

Adelson Educational Campus

Las Vegas, NV

www.adelsoncampus.org

Head of School

for July 2019

The Adelson Educational Campus (“Adelson” or “AEC”) is an independent Jewish day school serving 450 students, ages 18 months through grade 12. Adelson is a *community* Jewish day school, welcoming students and families of all levels of Jewish observance (as well as some non-Jewish students). Adelson combines Jewish learning and tradition with the best of innovative educational practices in a rigorous, yet nurturing learning environment. The school is dedicated to fostering an excellent education; a commitment to Israel and Judaism; a nurturing, drug-free environment; and a sense of community.

Adelson is located on fourteen acres and includes more than 160,000 square feet of facilities. It is the only full Apple school in Nevada. Facilities include seven fully equipped science labs, a lower school organic garden, a 400-seat theater, an art toolbox studio and an instrumental music room. Among the school’s athletic facilities are an indoor competition swimming pool, regulation-size basketball court, indoor running track, volleyball court, fencing area, soccer field and three tennis courts.

History

The Hebrew Academy Las Vegas opened in 1980 with 57 students in kindergarten through second grade. The school expanded in 1988 to encompass a preschool and grades K-8. The expanded school was named the Milton I. Schwartz Hebrew Academy in Summerlin. In 2008, following the rapid expansion of Las Vegas, and the size and depth of the Jewish community, Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson donated the funds to create a world-class Jewish community day school for children 18 months to 18 years old, rebranded as the Adelson Educational Campus.

The rebranding entailed the hiring of the best possible faculty, including numerous PhD credentialed teachers; establishing an all-kosher facility ensuring a welcoming environment to even the most observant Jewish families; employing architects specialized in school construction who designed a facility maximizing natural light, indoor/outdoor spaces, spacious hallways, a large, equipped auditorium, synagogue and sports facilities, including an indoor swimming pool; establishing school institutions, such as sports teams and uniforms; instituting the school’s drug-free policy (including random testing of students, faculty and administrators); and fostering a friendly school environment where the Head knew every child’s name, family, and family circumstances. The first high school graduating class sent students to top schools, including Harvard and Smith, and many students went on to become presidents of their college Hillel centers and fight in the Israel Defense Forces.

After seven years, the Board of Trustees undertook an initiative to improve academic quality and more aggressively advance Jewish content. Dr. Joyce Raynor was hired as Head in 2015 to achieve these goals and has made substantial progress towards doing so. Dr. Raynor came out of retirement from a highly successful New Jersey Jewish day school to take on these challenges, promising three years to Adelson (and graciously delivering four). The Lower School is now successfully providing differentiated learning as well as competent Hebrew language and Jewish content. In the Upper School, STEM courses have been ramped up, and the school implemented a tech incubator space that is best-of-class in the West. Dr. Raynor has also provided more effective financial management.

School Structure and Governance

Adelson's 130 faculty and staff serve 450 students across two divisions: Lower School (age 18 months through grade 5) and Upper School (grades 6-12). The faculty speaks with passion about its dedication to the students, and with great appreciation for the strength of the school community. In addition to the Head of School, Adelson's core administrative team includes the Principals of the Lower and Upper Schools, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Admissions, Director of Marketing & Communications, Director of Facilities, and Chief of Security & Safety. The school currently works with a development consultant and is looking to add a Director of Development to the administrative team. The next Head of School may look forward to working with a highly competent administrative team already in place.

The Adelson Educational Community is a member of NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools), is accredited by the Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS), and is a member of Prizmah. The school is currently in the process of renewing its accreditation, with the visiting team scheduled for Spring 2019.

Academic, Arts and Athletic Programs

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the Preschool and Lower School were consolidated to provide a smoother educational pathway for students. Preschool students enjoy a nurturing environment along with exposure to early literacy, math, Hebrew language and Judaism. They have opportunities to discover and learn through play both in and out of doors. Multisensory approaches to learning and appropriate technology enrich their education environment. Hebrew immersion in preschool includes at least one instructor in every class who speaks only Hebrew to the children.

Lower School students benefit from a multidisciplinary approach to foster connections between their day-to-day studies and their lives. Students learn how to plan a project, how to work collaboratively, adopt healthy work habits, offer meaningful feedback to others, and learn from feedback they receive. Lower School students are introduced to Hebrew language and Judaism through the Tal-Am and Chaverim b'Ivrit Programs. The teachers integrate Hebrew Language Arts with Judaic studies, including introductions to Jewish history and literature. The curriculum includes music, games and visual aids to reinforce vocabulary, thinking skills, and Jewish concepts and values.

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, the Middle and Upper Schools were consolidated into the Upper School in order to create a seamless transition to secondary school education. The Upper School is geared to college preparation. Small class sizes and a dedicated faculty, many holding advanced degrees in their subjects, ensure that students will be challenged, inspired, encouraged and supported as they grow into young adults.

Beginning in the fall of 2018, the Upper School will launch a new approach to curriculum, namely, project-based and multi-disciplinary team teaching. The purpose is to foster students taking an expanded role in their education, directed to solving real-world problems. Students will take an interdisciplinary Humanities course taught by three faculty members (Judaic Studies, History and English), providing numerous opportunities for project-based learning. 9th and 10th grade students will choose two majors among Judaic Studies, Pre-med, Pre-law, Communications/Art, and Technology & Entrepreneurship. In 11th and 12th grades, students will undertake a capstone project, exploring an area of interest stemming from their major. Faculty note that this program builds upon already-offered electives, and will enable Adelson seniors to demonstrate to colleges a depth of knowledge and expertise in a particular area.

Judaic Studies for students in grades 6-8 include the study of foundational texts, biblical, rabbinical and modern writings and philosophy works. Each grade level has specific themes that enhance the whole child while expanding the core skills of language arts, world affairs, geography and social studies. Required Judaic Studies for students in Grades 9-12 include a survey of Jewish history through the modern State of Israel. The Upper School offers an array of Judaic electives on foundational texts, biblical, rabbinical and modern literature, and writings of the great philosophers. Upper School students are currently required to take only one Judaic studies course per year, and Hebrew language is an optional foreign language. Upper School students participate in at least one Israel trip with their class. The Lower School has made great strides in Hebrew-language and Judaic studies. The new Head of School will be tasked with bringing the same improvements to the Upper School.

Adelson is justifiably proud of its Startup Incubator, a state-of-the-art technology lab inspiring innovation and creativity. This 5,000-square foot workshop features a coding lab, digital media studio, maker space and fabrication lab and includes 2D/3D printers, a laser cutter, a chroma key wall and digital cameras. From weekly coding and maker classes in the Lower School to Upper School core and elective courses, the Incubator provides students with a range of amazing opportunities.

Adelson hosts young Israeli ambassadors in the Shinshin Program (Israeli high school graduates who spend a gap year at Adelson before commencing their military service in Israel). The program is valuable in helping to bring Israel closer to Adelson students, while fostering cross-cultural understanding.

Adelson's athletic offerings include baseball, basketball, cross country, soccer, swimming, tennis, volleyball, fencing and golf at the intramural level. In recent years, the boys' varsity basketball team won division championships, while both the boys' and girls' swim teams have

qualified for regional and state championships. Arts and science opportunities include musical theater, art festivals, slam poetry, rocketry, drones, and STEM competitions.

There are a number of clubs and activities available to students throughout their years at Adelson, including student council, art, theater, dance, journalism, gardening, yoga, band, chess club, comedy club, environmental and social awareness, mad science, recycled percussion, creative arts magazine, Chinese games and culture, game design, Moot Beit Din, philanthropy, rocketry and sign language.

Head of School Opportunity

Profile of the Person

Adelson has been privileged to have two recent Heads of School collectively embodying the main skills, experience and personalities desired by the community, namely:

- Jewish with a commitment to Israel, Hebrew language, Judaism, Jewish education and the Jewish community.
- Educators with the ability to identify effective curriculum models and the teachers to implement the models.
- Love of children, and the ability to teach to the whole child through differentiated learning.
- Leaders with the ability and desire to reach out to the Jewish community of Las Vegas and market the school.
- Honest financial managers motivated to treat the generous resources available to this school with the respect the donors and school deserve.

The successful candidate will bring the skills and experience necessary to manage a top college preparatory academy. Additionally, the successful candidate will support the school's drug-free policy and support for Israel. Adelson is a community school, committed to welcoming Jewish students of all levels of Jewish observance. Consistent with this commitment to community diversity, Orthodox applicants are welcome to apply.

It cannot be overstated that the Board desires applicants who want to make a mark in educational innovation. The school's facilities are modern, well-maintained and well-funded. Las Vegas benefits from a forward-looking culture that is highly experimental and unburdened by traditional approaches, and the school community is highly diverse, including many Israeli families bringing an international dimension. Las Vegas is cosmopolitan yet surrounded by nature, traffic-free, weather-free, and provides the very best conveniences, as well as Jewish and cultural amenities, in a low-cost environment. Given these advantages, the school Head can and should push the frontiers of modern, Jewish education in ways that stand out nationally.

Summary of Goals

The Adelson Board has outlined the following specific goals for the incoming Head of School, in addition to the general goals applicable to running a successful, Jewish, college preparatory school:

- Ensuring that high-achieving students are well-challenged, and that Adelson be perceived as a school where high-achieving students can reach their full potential.
- Implementing effective Hebrew-language instruction for all students in all years of attendance, with the goal of producing fully competent Hebrew-language speakers upon graduation.
- Amplifying the quantity and quality of Judaic studies, with the goal of making Adelson acceptable to families seeking a true Jewish day school education in the context of a college preparatory academy.
- Fostering a school identity centered around Israel, the Jewish community and genuine friendliness.

Further Observations

The Board will support any candidate embodying the above characteristics and embracing the above mission, though it may require continuing evolution by the school academically and Jewishly. With this in mind, current constituents have contributed the following observations to the Head of School search process:

1. The Adelson Educational Community's constituents greatly value community. The culture of the school is such that the community will embrace (a) a Head of School who is highly visible and approachable, successfully builds relationships by connecting authentically with many people, and invites and fosters a culture of openness and collaboration; and (b) an individual who will take the time to learn the community, its culture, and its traditions and who provides stakeholders opportunities to provide input and who listens well.
2. A Head of School who actively engages with the school community and additionally serves as an enthusiastic and compelling external ambassador will serve the school well. In recent years, area educational options particularly for high school aged students have expanded primarily through magnet and charter schools, and the draw of a "regular" high school experience has some AEC students exploring different opportunities, impacting retention, particularly in the Upper School. The school will benefit from the Head of School actively engaging in the admissions and retention efforts, as the school works to attract and keep strong students.
3. Efforts need to continue to secure the long-term financial sustainability of the school, and it is expected that the new Head of School, partnering with the Board, will bring expertise and focus to this effort. The Head will need to continue to lead with financial prudence and explore increased revenue streams. Additionally, ensuring that the school remains a meaningful value for families is essential to the school's long-term viability.
4. The AEC community will value an assessment of its communications protocols and vehicles for communication with parents, faculty, and staff. Overall, the community will appreciate leadership prioritizing timely and appropriately transparent communications.
5. Members of the Adelson community spoke of a desire to see a focused examination of the academic program to ensure intentional scope and sequence as well as appropriate academic challenge for all students. AEC's commitment to being a community school enables great diversity, including students' academic abilities. This creates the additional challenge of ensuring it is rightly perceived for its academic strengths and strong college preparatory program. Numerous stakeholders noted the need to clarify whom the school can best serve, and to ensure that this is accurately messaged in the community and throughout enrollment

activities. An educational leader who can lead this conversation will be the right match for Adelson.

6. AEC has experienced numerous changes in the past ten years — including leadership transitions, enrollment shifts, and program changes. As the school continues to grow and mature, it is important that attention continue to be focused on faculty in the areas of professional development and support, balance in work loads, faculty compensation, evaluation, hiring, and retention.

7. As Adelson grows Jewishly, the new Head of School will embrace the school's community mission, and feel comfortable engaging in and leading conversations that explore and define how that mission is lived within the school's community, daily life, and educational programs. A focus in this area will ensure that families of all Jewish practices can feel welcomed and well-served at the school.

8. Adelson is a school that greatly values community and relationships and needs a Jewish leader who will thrive in this culture. Social intelligence, vision, alignment with mission, as well as visibility and accessibility, will be important traits in the successful candidate. Further, he or she will be a confident, hard-working, and creative leader who:

- Has a track record of leading through building strong relationships and encouraging engagement.
- Will serve as an inspirational and motivational leader for the school's varied constituents, and will partner effectively with the Board of Trustees.
- Is comfortable in a community Jewish environment, and positively embraces the challenges and conversations inherent in the school's diversity.
- Possesses enviable communication skills and excellent managerial skills.
- Is technologically savvy and forward-thinking in considering the role of technology in educating today's students and in communicating with their families.
- Balances collaboration and decisiveness.
- Is visionary and strategic.
- Will embrace the role of chief ambassador and be involved in both the internal and external community.
- Will champion a culture of innovation, ensuring that AEC remains at the forefront of educational best practices.
- Is a person of high standards and impeccable integrity, possessing a strong sense of self, humility, and a sense of humor.
- Is a warm, accessible, and visible leader with excellent interpersonal skills.

For Consideration

Please send electronically: Resume, Letter of Interest and Educational Philosophy and/or Personal Statement to:

Jane Armstrong or Bill Lyons, Managing Partners, Independent Thinking
it@independent-thinking.com
(617) 332-3131

All inquiries will be treated confidentially and review of candidate materials will commence upon receipt. Adelson offers a competitive salary and benefits.