

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Derek Gale, Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School
773.572.1275 dgale@bzaeds.org

Glenn Rosenkrantz
646.245.8975 glenn.rosenkrantz@gmail.com

Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School Part Of National Conversation On Future Of Jewish Day Schools

*2011 North American Jewish Day School Conference Explores The High Performance,
High-Tech Jewish Day School of the Very Near Future*

February 8, 2011 – Los Angeles – Tzivia Garfinkel, head of Jewish studies of Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School, joined more than 600 leaders of Jewish day schools from across the spectrum of Jewish practice at the just-ended North American Jewish Day School Conference.

The conference, widely followed by Jewish communal and educational leaders, addressed issues relevant to a day school movement committed to transmitting knowledge, enhancing practice, ensuring a vibrant future and solidifying its place on the educational landscape.

Participants examined issues and approaches changing the face and direction of Jewish day schools, from making special education a priority, to harnessing technology to enhance and strengthen curricula and classrooms, to maintaining financially sustainable institutions of quality.

The North American Jewish Day School Conference was a joint initiative of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network, the Institute for University-School Partnership at Yeshiva University, and PARDeS: The Progressive Association of Reform Day Schools. This is the second year that the organizations, representing the arc of Jewish movements and educational approaches, joined to organize the conference and explore common issues.

The theme of the 2011 conference - The High Performance, High-Tech Jewish Day School of the Very Near Future - underscored how Jewish educational professionals are transforming their individual institutions, and the day school movement itself, into inclusive venues of educational quality and value utilizing proven, effective and emerging approaches.

“The future is by its nature something about which we can only speculate, but that limitation does not permit us to stand still,” said Dr. Jane West Walsh, executive

director of PARDeS, the Reform Day School organization. “We have an obligation to advance our thinking about what it means to teach and to learn such that our students are ready to face whatever the future has in store.”

Four plenary sessions and nearly 70 sessions and workshops focused on provocative issues, ideas, challenges and opportunities facing Jewish educational leaders, and included the promises and pitfalls of Israel education, new technologies, philanthropic support, and education for students with special needs.

“The themes we explored together speak volumes about the emerging priorities facing the day school world,” said Dr. Marc Kramer, executive director of RAVSAK. “Whether to delve into questions about technology, to advance thinking about special education, to build bridges between early childhood education and day schools, to rethink thinking, or to ponder ways to make all of this affordable, the conference created a big tent for leadership. No matter what the future brings, it will take us, as the leaders of communities and builders of schools, to get the job done.”

“At other conferences you are asked to focus on the here and now,” said Dr. Elaine Shizgal Cohen, executive director of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association. “At this conference we ask you to think about the there and then – the future of Jewish day school education and how it might be very different from school today.”

The North American Jewish Day School Leadership Conference was sponsored by the AVI CHAI Foundation, the Center for Initiatives in Jewish Education, The Covenant Foundation, ERB, the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, The Kohelet Foundation and several anonymous funders.

More information about the conference, which took place Feb. 6 to 8 in Los Angeles, is at <http://www.jewishdayschoolconference.org>.

###