

Jewish Day School Group Project

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Head of School Dean Goldfein speaks with Mayor Carol Federighi, far right

It wasn't easy, but with the help of some very generous donations, a Koret Foundation grant of one million dollars and the support of the school community, the Contra Costa Jewish Day School (CCJDS) will soon have its very own permanent new classroom and administration building.

While well on their way toward their 7.5 million dollar target, and still actively soliciting donations, construction is tentatively scheduled to commence this coming April. At 18,000 square feet, the new structure will have plenty of room to accommodate the growing number of students from kindergarten to eighth grade, along with a dedicated science lab, music room and large library.

Mayor Carol Federighi recently toured the facility to get a first hand look at the existing school and the new building site. "Design Review was a wonderful process," noted Head of School Dean Goldfein. "It made our building better, integrating it with the rest of the campus." Federighi acknowledged the requirements of the City, "It can be painful sometimes." This new building is just part of a master expansion plan that is slated to include a gymnasium with a rooftop play field and additional landscaped gathering areas adding to the overall campus feel.

The current building, leased from Temple Isaiah since 2001, is bursting at the seams with students. Started with just 23 children, now 94 pupils are enrolled in grades K through 8. According to Goldfein, "Contra Costa County has the fastest growing Jewish community in the Bay Area." He continues, "private schools must serve a public purpose, providing something special and unique to the community." The CCJDS emphasizes its community-learning program through extensive service to the Contra Costa Food Bank, and student-centered fundraising for charity.

Located off of Risa Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard, the 10-acre parcel offers ample parking, easy access, and a quiet woody atmosphere. Because the setting is so secluded, it's anticipated that construction equipment and noise will have minimal impacts on Mt. Diablo Boulevard traffic.

Students come from all over the area, Lamorinda, Walnut Creek, Rockridge and beyond. The school accepts non-Jewish students, and has a number of students from households with just one Jewish parent, along with a range of beliefs from Reform to Orthodox.

"This school is full of life, learning and excitement," says Dr. Colin Schlesinger, President of the Board of Trustees.



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