

## I\*Express Resource: Developing Social Networks

A great way to create buy-in and continue to share the most up-to-date information on your new model is through the use of social networks. This document will help you and your team to think through how to use your social networks to support and spread the word about your new model of innovative Jewish education.

### Mapping Social Networks

- Visually depict the social networks operative among your target learning audience by either drawing on a white board or affixing post-its to a blank wall. Think about families that are related, live in the same neighborhoods or carpool together. Parents who work together or in the same field or students who attend the same schools may, or may not, be socially connected. Consider families in which the mothers may be connected even if the fathers and/or children are not. Only map out what you know, not what you think might be true.
- Decide whether it is important to map out student connections as well as parent/family connections.
- When satisfied that the mapping is an accurate visual depiction of the existing social networks, discuss: As we look ahead and plan the pilot phase of this model so that it engages more students and families,
  - Which families seem to be part of multiple social networks? Who are the key social connectors in those networks?
  - Which families are moderately connected? Who appears in their networks that might wield influence?
  - Which families are the least socially networked? What do we know about their interests and what keeps them connected to the synagogue?
- Take a picture of the social map so you can refer to it later

### Leveraging Social Networks

- Looking at both the messages about the new model that need to be shared and the map of existing social networks, discuss the best ways to communicate the messages so that:
  - People hear from others they know and trust about what is coming up
  - Clear and accurate information is communicated
  - Key social connectors have accurate information, are able to discuss the new model and answer questions about it
  - Messages disseminated through mailings, email, bulletin articles and announcements are reinforced via conversations with those in one's social network
  - Families on the periphery of existing social networks get drawn in and appropriately connected
- Keep a list of recommendations for the team to consider