Fees	\$ 2,746,791
Gifts and Donations	\$ 692,400
Other Revenue	\$ 283,700
Total	\$ 5,330,444

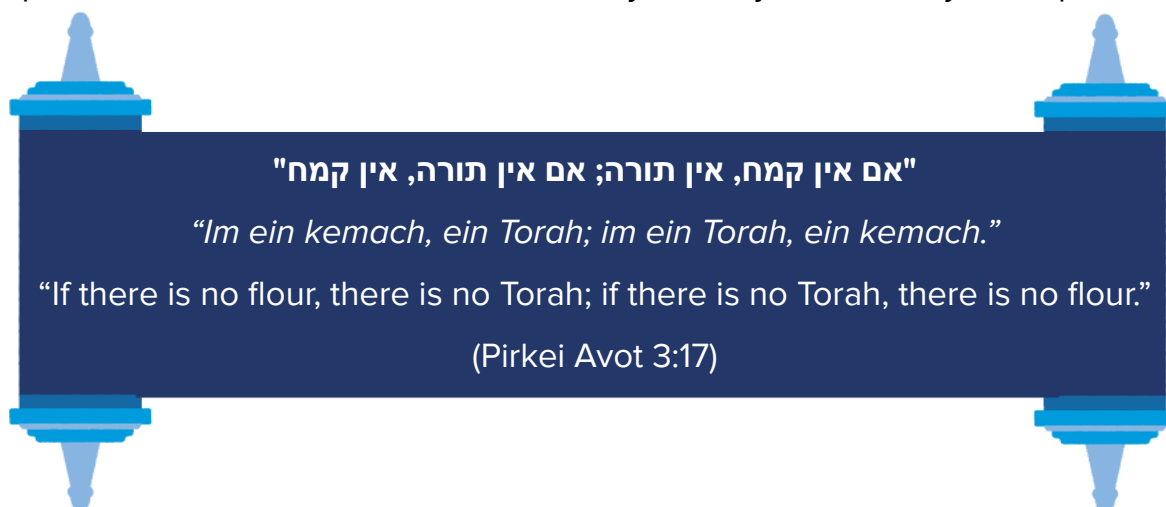
Expenses	2025/2026 Budget
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 4,266,732
Services, Contracts & Supplies	\$978,100
Total	\$ 5,244,832

Operating Surplus/Deficit	\$ 86,615
----------------------------------	------------------

Plan for Implementation

Turning Vision into Action

This Education Plan focuses on three interconnected goals that will collectively enhance the overall school experience and student success at the Calgary Jewish Academy. First, we aim to improve student behaviour by fostering a culture of respect and responsibility rooted in Jewish values and through engaging families as active partners in this work. Second, we seek to strengthen school culture by deepening connections among staff, students, families, and the broader community through inclusive practices, meaningful engagement, and shared celebrations. Finally, we are committed to improving student achievement in literacy and numeracy by implementing consistent, research-based programming across all grade levels, supported by targeted professional learning and data-driven instruction. Together, these goals reflect the CJA's dedication to nurturing a safe, supportive, and high-achieving learning environment that prepares our students to thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.



This quote teaches that just as "kemach" (flour) represents the nourishment of the body, and "Torah" symbolizes the nourishment of the mind and soul, both are necessary and interdependent. At the Calgary Jewish Academy, we understand that academic learning (Torah), emotional and social development (the whole child), and physical well-being (kemach) thrive in a symbiotic relationship. Each one enriches the others to create a balanced, meaningful, and deeply rooted Jewish education.