

“From the Directors” October 2021

By the time this temple bulletin lands in your mailbox, Buffalo’s new Community Religious School will already have celebrated its Opening Day and first full month of Sunday morning sessions!

During these opening weeks, we hope to have begun forming the relationships in our classrooms that will sustain us through the rest of the school year and beyond.

Some of our students will have learned a little more about the fall holiday cycle than they knew before. Some will have gotten their hands messy making Rosh Hashanah or Sukkot arts and crafts projects. Some will have made a new friend or two, or maybe reconnected with someone they haven’t seen in several months. Some will have brushed up on their Alef-Bet or Hebrew reading skills, enjoyed learning a song they didn’t know before, or begun meeting online with their 1-on-1 Hebrew tutor.

We hope that our parents are smiling as well. We’ve never had to bar parents from our doors before, and it doesn’t feel great to have to do it now. We hope that our new drop-off and pick-up routines have worked reasonably well and that nobody drove out of the CSS parking lot in a rage. We hope that when you ask your kids “What did you do today in religious school?” that you actually get an answer. (Believe us... nobody comes for 2-1/2 hours and does NOTHING, even though they might say it.)

We’ve all heard the African proverb that teaches, “It takes a village to raise a child.” As Rabbi Jesse Olitzky (one of The Forward’s list of “America’s Most Inspiring Rabbis”) reflects... “The *ikar*, or essence, of this proverb is that as parents we have a large role and responsibility in shaping the types of men and women our children become, but the community around us, the people we surround ourselves with, clergy and teachers, friends and dedicated lay leaders, ultimately have just as much of a role in shaping who they become.”

Parents, clergy, teachers, friends and dedicated lay leaders have all worked to make the dream of a combined religious school in Buffalo a reality. We are grateful for your vision, your guidance, your time, and your commitment. Our aim was to create a school where all of our children feel welcome, where all students will discover what it means to be Jewish and to live Jewishly, where everyone finds respect and community, and where all can gather together and experience the joy of Jewish learning! *Ken y’hi ratzon*, may it be so.

L’shalom,

Beth Steinberg & Einav Symons

Co-Directors Community Religious School