

2022-2025

EDUCATION PLAN



Halpern Akiva Academy's 3 year Education Plan for Accountability, Improvement and Assurance.

School: 9914 Akiva Academy

Authority: 9147 Congregation House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

We are pleased to report to our school Parents, Staff, Board of Directors and to Alberta Education the following information concerning Halpern Akiva Academy as it pertains to its operation during the 2022-2023 school years. This report reflects the information that is required for reporting as stipulated by Alberta Education. Halpern Akiva Academy's goal is to be transparent in the information that we share with all of our stakeholders. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring that all members are kept informed of what is happening at Halpern Akiva Academy. We encourage you to read this important document. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

Best,

Irena Be'eri
President
Halpern Akiva Board of Directors

David Silver
Chair
HOJMI Board of Directors

A PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Halpern Akiva Academy was founded in 1980 as an Orthodox Jewish Day School. Halpern Akiva Academy is accredited and partially funded as a Private School under the Education Act and provides a Secular Education, which meets or exceeds the requirements of Alberta Learning. The Judaic/Hebrew program follows the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools curriculum guidelines.

For the 2022-2023 school year, Halpern Akiva Academy will serve 75+ students from 19 months through Grade Nine. The school staff consists of qualified and dedicated full and part time teachers, paraprofessionals, one administrative assistant, one daycare director, and one maintenance worker. Halpern Akiva Academy has optimal teacher/student ratios in all classes.

FOUNDATION STATEMENTS

The Vision of Halpern Akiva Academy is to provide an exceptional education to Jewish children, by instilling Torah values, academic excellence, passion for learning, love for community and respect for self and others.

The Mission of Halpern Akiva Academy is to welcome all Jewish families and to provide excellence in General, Hebrew & Judaic education while instilling a love of Judaism.

In order to fulfill this mission, we:

- Recognize the individual educational needs of each child, and provide strategies for them to learn to their full potential;
- Investigate new methods of teaching to ensure the best methods of learning;
- Teach and model Torah values with sensitivity and respect towards individuals' religious observances and philosophies;
- Provide a meaningful Jewish education emphasizing knowledge, skills and values in order to strengthen Jewish identities, thereby encouraging children to make informed choices about their Jewish life;
- Immerse the children in Hebrew language by ensuring that Hebrew is taught through Ivrit b'Ivrit;
- Nurture the characteristics of "Menschlichkeit" to promote the development of a caring, sensitive and socially responsible Jew who will be a source of strength to our community;
- Enrich learning skills, such as critical thinking, through Judaic learning;
- Foster a lifelong love of learning that will motivate children throughout their lives, developing in each child a positive self-image and high self-esteem;
- Provide a welcoming environment that is open to all Jewish families & foster a sense of community both within the school and the greater Calgary Jewish Community;
- Instill in our students an attachment to the State of Israel and its people as well as a sense of responsibility for their welfare.

Our unique strengths include an inclusive and supportive school environment, small student-to-teacher ratios, Montessori-inspired childcare, immersive Hebrew language program and a meaningful Jewish education.

BELIEFS & STRENGTHS

Providing Jewish Children with a Traditional Jewish Education emphasizing the knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live as practicing Jews and as responsible Jewish citizens in the world. Providing education and an educational environment that promotes moral and ethical behaviour and religious practice embodied in traditional values. Halpern Akiva Academy's Torah orientation results in a high standard of student conduct and respectful interaction among all members of the school community.



AN EXCELLENT START TO LEARNING

Halpern Akiva Academy has a Preschool Program for Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten children as well as an afternoon daycare program and a full day Toddler program.

These programs boast a Montessori element, and training on this method of early education has been taken by all staff. Montessori is a method of teaching that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning, and collaborative play. The Montessori approach to education is based on the work and research of Dr. Maria Montessori. It provides students a carefully planned, stimulating environment that helps them develop an excellent foundation for learning and leadership.

The daycare and preschool have now incorporated five key areas of learning which make up the Montessori elements: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, and Culture.

Some of the Montessori special approaches to learning are: Fostering independence, Creating sense of order and Hands on learning.

Halpern Akiva Academy operates a full day Kindergarten. The students participate in the Alberta curriculum for half of the day and the Hebrew/Judaic programs for the other half of the day.



Strategies

- Encourage children to interact freely with their peers
- Listening to stories
- Provide opportunities for play during centre time
- Begin literacy and numeracy skills
- Participate in the physical activities during gym and outside on the playground

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We truly believe in the idea of "Am Echad, Lev Echad" and consider our students, staff, parents and supporters our Halpern Akiva Family. When you enter the school, you immediately feel you are part of something special, with everyone looking out for one another. Our older students help our younger students both in- and out-of-class. Our staff support one another and look for ways to collaborate. Our supporters are always welcome to schedule a visit and see what exciting things we are learning. Our parents are encouraged to volunteer and our students are encouraged to go out into the community to do acts of kindness (Chesed). In 2020 100% of our parents reported that they were satisfied with the level of involvement they were granted in their child(rens)'s education.

Every year we are blessed with a mix of students and parents that are supportive and encouraging, as well as deeply vested in the education process. Parents need to feel that their voice is heard, along with that of the student in the Education process. Halpern Akiva Academy values its stakeholders' input immensely and is committed to creating and maintaining positive and lasting partnerships with parents and the broader community.

- Continue to have an open door policy for parent volunteers
- Continue with weekly newsletter, sharing details of classroom activities, field trips and upcoming events.
- Continue to sponsor a variety of events to bring parents and community members into the school
- PTA will continue their active role in shaping the school activities.
- Parents volunteers on the Halpern Akiva board, in classrooms, fundraisers, special events and programs.
- Board meetings are held monthly.
- Parent community is heavily involved and committed to supporting many school endeavours
- Recognize that the Finance Committee is a vital, active and positive arm of the School Board
- Continue to hold yearly AGM open to all stakeholders.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

This Education plan was created using results from the 2021 provincial accountability pillar survey taken by parents, staff and students.

Furthermore, ongoing feedback from parents, students, teachers, the board, paraprofessionals, community members and more is welcomed, encouraged and taken into consideration.

Feedback is received from these groups during board meetings, conversations, formal surveys, questionnaires, and more.

This feedback inspired us to create CTF courses, engage in meaningful conversations with paraprofessionals to support our students, pilot the new DRAFT Alberta curriculum, invest more into our music program, decide where and how to allocate funds and resources, and more.

For more details please visit www.halpernakiva.ca to view our Annual Education Results Report.



FIRST NATIONS, METIS, AND INUIT STUDENT SUCCESS

At the present time, Halpern Akiva Academy has no students declared as FNMI however, we continue to be inclusive in our teaching and resources to ensure that students are aware of and learn about this important history in Canada, as well as modern day issues and opportunities.

- Ensure students in the Social Studies program understand and appreciate the FNMI culture
- Incorporate the FNMI culture into the Social Studies program by bringing in speakers to share their knowledge and history
- Participate in Orange shirt day by keeping it as an in-school day of learning about the topic rather than a day off.
- Continue to use a curriculum and/or supplemental curriculum that will ensure all students and teachers learn about the First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, treaties, and the history and legacy of residential school

STUDENT GROWTH & ACHIEVEMENT

Student Growth and Achievement refers to the ongoing progress students make in their learning, relative to identified provincial learning outcomes and consistent with their needs, interests and aspirations

Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate increased literacy skills and confidence when reading.
- Students will demonstrate increased numeracy skills, specifically in the domain of mental math, and will transfer those skills to problem solving situations.
- Junior high students will be engaged in school through participating in courses they find interesting and relevant.

Strategies:

- The principal will review and analyze PAT results with teachers to address the specific areas of need.
- We continue to ensure we provide extra time and support for ESL (English Second Language) students and for those students on an IPP (Individualized Program Plan).
- Focus on instilling and improving critical thinking skills (e.g. synthesizing information) throughout the school year.
- Increase the intentionality of tracking students reading levels and ensuring those who are struggling receive supports.
- For the 2022-23 school year math will be taught through a four step process where the teacher introduces a skill, then reinforces it with practice, formative assessments, games, projects, manipulatives and other hand-on means, then the students practice and review the skill, and then the skill is summatively assessed.
- Use of IXL diagnostic, assessment and practice materials as homework, in-class practice and one on one support.
- Implement CTF courses for students in junior high to explore areas of interest that can lead to career paths and opportunity for self-improvement and have students actively involved in deciding on courses and picking what they would like to learn.

STUDENT GROWTH & ACHIEVEMENT

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Measures:

Provincial

- Provincial exams have not been reported on for the 2020 and 2021 years. Students in Grade 6 in 2022 will write all their PATS minus ELL as they are piloting that new curriculum. Students in Grade 9 in 2022 will write all their provincial exams. The percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on the 2019 PAT's exceeded or approached the provincial percentages in all of the subjects.

Local

- Fountas and Pinnell reading levels will be carefully tracked three times a year to measure student progress, offer assistance to those students in need and to continually ensure students making progress in their reading levels and are reading at challenging and acceptable levels for their personal abilities.
- Halpern Akiva Academy is updating the way they teach math for the 2022-2023 school year as described above. We believe that every child can develop a deep understanding of mathematics and strong reasoning skills. Students who are requiring extra assistance will be given small group or one-on-one support.
- Halpern Akiva Academy will participate in the mandatory literacy and numeracy screening assessment initiative for students in grades 1-3 beginning in September 2022.
- We will seek junior high student feedback related to the CTF courses we offer in order to provide interesting and engaging courses to students and to continually strive to improve.

TEACHING & LEADING

Teaching and Leading refers to teachers and leaders analyzing the learning context; attending to local and societal considerations; and applying the appropriate knowledge and abilities to make decisions resulting in quality teaching, leading and optimum learning for all.

Outcomes:

- Teachers will demonstrate a strong commitment to life-long learning and in-depth knowledge of best teaching practices.
- Students will demonstrate increased numeracy skills and will transfer those skills to problem solving situations.
- Students will develop strong Hebrew language skills and demonstrate proficiency in Hebrew reading, writing and oral comprehension.
- Junior high students will be engaged in school through participating in courses they find interesting and relevant as well as student council.

Strategies:

- Teachers will attend a minimum of one professional development course per year. Administration will continue to forward information on upcoming courses and aid teachers in finding relevant and meaningful professional development opportunities. to assist teachers in evolving as new trends and student needs are identified.
- We will continue to pilot parts of the new DRAFT curriculum in 2022-2023 to become familiar with the material, engage in collaborative opportunities with other schools, and provide meaningful and relevant feedback to Alberta Education.
- Implement new CTF courses for Junior High students based on their feedback from the previous year.
- Implement new methodology for the teaching and understanding of mathematics.
- Continue the bilingual Hebrew Language environment and continue to mandate Hebrew Language within our Judaic curriculum. Our staff has been trained through professional development opportunities in a curriculum appropriate for North American children to learn HSL.
- Use new LeHavin Ulehaskil Chumash curriculum which focuses on skills-based deciphering of the Torah verses.
- Halpern Akiva Academy is excited to welcome a new Head of Judaic Studies for the 2022-2023 school year. Rabbi Kutnowski is especially looking forward to fostering the unique personality and strengths of each student at the HAA.

TEACHING & LEADING

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Measures:

Provincial

- Accountability Pillar results indicating measure of education quality and teacher professional development.

Local

- Halpern Akiva Academy staff have used professional development days to expand their knowledge of art techniques, anaphylaxis training, CTF, Montessori programming and student social emotional well-being. We are striving to expand our programs at the school level and as such we have visited and entered into joint endeavours with other successful schools. We have also visited Rundle College as well as other schools to learn about STEAM integration. These professional developments result in a strong staff team that are confident and supported in providing high quality education to all students. and we will continue to expand and grow our knowledge on our PD days by booking full staff team training programs.
- Judaics is taught by qualified teachers who lead by example - demonstrating a true love of Torah. Students become familiar with the services in any Jewish synagogue or life cycle event, and develop critical thinking through text study and in-class discussion. Most importantly, students will demonstrate a passion for whatever Jewish observances their family celebrates at home.
- Hebrew language skills will continue to be demonstrated across various platforms such as artwork, projects, formal assessments, oral conversations and more. .
- Student feedback on CTF courses will be gathered to determine what courses to offer as well as overall satisfaction with the courses provided.

LEARNING SUPPORTS

Learning Supports refers to the mobilization of resources (including expertise, facilities, human and community services) required to demonstrate shared, system-wide responsibility for all children and students, and the application of these resources to ensure quality teaching and leading and optimum learning for all

Outcomes:

- Students will feel that school is a safe place where they are welcomed and cared for. They will feel comfortable speaking to their teachers or administration when they have a concern.
- Staff members will recognize the importance of relationship building in student success and will actively build and cultivate meaningful relationships with students.
- Teachers will actively communicate with families on an ongoing basis.
- Families will feel they have access to the supports they need in order for their child(ren) to feel successful at school.

Strategies:

- Recognize the individual educational needs of each child, and provide strategies for them to learn to their full potential through IPPs, personal goal setting, and partnership and communication with parents and families.
- Continue to partner with AISCA to provide occupational therapy, speech therapy, psychologist supports and psychoeducational assessment services to students through Renfrew Educational Services as needed.
- Teachers will communicate their expectations, academic coverage, classroom goals and more to parents on an ongoing basis and will seek out opportunities to allow parents into the classroom
- Build relationships with Can Learn Society and the organizations involved with AISCA's Expanding Capacity and Learner Supports project in order to direct our family towards services and supports as needed

LEARNING SUPPORTS

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Measures:

Provincial

- Accountability Pillar results focused on safe and caring, student inclusion and access to services.

Local

- Halpern Akiva Academy prides itself on being a place where all Jewish children can receive an outstanding Secular, Hebrew & Judaic education while instilling a love of Judaism. Social-emotional student support services will continue into 2022-2023 with a focus on working with classes as a whole through the implementation of Physical Education and Wellness as a course in the new curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 6. This class combines elements of both physical and mental wellbeing.
- IPP's created by teachers with the aid of an IPP coordinator and consistent and ongoing conversation with parents will ensure curriculum is modified in a way that allows every child to feel successful.
- Teachers will send updates to parents to inform them of activities in the classroom via weekly emails, newsletters, blogs, websites or other means of communication.

GOVERNANCE

Governance refers to the processes by which policy leaders attend to local and societal context; determine strategic direction; evaluate policy implementation; and manage fiscal resources to ensure learning supports, quality teaching and leading and optimum learning for all

Outcomes:

- Parents will feel that their voices are heard in regard to feedback and input involving their child's education.
- The Halpern Akiva Academy and HOJMI boards will both be informed about all relevant information regarding Halpern Akiva Academy and will work together to support the school.
- Policies will remain up to date, relevant and meaningful to the current school and governmental context.
- The school will operate under a budget that is feasible and aids the school in remaining successful and viable for years to come while continuing to provide up to date resources and materials to teachers and students.

Strategies:

- Use Sycamore Education to track attendance, communicate with parents, and access report cards.
- Create a document for tracking policy updates and ensure policies are updated to reflect the changing dynamics of the school on a continual basis.
- Continue to strengthen the relationship between Administration, The Halpern Akiva Academy Board and the HOJMI board through participation in monthly board meetings and ongoing continued communication. A representative from the HOJMI board of directors will be present at Halpern Akiva Board meetings.
- Continue Board of Directors holding the end of year Annual General Meeting that all stakeholders are invited to attend.
- Monthly finance meetings to be held between administration, the treasurer and Halpern Akiva Academy board president to manage and reflect on monthly expenses and revenues.

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Measures:

Provincial

- Accountability Pillar results of parent involvement.

Local

- A spreadsheet will be created to ensure cyclical review of policies. Updated policies will be brought to monthly board meetings by administration, reviewed and voted on by the board.
- Students and teachers will have access to up to date and relevant learning and teaching materials.
- Monthly finance meetings will be planned and attended and the budget will be adjusted accordingly.
- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting and feedback from stakeholders on governance issues will inform this domain.

LOCAL & SOCIETAL CONTEXT

Local and Societal Context refers to the engagement practices of schools and communities, with support from the broader system, in identifying and responding to the learning needs, interests, aspirations and diverse cultural, social and economic circumstances of all students.

Outcomes:

- Halpern Akiva Academy will feel as though they are part of a broader community working towards a common goal.

Strategies:

- Partner with various Judaic and educational programs throughout Calgary to support our school, students, families and programming.
- Community services will be informed of events and other success that Halpern Akiva Academy experiences. Weekly meetings bringing together people from various Jewish organizations to collaborate will continue.

LOCAL & SOCIETAL CONTEXT

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Measures:

Local

- At Halpern Akiva Academy we realize that it takes a community to raise a child. We are proud of our warm inclusive Halpern Akiva family which includes people from diverse cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. All Jewish families will feel welcome here.
- Partner with Jewish Family Services to provide social and psychological services to our families and all families
- Halpern Akiva Academy is affiliated with House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel, is a beneficiary agency of The Calgary Jewish Community Federation, is an accredited Alberta Learning school and follows the curriculum guidelines of the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools. We will continue to foster relationships with these organizations.
- We are able to offer a subsidy program in correlation with Calgary Jewish Federation to ensure all Jewish families have access to quality Judaic and Alberta education in Calgary.
- We will expand our social media presence to inform our local and international school of events, achievements, and opportunities happening at Halpern Akiva Academy.

FINANCES

The guiding principles used in the financial planning process are:

We have been using Accountability Pillar Level 2 for the past nine years. With our acceptance of Level 2 funding and accountability, we will once again receive partial funding from Alberta Education the 2022-2023 school year as do all accredited independent schools.

The budget must reflect the anticipated costs of meeting the identified educational requirements of all students. Brander and Company Chartered Accountant accounting firm audited Halpern Akiva Academy's financial statements. Our major expenses continued to be salaries and benefits for teachers and staff. The reader may access additional financial information (Audited Financial Statements) by contacting the administrative assistant in the school office.

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.

Our first guiding principle in budgeting and planning is to evaluate what would be best for our student learning needs. Next, we have to follow our mandate not to deny a Jewish child a Jewish education due to lack of funds, so we have to be conscious of balancing community bursary funds and realistic fundraising initiatives. After evaluating and calculating our revenues, we allocate expenses to meet the learning needs of our students within our budget.

The 2022-2023 budget is available at www.halpernakiva.ca

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The Education Plan for the Congregation House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel commencing Sept 1, 2023 was prepared under the direction of the Board in accordance with the responsibilities under the Private Schools Regulation and the Education 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 Education Plan for 3 years on May 31, 2022.

David Silver
Chair
HOJMI Board of Directors

