

KYHS — Bigger and Better than Ever *By: Adina Hirsch*

As the hallways boomed with excitement at Katz Yeshiva High School of South Florida, it was clear that everyone was eager for the return of school. This year, however, the laughter and enthusiasm seemed even louder than usual. The apparent growth that KYHS has experienced in its short span of 20 years is remarkable. Established in 1998 with a student body of just 41 students, KYHS has continued to grow steadily over the years. Ten years later, Katz Yeshiva High School's enrollment had increased significantly to 225 students and from 2013- 2017, the population surged by over another 80 students. This year, Katz Yeshiva School of South Florida has a total of 357 students, serving three counties: Miami Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach. There is even a group of students attending KYHS living as far as Bal Harbor, who travel up to an hour and half daily because they so passionately want to attend KYHS.

In addition to attracting students from these three counties, KYHS has welcomed an all-time record number of transfer students this year. Typically expecting 7 or 8 transfer students, KYHS was delighting to open its doors to 25 transfer students joining from near and far places including New York, Memphis, Israel, Winnipeg, and some other local high schools. Some transfer students come from public schools, giving these students greater access to a robust Jewish education as



KYHS offers a dual curriculum including a half-day of Judaic studies and intensive Judaic programs.

The booming population has led to the incredible growth of each grade of students. Katz Yeshiva High School's current freshman class has a total of 91 students, evidence of its massive growth. And the sophomore grade has reached a first-time milestone for KYHS, growing to 100 students, the first class ever to reach triple digits in size. Making it a priority to ensure that every student feel welcome and supported, KYHS runs Freshman and Transfer mentoring programs. Thus, with just two weeks into high school, students are already feeling at home. For example, freshman, Ariella Greenberg already has made an easy transition into high school. She exclaims, "KYHS is an amazing environment! The teachers are so encouraging and caring, and school has been so fun so far!"

In order to provide this large student population with a stellar education, KYHS



has also increased its faculty significantly, making this year's KYHS the largest ever. With over 55 faculty members committed to teaching and inspiring their students, KYHS students have the opportunity to gain a tremendous amount of knowledge from their teachers, as well as developing personal relationships with them. Excitingly, KYHS was able to recruit teachers both locally and from diverse locations such as Columbus, Ohio, New York, and Atlanta. "My students are bright, witty, and enthusiastic; my colleagues are supportive; and I learn more about the Jewish faith and traditions every day. I'm looking forward to a fun year!", proclaims new English teacher, Ms. Crowther.

Since KYHS has experienced such growth, it can now offer an even wider range of courses. New classes this year include: AP Computer Science and AP Calculus for Sophomores, AP Biology, Artificial Intelligence, and PLTW Engineering for Juniors, AP Chemistry, and "The Jewish Encounter with Modernity"



for Seniors. There are also new grade-integration classes, which include: Freshman-Sophomore Honors Masmidim Gemara Shiur, Sophomore-Senior Digital fluency, and an Entrepreneurship/Israel advocacy elective.

Finally, with the addition of more students KYHS opened up even more clubs to the dozens of already existing options. This year's new clubs include: Teens of Pink Ribbon, Turning Point USA, Cultural Diversity club, Political Activism Club, Chai Lifeline, Architecture Club, Fishing Club, and many more! One club leader, Sara Deichman explains, "Kindness Matters is a nationwide organization that aims to spread kindness in schools throughout the world. After having the opportunity to intern for the organization over the summer, I decided to bring the organization to school as a club and incorporate it into the chesed committee. The club will be kicking off soon and we can't wait to make the world a better place."