



The AVI CHAI Foundation

**For Immediate Release**  
**March, 22, 2006**

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**\$26 Million in New Funds Awarded to Jewish Day Schools**  
**- INNOVATIVE MATCHING GRANTS INITIATIVE**  
**YIELDS BIG INVESTMENT IN JEWISH EDUCATION -**

\$26 million in new dollars will go to fund Jewish day school education in North America thanks to MATCH - a matching grants initiative supported by a group of philanthropists that provides a 1:2 match of funds for first time grants of \$25,000 - \$100,000 to Jewish day schools and education projects. Those eligible for matches were either new or current Jewish Funders Network members.

MATCH funders originally allocated \$5 million for the program in order to match \$10 million in new gifts. When applications totaled more than \$18 million - far exceeding expectations - the funding partners made the decision to increase their own contributions and to recruit additional philanthropists in order to match the \$15.5 million that was eligible for matching funds. The total matching pool created is nearly \$8 million to match \$15.5 million in first-time gifts according to the 1:2 matching formula. Thus nearly \$26 million in new funds will go into Jewish day school education as a result of MATCH.

There were nearly 300 eligible applications, all of which will be matched. Schools in 25 states and two Canadian provinces will get support, with donors representing 164 cities. Schools representing all Jewish denominations will be supported. 159 schools and 8 day school projects are slated to receive support. This number includes 53 schools known as Community Schools (which are not affiliated with any one Jewish denomination) that alone received grant pledges of \$4.7 million.

**Overwhelming Interest from First-Time Donors**

"The overwhelming success of this initiative and the response from so many first time donors shows that matching grants are a tremendous tool for leveraging money and encouraging new philanthropy," said Mark Charendoff, president of the Jewish Funders Network and a MATCH partner. "There is no doubt that the field of Jewish philanthropy is greatly strengthened by this new infusion of support. We're delighted that JFN members are able to draw on this type of initiative to enhance their own philanthropic giving and we look forward to working with the first-time donors to assist them in transforming from one-time donors to lifetime philanthropists."

"MATCH proves two propositions," explains Lauren Merkin, a Trustee of The AVI CHAI

Foundation and one of the MATCH supporters. "First, that in the current era in which Americans value autonomy supremely, matching grants that allow donors to choose the specific recipients can be a powerful tool for drawing philanthropists into new fields. Second, that grass-roots support for the Jewish day school movement is at a historic high, as donors recognize the potential of these schools to produce graduates steeped in Jewish tradition and able to apply their Jewish literacy and commitment for the benefit of both America and the Jewish people. We hope that the matched donors will now become ongoing supporters at a significant level"

"The success of MATCH puts to rest once and for all the fallacy that there is no new money to be found for Jewish education. The fact that so many schools were able to identify and attract new donors in such a short period of time reveals the expanding capacity of Jewish day schools to implement sophisticated and professional fundraising strategies. We are very proud of the schools who stepped up to the plate and put into practice expertise they have gained about what it means to attract new donors, and PEJE is eager to help these schools in their continuing stewardship." said Rabbi Joshua Elkin, executive director of PEJE, another MATCH partner.

### **MATCH Make-Up**

MATCH is a project of the Jewish Funders Network and the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, and funded by The AVI CHAI Foundation, Ingeborg and Ira Leon Rennert, The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, The Alan B. Slifka Foundation and Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation. MATCH was first initiated in 2004 by The AVI CHAI Foundation in partnership with the Jewish Funders Network. The first year of the program successfully infused the field with \$6.8 million in new grants for Jewish education.

Additional support for the 2005-6 MATCH program came from PEJE partners: the Jesselson Family, The Gottesman Fund, Brad and Robin Klatt, Bobby and Fran Lent; and two anonymous donors. To be eligible for MATCH, a philanthropist had to make a first time grant to Jewish day schools or increase a previous gift fivefold. The matching grants initiative was open to current and new members of the Jewish Funders Network.

The Jewish Funders Network ([www.jfunders.org](http://www.jfunders.org)) is an international organization of family foundations, public philanthropies, and individual funders dedicated to advancing the quality and growth of philanthropy rooted in Jewish values.

The Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education ([www.peje.org](http://www.peje.org)) founded in 1997 by Michael Steinhardt and Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, is a collaborative of visionary Jewish philanthropists who seek to create a vibrant and sustainable Jewish future through strengthening the Jewish day school movement in North America, with a targeted goal of increasing enrollment in new and existing Jewish day schools.

### **Day School Growth**

There are currently more than 750 Jewish day schools across the U.S. with more than 200,000 students. The schools offer a full-day dual curriculum of Judaic and secular studies. They range from Orthodox, Conservative and Reform to nondenominational Community schools. Jewish day schools provide students with a positive Jewish identity while also strengthening a student's knowledge base, and offer them a rigorous curriculum that prepares them for college and post graduate study. Nearly all graduates attend secular colleges and universities at disproportionately high rates. Over the past ten years, enrollment in Jewish day schools has increased by

approximately 35,000 students (20 percent), with nearly 100 more schools open in 2003-2004 than in 1993-94.