

Yeshiva High School of Arizona purchases new property

Jeff Kronenfeld | Staff Writer | Posted: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 7:44 am

Since opening its doors in 2010, the Yeshiva High School of Arizona (YHSA) has seen its enrollment double. While the YHSA's current location, which it rents, has served the school well, it needs more space. After a multi-year search, the school has found a new location, a building at 7045 N. 12th Street in Phoenix.



“There’s an over 5,000-square-foot house on there, which we’re going to renovate,” said Rabbi Gavriel Goetz, head of school for YHSA. “We’re going to develop the property to make it conducive for the students to be able to play.”

Yeshiva High Renovation

A rendering shows what the Yeshiva High School of Arizona will look like after it is renovated.

On Sunday, Dec. 10, the YHSA is holding a groundbreaking ceremony for the renovation. The event is free and open to the community and will include a brunch and a walk-through of the new property.

“We’re going to give a tour of what it looks like now and what we want it to be in the future, and enjoy a good time celebrating a ceremony of beginnings, cutting the ribbon, so to speak,” Goetz said.

Goetz said the property is large enough to allow for future expansion, possibly even the construction of a new building. But the immediate goals are more modest.

“We’re planning a fundraiser to renovate and develop the property, the sports facilities, the study hall, the classrooms, the science lab,” Goetz said. “A lot of the work is developing, working with the city to get the permits and rezoning. There’s a lot of work, and that’s why the building committee is tremendous in getting that done.”

There are only two Jewish high schools in the Valley: YHSA, which is an all-boys school, and the Shearim Torah High School for Girls.

Both schools serve an important purpose to the community, as the president of the YHSA’s board, David Segal, knows well. When Segal was getting ready for high school in Phoenix in the mid ’70s, he and his four older sisters had to go all the way to Denver to find a yeshiva high school. When it came time for his own sons to attend high school in the early ’00s, there still wasn’t a yeshiva high school in Arizona, so he sent his sons to an out-of-state school as well. It was worth the separation, he said, because high school is such an important time in a young person’s life.

“That’s when teenagers are developing, not only physically and emotionally, but they’re also developing religiously,” Segal said. “In my opinion, that’s when they take it upon themselves to do or not do the things that they were taught in day school.”

When Segal learned of the plans to start a yeshiva high school in Phoenix so future families wouldn't be forced to make the difficult decision he had, he said he was immediately onboard.

“I sent my kids away to the [Fasman Yeshiva High School at the] Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Illinois,” Segal said. “When I heard that they were starting a high school here in Phoenix, even though I would not directly benefit from having one anymore because my kids were grown, I still was very eager to do whatever I could to help to get it off the ground. And I've been president of the board of directors since the inception of the school.”

The YHSA currently does not have any out-of-town students enrolled, but it has in the past. In those instances, the school housed the students in rented apartments near the campus' current location. The new location will allow the school to house out-of-state students on the property. Segal explained that owning a property also helps to ensure the future financial health and stability of the school.

“It's a much bigger commitment to send kids out of town,” Segal said. “We are growing and prospering because we are local and taking care of the local need in Phoenix for a Jewish high school for boys right here.” **JN**