

Timeline of Jewish Education in NSW

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| Prior to 1844 | The first schoolmaster, Rev Moses Rintel, conducted the Sydney Jewish Academy |
| 1844 - 1847 | Jewish education was provided in family groups by private tutors |
| 1848 | Denominational School Board was established by the Government of NSW. Jewish schools including Zion House School were established |
| 1855 | The first Jewish book published in Australia was Principles of Judaism by Rev M. R. Cohen, produced for the students of Zion House School. |
| 1863 | The Sydney Jewish Sabbath School was established by Rev Alexander B. Davis with 14 pupils. Enrolments increased in the first year to 81, with an average weekly attendance of 45 students. |
| 1866 | The Public Schools Act was passed and the Denominational School Board dissolved. |
| 1868 | The Sydney Hebrew School in Pitt Street was certified as a “Denominational School” under the 1866 Act. This was New South Wales’ first successful day school; its initial enrollment was 99 students and its first headmaster was Rev. A. Levi. |
| 1880 | State Aid to denominational schools ceased with the introduction of the Public Instruction Act. |
| 1882 | The day school closed and the Sydney Jewish Education Board was established to conduct classes under the Right of Entry system. Rev A. B. Davis was President, and the first classes were held at Fort Street, Crown Street and William Street Public Schools. |
| 1884 | Louis Pulver, “a heaven-born instructor of youth”, was appointed Headmaster of the Sydney Jewish Education Board and the Sydney Jewish Sabbath School. He instituted weekday afternoon classes to supplement the Right of Entry classes, regularised the curriculum and prepared texts to suit his pupils’ needs. These included “First Bible Stories for Little People”, “A Hebrew and English Vocabulary of 650 Words” and “Elementary Exercises in Hebrew Grammar”. |
| 1897 | Death of Louis Pulver and appointment of M. A. Cohen BA as Headmaster. |
| 1905 | Rabbi Francis Lyon Cohen appointed Chief Minister of the Great Synagogue and President of the Sydney Jewish Education Board. |

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| 1909 | On 4 February, 1909 a general meeting of the members and subscribers of the Sydney Jewish Sabbath School resolved, “that as from 1st Adar 5669, the 22nd February, 1909 this Institution, the Sydney Jewish Sabbath School, be amalgamated with the Sydney Jewish Education Board to form a New South Wales Board of Jewish Education”. Its President was Rabbi Francis L. Cohen and Headmaster M. A. Cohen. |
| 1924 | Abraham Rothfield, was appointed Headmaster. “He had a way with him of making his pupils love him, winning his way into their hearts by a kind smile, a fund of stories and a gentle manner.” |
| 1927 | The Women’s Auxiliary, formed under the chairmanship of Mrs F. L. Cohen, organised fundraising, social activities and adult educational programs. The Auxiliary was re-organised in 1952 with Mrs Bertha Porush as President. |
| 1940 | Rabbi Dr Israel Porush appointed Chief Minister of the Great Synagogue and Hon. Director of Education of the Board. |
| 1945 | Rev Caesar Stanton (Steinhof) appointed Headmaster, holding office with Abraham Rothfield. |
| 1950 | Miss Naomi Goldsmith appointed General Secretary, a position she held until her death in 1980. “She was a woman of quality – a true lady, marked by her sense of dignity, of beauty, of loyalty, of fair-mindedness and of Judaism.” |
| 1950s | The rise of the Jewish day school movement in NSW. |
| 1957 | Rabbi T. Rafalowicz appointed first full-time Director of Education. |
| 1967 | The Jewish Communal Appeal established. The Board has benefited greatly from JCA funding. |
| 1970 | Lionel Link appointed Director of Education. His highest priority was the training of teachers |
| 1976 | Rabbi Raymond Apple appointed Hon. Director of Education. |
| 1979 | Harold Nagley, former Principal of Moriah College, was appointed Director of Education. He brought to the Board a lifetime of familiarity with best practice in Jewish education. |
| 1987 | Max Wahlhaus appointed Director of Education. During his term of office and under the presidency of Bernard Levy, the Board introduced Hebrew elective classes into public schools in 1989 with 14 students enrolled. |
| 1997 | Lilly Maltz, appointed Principal. Development of BJE as a centre for professional development of educators of Judaism and related subjects. |
| 1998 | “Turning of the Soil” for new BJE centre. Rabbi David Rogut presided. |
| 1999 | Official opening of the NSW Board of Jewish Education, BJE Jewish Education and Resource Centre at 56 Roscoe Street, Bondi Beach by the Ambassador of Israel, Mr Shmuel Moyal. |
| 1999 | First Discover Israel Program (now known as the BJE Israel Program) for state high school students. |

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| 2000 | BJE launches JSN (Jewish Students Network) program in high schools |
| 2002 | Launch of BJE website, www.bje.org.au |
| 2004 | Implementation of NETA High School Hebrew curriculum. |
| 2005 | Living in Harmony grant for interfaith program (Studies of Religion). |
| 2007 | Implementation of the early childhood Hebrew program Chalav uD'vash. Commencement of the Year 10 Discover Israel Program (now known as the BJE Israel Program) in conjunction with the Alexander Muss Institute (AMHSI). |
| 2008 | Rachele Schonberger appointed Principal and Co-CEO with Robert Greenfield. Introduction of the Discover Israel Years K-10 Integrated Curriculum, funded by the L A Pincas Fund. |
| 2009 | BJE centenary year. Launch of revised curricula for SRE ('Scripture') and JSN (now known as 'Youth Engagement'). |
| 2010 | Launch of new BJE website and launch of Facebook page Kangajew (now NSW BJE). |
| 2011 | Completion of the revised SRE ('Scripture') curriculum. |
| 2012 | Introduction of the high school Ulpan Or Hebrew curriculum. |
| 2015 | Partnership of BJE and Y2i to enable all Year 10 students not attending Jewish day schools to access the BJE Israel Program. |
| 2016 | Launch of the Breakout Retreat camp for Year 6 students across NSW. |
| 2017 | Appointment of a new Board of Directors |
| 2018 | Hilit Man appointed as CEO. |
| 2019 | Launch of the 'BJE Jewish Journey'. BJE is accredited as a Service NSW Creative Kids provider for Hebrew classes before and after school. |
| 2020 | Launch of the new BJE website. Launch of 'jwave Powered by BJE' – the BJE family engagement program. |
| 2021 | Appointment of Jo Gluckman as Head of Experiential Jewish Life and Learning. |