

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

---

Type of School: (Check all that apply)     Charter  Title I  Magnet  Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Andrew Polsky

Official School Name: The Rabbi Jacob Pressman Academy

School Mailing Address:  
1055 S. La Cienega Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90035-2507

County: Los Angeles    State School Code Number\*:

Telephone: (310) 652-2002    Fax: (310) 360-0850

Web site/URL: pressmanacademy.org    E-mail: apolsky@tbala.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*: Head of School Rabbi Mitchel Malkus

District Name:    Tel:

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Linda Salem

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*  
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

---

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2003.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

---

**All data are the most recent year available.**

**DISTRICT** (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

Does not apply to private schools

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- Urban or large central city
- Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
- Suburban
- Small city or town in a rural area
- Rural

4. 16 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	7	8	15	6	17	22	39
K	28	24	52	7	13	22	35
1	17	22	39	8	10	18	28
2	18	19	37	9			0
3	20	22	42	10			0
4	19	17	36	11			0
5	18	17	35	12			0
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL</b>							358

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: \_\_\_\_\_ % American Indian or Alaska Native  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % Asian  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % Black or African American  
3 % Hispanic or Latino  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
92 % White  
 \_\_\_\_\_ % Two or more races  
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 0 %

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	1
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	358
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.003
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	0.279

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 1 %

Total number limited English proficient 3

Number of languages represented: 4

Specify languages:

Hebrew, Farsi, Russian, Spanish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 1 %

Total number students who qualify: 3

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-price school meals program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

As a private school, we do not calculate the number of students who are eligible for reduced priced meals. We do, however, have a demographic understanding through our tuition assistance program of the number of families who are from low income families. We estimate that 3 students might be in this category.

10. Students receiving special education services: 0 %

Total Number of Students Served: 0

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>18</u>	<u>20</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>31</u>	<u>21</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 11 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Daily teacher attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Teacher turnover rate	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Student dropout rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0 %
Enrolled in a community college	0 %
Enrolled in vocational training	0 %
Found employment	0 %
Military service	0 %
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0 %
Unknown	0 %
<b>Total</b>	0 %

## PART III - SUMMARY

---

The Rabbi Jacob Pressman Academy of Temple Beth Am is a Jewish day school committed to excellence in General and Judaic Studies. Part of Temple Beth Am, the school is affiliated with the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, the network of day schools connected with the Conservative branch of Judaism in North America. Pressman Academy's relationship with Temple Beth Am is a source of strength for both institutions. Temple Beth Am is one of Los Angeles' oldest Jewish organizations, having been established in 1934. The synagogue has a membership of roughly 1,050 families. Temple Beth Am is committed to education. Pressman Academy was formed in 1986, and reorganized into its current structure in 1988. Pressman Academy Day School is a Pre-K – 8 school with a current enrollment of 358 students. The school is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the BJE of Los Angeles.

We have several characteristics that make us a unique school and worthy of Blue Ribbon School status:

First, we are guided by our mission statement, which articulates the values and ideas that animate our school and student learning. In seeking to articulate specific outcomes for our curriculum, we have developed a set of benchmarks that are based on our mission and educational philosophy. These benchmarks serve as a basis for student learning in classrooms across all grades. These are goals —academic, social, emotional, and spiritual—we have for each student who graduates Pressman Academy. They fall into the following five broad categories that are delineated for parents, faculty, and the community.

1. A Commitment to Jewish Life
2. A Positive Social Awareness and Responsible Citizenship
3. Effective Communication
4. Critical Thinking Skills
5. The Elements of A Healthy Lifestyle

Second, we have a unique relationship between the school and the synagogue. A majority of our students reside within three miles of the school, so it is relatively easy for students, staff, and parents to interact beyond school hours and for students to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities. Many of our students and staff attend religious services at Temple Beth Am. This connection between the school and the synagogue makes for a deep bond that stretches throughout the community.

Third, the Pressman Academy is committed to meeting the needs of children in the community. We maintain a Student Services Department which provides support for academic, social, and emotional growth beyond the classroom experience. We are committed to the development of the whole child and addressing issues in a proactive manner. Even when after much effort, it is apparent that the school cannot meet the needs of a child, we work with the family to find an appropriate educational setting in which the child can continue to be part of the Pressman community.

Fourth, we believe in fostering strong school – home partnerships. We continually look for ways to strengthen ties and to improve the quality of the education we provide. One example is the Coffee Nights we have with each grade's parents annually. Administrators and Teachers attend and we use the evening to answer general questions about the curriculum and expectations of the class. We also use the Coffee Nights to discuss with parents a topic of educational interest that directly impacts school routines. Two years ago, we (teachers and parents) read and discussed Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's The Essential Conversation and, as a result, re-framed our parent - teacher conference focus and routines. Last year we discussed homework and similarly revised our homework policies and practice. We regularly provide parents with information about their individual child's progress, class and school activities, and general overall status of the school.

## PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

---

### 1. **Assessment Results:**

Pressman Academy uses the results of standardized testing to track student progress as a group beginning in Grade 3 until they graduate in Grade 8.

a. The first trend we see is an overall dip in scores for students in sixth grade. We notice this in two ways: (1) in overall scores of the grade being deflated and (2) in the decreased number of sixth grade students qualifying for the Johns Hopkins University Talent Search. It is hypothesized that this result is related to the fact that many of our sixth grade students travel to Israel for a ten-day school-sponsored trip and return shortly before the standardized tests are administered. This trip and the jet-lag that accompanies it, coupled with the ten days of reduced formal class instruction in December when a group of Israeli sixth grade students spend time at Pressman Academy, result in a loss of approximately one month of formal schooling. The school recognizes this loss and the impact it may have on standardized testing results, but feels strongly that the positive cultural experience this program has far outweighs its deficits. In addition, sixth grade is the first year of our middle school and the first time that students are exposed to a departmentalized academic curriculum. We do see the scores return to the previous levels after the testing in the seventh grade.

b. The second trend is related to the “personality” of certain grades. Because we are a small school (grade sizes range from 28-40 students), any number of learning issues can affect the outcome of a subtest or subtests on a standardized test. In particular, our current 8th grade has a population of 28 students. Many of the students in that grade have significant learning issues and do not perform well in school. Pressman Academy is committed to serving students of diverse needs. This means that we accept children into our school who might not be accepted into other private schools with more rigorous admission criteria. Often, these students require modification and more help from teachers, and they do not score as well on standardized tests.

c. In understanding the results of the standardized tests, one must understand Pressman Academy. We are a dual-curriculum school where 40% of the students’ school day is spent in Judaic Studies. This is an experience which supports the mission of the school, but at the same time results in fewer hours spent in general education subjects. Our students are exposed to all the same subjects as their counterparts in public and private secular schools, but not for as many class hours. An example of this is the amount of science education children receive in the elementary school. Other schools may have science two or three times a week. At Pressman Academy, in the elementary school, our science specialist works with each class once a week for 45 minutes. While the standardized tests do not test science directly, this does mean our students are exposed to fewer non-fiction science text concepts. In the middle school (grades 6-8), our students do receive five hours of science instruction each week, which is typical of other schools. In the long run, we believe that research on second language learning and on Jewish day schools indicate that our students’ academic achievement will be comparable or beyond students who do not receive these specific courses. In the short run, this may adversely affect our students’ test scores.

### 2. **Using Assessment Results:**

Pressman Academy school personnel use the data in a variety of ways. First, the Head of School, the Principals, and the Coordinator of Student Services examine the results and discuss trends and findings. The data from a grade is tracked from year to year to develop a profile for a specific grade. By understanding the characteristics of a class, we can better serve students’ needs. An example of this is with the fifth grade. The results, along with performance in fourth grade math, indicated that each year, several students were not being successful in the curriculum and were not mastering the skills necessary for middle school math. Given all the data, a decision was made to remove selected students from the fifth grade math curriculum and work with a textbook which emphasizes basic math skills. Second, the data is also used to identify those students eligible for the Johns Hopkins University CTY Academic Talent search. Typically, about 35% of all students who take the standardized tests score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally on either one or both of the math and verbal sections and thus qualify for the Johns Hopkins CTY. Third, the school uses the data gathered to identify areas of weakness in the curriculum which need to be strengthened. An example of this is in the area of

reading comprehension. A review of the results over time indicated that this was a weak area for the school. The school personnel are working to improve this area through direct instruction and more opportunities to work with non-fiction texts. Fourth, the data is used to see how we as a school are performing compared to the general population and other independent schools across the nation. Finally, the school uses the data to identify an individual student's weaknesses and recommend courses of action such as working with our resource specialist, hiring a tutor, or participating in an educational evaluation.

### **3. Communicating Assessment Results:**

The school communicates student performance in a variety of ways. With regards to standardized testing, parents receive from the school a copy of the results along with a detailed explanation written by ERB. A letter which highlights the school's general performance is also sent at that time. The school also shares the results of the individual students as well as grade profiles with teachers. There is a discussion on general strengths and weaknesses of a specific grade and teachers are then given time to review how their past year's students performed. The teachers also review the strengths and areas needing attention of their incoming class and take that into account when planning lessons. Additionally, those students who qualify for the Johns Hopkins University CTY Talent Search (see question 2) are also sent a separate letter and brochure with detailed information about how to participate in the CTY Talent Search.

Standardized testing is only one form of assessment. The school produces progress reports two times a year for elementary school students and three times a year for middle school students. For elementary school students, these progress reports include a rubric as well as specific comments about language arts, mathematics, Hebrew, Judaic Studies, and behavior and work habits. The school also has student learning conferences twice a year. Students in grades 3-8 lead and actively participate in the conferences.

### **4. Sharing Success:**

The Pressman Academy believes in educating the whole child and, thus, our curriculum and programs reflect this mission. Our school is proud of its unique programs and the partnerships we have established. As a result, we have served as a model for other schools and have piloted cutting-edge curricular materials. One example is our Hebrew immersion program that grew out of our partnership with the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. We are one of only a few Jewish Day Schools in the country using this approach and we serve as a model for others interested in Hebrew immersion. This program has received media attention both here in Los Angeles and across the country. Another partnership we are actively engaged in is with the Hebrew Union College and the DeLeT (Day School Leadership through Teaching) program that trains future teachers for Jewish Day Schools. Participants in the DeLeT program not only learn about teaching, but have on-the-job training through a fellowship in a Jewish day school. We were one of the first Jewish schools to participate in this partnership with H.U.C. and we continue to be a strong supporter of the DeLeT program.

We are proud of all our successes and are constantly looking to share our gifts and find new ones. Our senior staff and teachers regularly attend and present at local, state, and national conferences. We consult with other Jewish Schools in Los Angeles and throughout the United States on areas of "best practice." We are also consulted on a regular basis about our unique approach to education in a Jewish setting. Should we have the honor of being awarded Blue Ribbon Status, we would welcome the opportunity to serve as a model of excellence in education, particularly in a Jewish setting.

## PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

---

### 1. **Curriculum:**

Pressman Academy has a rich dual language General and Judaic Studies integrated curriculum. Our students study English, Math, Social Studies, and Science in general studies and Hebrew language, Jewish holidays and customs, Israel, Bible, Rabbinics, Jewish history, and Jewish values in Judaic Studies. The curriculum includes art, general music, and Jewish music. Our curriculum fosters intellectual development and affective learning; we emphasize the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and personal meaning-making skills.

### **Mathematics**

Our elementary school mathematics instruction is based on the Everyday Mathematics program developed by the University of Chicago. The program focuses on four key areas: number sense (numeration and operations), algebra and functions (patterns, sequences, and variables), measurement and geometry, and statistics, data analysis, and probability.

The middle school math program works towards enriching each student's education. Classes are ability grouped, yet, all students are encouraged to embrace a higher level of mathematical thinking and problem solving. Each math class emphasizes applying math to the real world. Students learn the basic skills and take them one step further by relating them to their everyday lives. The use of technology in the classroom is also emphasized in math classes.

### **Science**

The goal of the elementary school science program is to foster a natural inclination towards inquiry through hands-on projects and experiments. We encourage students to ask questions and to look for answers through the scientific method. Units of study in each grade include experiences with Earth, Physical, and Life sciences. In Middle School, the focus is on developing an understanding of practical applications to the scientific concepts presented. Laboratory experiments and hands-on activities help students develop analytical, organizational, and problem resolution skills associated with the scientific method.

### **Social Studies**

Jewish education and secular education are not mutually exclusive. The goals and objectives for celebrating holidays, having pride in one's heritage, developing moral values, are the same for both secular and religious studies. Encouraging responsible American citizenship and enduring Jewish values provide a cohesive foundation for our students. Social Studies provides opportunities for integration of the general and Jewish studies.

### **Hebrew**

The school meets the foreign language requirement; every student in Kindergarten through Eighth grade receives at least ten hours of foreign language instruction each week. The Hebrew language program is based on an immersion approach. Immersion provides a natural setting for acquiring Hebrew language at an early age. The emphasis is on oral language development, listening comprehension, speaking in simple sentences, games, songs, dances, and dramatics. Research consistently shows that learning a second language during the early school years enhances later academic achievement, creativity, and abstract thinking skills.

### **Israel**

Israel is central to the Judaic Studies curriculum. Through music, song, dance, stories, ceremonies, and celebrations, our students learn about their connection to the land and its people. Our partnership with the Magen School in Tel Aviv, Israel, allows our students to communicate with Israeli children who are their own age and serves as the basis for our Israel education.

## **Bible**

Pressman Academy students study the books of the Bible. Students are introduced to the first leaders and events in the history of the Jewish people. The elementary program teaches the skills necessary to deal with the primary sources of biblical texts. In the middle school years, these skills are put to use in grappling with the messages of the various texts. Students are encouraged to discuss the texts at all levels, including the literal passages and metaphoric interpretations, as they learn to use the sacred texts to help guide the development of their future Jewish identity.

## **Prayer**

*T'fillah* (prayer) is part of the daily life experience and the *halakhic* (religious law) obligation of Conservative Jews and is therefore viewed both as an educational and experiential/spiritual practice at Pressman Academy. The goal of *t'fillah* at Pressman Academy is to be engaging, participatory, educational, and spiritual.

### **2a. (Elementary Schools) Reading:**

(This question is for elementary schools only)

#### **Reading**

Pressman Academy believes that students achieve success in reading and writing when the two are thoroughly interwoven into learning. Writing teaches students to read and reading teaches students to write. Using the workshop approach, students are given time to practice and develop their skills; they are given whole class, small group, and individual guidance to further develop their proficiency. The reading program is based on a balanced approach and uses techniques from both phonics and whole language instruction. Kindergarten begins with a whole language approach and, by the end of the year, most students have a basic sight vocabulary. First grade expands on this sight vocabulary and begins a structured teaching of phonics skills including initial and final consonant, short and long vowels, blends, and digraphs. Second grade continues to expand on blends and digraphs while developing reading fluency. Reading in grades three through five is literature based. Reading Workshop and Literature Circles are methods used in our classrooms to develop reading and comprehension skills. In addition, reading and comprehension focus on the elements of fiction: genre, setting, characters, plot, conflict, and resolution. Non-fiction reading comprehension is taught and practiced both in the elementary and middle schools.

#### **Writing**

Writing Workshop is the method we use to develop our students' writing. Students engage in Writing Workshop three to five times each week. Using Units of Study by Lucy Calkins as their guide, students develop stories from their own experiences. Personal narratives, poetry, fiction, essay, and realistic fiction are some of the key topics. Students are engaged in the writing process and learn skills of revising and using proper mechanics.

### **2b. (Secondary Schools) English:**

(This question is for secondary schools only)

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH**

English is an integrated language arts program focusing on the literary process of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The course is a spiral curriculum which continues to build each year focusing on the connections between literature and life, literature and understanding, literature and writing, literature and language, and literature past and present. The literature in these courses explores a wide expanse of universal themes.

The Language Arts program aims to produce competent readers and writers who appreciate literature and the power of the well-chosen word. Literature is carefully selected to reflect the grade level theme. The process includes reading aloud, independent reading selections, and in-class novels. Poetry, fiction, essays, and non-fiction are incorporated into the curriculum. Students not only analyze and discuss characterization, plot, theme, and point of view, but they explicate text to extract its deeper meaning. Students are exposed to essays that model both thesis-driven and narrative writing.

Writing instruction focuses on narrative and thesis-driven essays in which students develop and focus their ideas. Students create and refine coherent and unified paragraphs with supporting details, leading to five-paragraph essays. Coherence is emphasized through paragraph organization, varied sentence structure, proper grammar, and the use of transitional devices. Students recognize the effect of concrete, precise language in enhancing creativity, reader interest, and articulation of ideas. Grammar is used as a tool to sharpen students' writing skills. Vocabulary is generated from literature and integrated into discussions and papers. Vocabulary, punctuation, grammar, and syntax are introduced and reinforced throughout all units of study. The revision process is emphasized as students tighten, sharpen, and brighten their writing. The writing portfolio maintains a record of individual progress.

### **3. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Life Skills is a course in human development for middle school students. A required course, Life Skills meets once a week for one hour with teachers trained in adolescent development, active listening, group building, visualization, self-esteem methods, and the use of a variety of art, movement, and play modalities for personal growth and expression.

The following are the broad topics included in the course:

1. Identity: definition and self-esteem
2. Stress management
3. Affective education: intuition, imagination, centering, focusing, creativity, and sensory learning
4. Preventative health education
5. Celebrating human diversity
6. Accommodating and validating different learning styles
7. Group problem solving and conflict resolution
8. Personal and social responsibility
9. Spiritual development
10. Communication skills

Life Skills uses a variety of exercises to teach listening skills and increase the students' ability to express themselves more effectively, fully, and authentically. Pair and small group exercises are used. Discussion and dialogue may occur, but the main emphasis is on speaking one by one in a circle. At the core of Life Skills is a process called "Council," a unique format which fosters effective communication. Derived and adapted from many worldwide dialogic practices, including Native American traditions, Council is a communication skill, practice, and ceremony. Council is a ceremony which requires strict use of the circle discussion with four basic intentions:

- Speak from the heart,
- Listen from the heart,

- Speak briefly,
- Speak spontaneously.

This simple format has a very powerful effect. Giving each student an opportunity to speak with a guarantee of no interruptions or immediately expressed reactions, creates both safety and disciplined listening. Safety is further insured by a commitment to confidentiality and by respecting the choice of the individual in determining whether it is appropriate to speak or be silent when it is their turn. The use of candlelight and a “talking” stick, stone, shell, rattle, etc. adds a special dimension of intimacy and respect which inspires many students to develop greater self-expression.

#### 4. **Instructional Methods:**

Pressman Academy is dedicated to meeting the academic needs of all its students. The school recognizes that students differ in their rates and styles of learning. Differentiated instruction is used in the classroom to address the specific academic needs of each student, allowing for a flexible program within the curriculum. A pull-out program in the elementary school is also utilized for remediation and enrichment to provide individualized instruction in the core subject areas when necessary. The school strives to provide its faculty with the resources and training needed to meet the academic needs of its students. Pressman Academy is committed to encouraging all of its students to reach their full potential.

We maintain low teacher to student ratios in each classroom, whereby the maximum ratio is 1:11. The school employs a full-time learning specialist who works with small groups of children both inside the classroom and in small groups outside the classroom to strengthen the skills needed to be successful in the general classroom. The school also employs a full-time Hebrew specialist to address the needs of students struggling with the Hebrew curriculum. Teachers regularly modify in-class assignments, homework, tests, and projects to meet the needs of children who need individualization. In addition, the teachers and learning specialists are in touch with tutors and educational therapists to ensure a unified, coordinated approach to helping a student succeed.

In third, fourth, and fifth grades, students are ability grouped in math so that both children who excel in math as well as those who struggle can be appropriately challenged. In the middle school (sixth – eighth grades), students are ability grouped in both math and Hebrew.

#### 5. **Professional Development:**

Professional Development is an important component of the philosophy of the Pressman Academy. We believe that every teacher should be appropriately challenged so that he or she can continue to grow and become excited about his/her chosen profession. The school has in place a professional development protocol whereby all teachers who are new to the field as well as veteran teachers are allowed the opportunity to grow professionally. For example, veteran teachers select from a variety of activities including observing peers, reviewing educational literature on a specific topic, or examining new instructional methods. The school also supports the growth of new teachers through the use of mentors, peer-to-peer dyads, and informal learning sessions.

Pressman Academy supports professional development in two significant ways. First, each teacher is given a yearly stipend (\$225.00) to use on professional development as he or she sees fit. In addition, teachers who have been on staff at the Pressman Academy for more than five years can apply for a \$1000.00 stipend to be used for professional development on a larger scale. Many teachers attend professional conferences (i.e., meeting the needs of the gifted, helping struggling readers to success) and/or summer institutes (i.e., Schools Attuned Institute developed by Dr. Mel Levine).

Second, the school has three professional development days each year. Usually there is a specific theme that connects these days. Last year our theme was homework. We studied research, heard from experts, and, as a result, revised our homework policy. This year, we have been working with Sasha Borenstein the Director of

the Kelter Center. Our discussions have focused on differentiation and the needs of diverse learners.

**6. School Leadership:**

Pressman Academy is a Jewish day school affiliated with a large Conservative Jewish synagogue. The Pressman Academy is governed by the Education Cabinet which operates in accordance with a set of governing principles. The Cabinet is composed of 23 voting members who are volunteer leaders from both within the school and synagogue community as well as members from outside the community. The Education Cabinet seeks to instill the articulated values of the Academy by encouraging inspired leadership committed to Jewish tradition, community, and the development of children as both students and human beings. The Cabinet also undertakes to assure the stability of the Academy and safeguard its educational mission. The Cabinet serves as the board of the school, and through its standing committees, sets policy and serves as the fiduciary of the school. The Cabinet meets monthly, is chaired by the Vice President of Education, and is staffed by the Head of School. The Education Cabinet evaluates the Head of School each year.

The school is led by a Head of School who works closely with an administrative team of three principals (Elementary School Principal, Middle School Principal, and Judaic Studies Principal) and Day School Coordinator. The principals report directly to and are supervised by the Head of School. Each of the principals supervises and oversees the faculty in their respective departments. The administrative team meets weekly to oversee the day-to-day operations of the school. In addition, the administrative team meets monthly to study and learn together. The principals convene weekly staff meetings and regular grade level team meetings. The principals are also responsible for the formal supervision of the teachers and produce a written evaluation based on a supervision protocol.

## PART VI - PRIVATE SCHOOL ADDENDUM

---

1. Private school association: Jewish
2. Does the school have nonprofit, tax exempt (501(c)(3)) status? Yes  No
3. What are the 2009-2010 tuition rates, by grade? (Do not include room, board, or fees.)

<u>\$14255</u>	<u>\$14255</u>	<u>\$14255</u>	<u>\$14255</u>	<u>\$14255</u>	<u>\$14255</u>
K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
<u>\$15555</u>	<u>\$15655</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th
<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>				
12th	Other				

4. What is the educational cost per student? \$ 13928 (School budget divided by enrollment)
5. What is the average financial aid per student? \$ 5000
6. What percentage of the annual budget is devoted to scholarship assistance and/or tuition reduction?  
12 %
7. What percentage of the student body receives scholarship assistance, including tuition reduction?  
30 %

# PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

## ASSESSMENTS REFERENCED AGAINST NATIONAL NORMS

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 3    Test: CTPIV

Edition/Publication Year: 2002    Publisher: ERB

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	86	89	82	69
Number of students tested	35	35	36	41	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 3 Test: CTP IV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	79	67	71	67	82
Number of students tested	35	35	36	41	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 4 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	81	89	86	84	89
Number of students tested	36	37	37	29	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 4 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	60	81	74	74	74
Number of students tested	36	37	36	29	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 5 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	89	86	86	91	93
Number of students tested	37	35	30	28	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 5 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	78	81	74	78	85
Number of students tested	37	35	30	28	32
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 6 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	80	59	80	79	76
Number of students tested	39	29	30	32	29
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 6 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	58	52	67	85	66
Number of students tested	39	29	30	32	29
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics                      Grade: 7 Test: CTPIV

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	75	84	87	79	91
Number of students tested	31	32	33	28	28
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 7 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	77	80	79	74	74
Number of students tested	31	32	33	28	28
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 8 Test: CTPIV

Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB

Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	91	79	79	88	84
Number of students tested	35	32	33	24	24
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes:

Subject: Reading                      Grade: 8 Test: CTPIV  
Edition/Publication Year: 2002 Publisher: ERB  
Scores are reported here as: Percentiles

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Average Score	85	91	85	90	87
Number of students tested	35	32	33	24	24
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>5. Limited English Proficient Students</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. Largest Other Subgroup</b>					
Average Score					
Number of students tested					

If the reports use scaled scores, provide the national mean score and standard deviation for the test.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
<b>NATIONAL MEAN SCORE</b>					
<b>NATIONAL STANDARD DEVIATION</b>					

Notes: