



May, 2009
Iyar, 5769

Dear Principal/Education Director,

As Director of Teen Initiatives at The Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life I, together with my colleagues at The Partnership, am constantly looking for ways to engage the MetroWest teens in vibrant Jewish life.

After much consultation and planning we are proud to present JTEEN^{MW} (Jewish Teen Educational Experiences Network- MetroWest). Our community offers many opportunities for Jewish teens to develop Jewish identity through formal and informal means including fine opportunities provided by your school and synagogue.

The goals of JTEEN^{MW} are:

- To create a community-wide sense that all of these opportunities are available to all teens.
- To create an understanding that different programs are available to teens at different times in their identity development, and that these programs can build off of each other rather than compete with each other.
- To create community honors and other incentives for teens to pursue their Jewish identity development in significant and meaningful ways.
- To develop a network of formal and informal youth educators who share information and ideas, and strive for the elevation of Jewish knowledge and the deepening of involvement for all MetroWest teens.

A major component of this initiative is the JTEEN^{MW} Learning Community that includes an array of diverse, exciting and meaningful educational experiences. Teens will now have the opportunity to choose which educational experiences they would like to participate in based on their tastes, interests and schedules. The Partnership will offer a core of educational experiences will be offered on Sunday mornings and will be called The Sunday Morning Learning Community, and other experiences will be offered throughout the week as well. Each experience may be taken separately or as part of the comprehensive JTEEN^{MW} Learning Community framework over four years in order to receive a diploma. A participant must register for 4 course-hours per week for 2 semesters a year to be considered as if s/he has completed a year in this framework.

The JTEEN^{MW} Sunday Morning Learning Community will be centrally located at the Aidekman UJC campus in Whippany. Every Sunday this campus will become a lively hub of educational experiences for MetroWest teens. We have chosen to focus on one location to create a dynamic and diverse MetroWest community and in consideration of the cost-savings this provides in these uncertain times.

We are now planning the next stage of the JTEEN^{MW} initiative incorporating all MetroWest area teen educational experiences into a community wide system that will be linked together. Teen participation will be tracked and credits will be honored leading to a certificate of completion of the community wide program by age 18. We will be in close touch with you to incorporate your formal and informal educational offerings into this diverse portfolio so that MetroWest teens will be able to take advantage of meaningful and relevant learning opportunities at times and places that are convenient for them.

I recognize this to be an ambitious vision but, with your help and cooperation, we can turn the vision into a reality!

Thank you and I will keep all of you updated in the near future as we progress with this initiative.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Shmuel Greene
Director, Teen Initiatives