

**Keeping Graduates Close While Socially Distancing: An Alumni Engagement Round Table**

A conversation sharing alumni engagement strategies and ideas, including reimagining alumni events and programs previously done in person.

For additional support, reach out to Traci Stratford, tracis@prizmah.org

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Field Work Update – Debra**

* JCRIF Loan and Grant Fund- webinar coming up
* Development Planning for small schools- webinar coming up
* Prizmah Knowledge Center constantly being updated with archives from past webinars

**Introduction**

* Start with what you have and what you’re already doing that can pivot toward alumni audiences

**Communication: Email and Social Media**

* Be mindful: How often are we communicating with our alumni? Are we creating alumni specific content?
* Post updates on FB and Insta to share what’s happening in schools
* Schools posting Throwback Thursdays, shout-outs to essential workers
* In the early days, the focus was on parent population. Now expanded to keep alumni in the loop. Currently receiving 2-3 emails a week with high open rates

**Event Promotion and Follow Up**

* Event promotion and follow-up- flexibility in make-up of committees, more focus on asking alumni to spread the word
* Less time spent on quantity of participation and more time on quality of programing
* College age alumni and gap-year alumni- how to serve them? Know where they are physically located (at home, still away) to form a strategy.
* People are looking to be helpful and connect with the community- ask them to help and support with data collection, especially contact information
* Include alumni parents in this group as well as connectors to the alumni and the school

**Stewardship**

* Make contact: Check in by email, phone, or text; personal emails (not bulk)
* Start small with the people you have a personal relationship with
* If possible, expand the outreach group to those who might have relationships with alumni (principals, etc.)
* Ideas from the field:
	+ Alumni Happy Hour
	+ Small business owner alumni- school creating a free directory and flyer so the community can help support

**Programming: College Aged Alumni with Young Professionals**

* Guiding question: What would you turn Netflix off for?
* Peer-to-peer industry specific events with panels of young professionals who want to give back to college aged alumni by helping them with internships, career prep, etc.
* College aged alumni on panels for 11th graders and the school community to talk about their schools and internships;
	+ Opportunity to re-engage with college students
	+ Opportunity for kids who can’t visit schools to hear insider information about life on campus

**Programming: Reunions**

* Think differently about how we bring classes together; can’t fully replicate a big dinner, but maybe:
	+ Zoom breakout rooms for smaller group conversations
	+ Alumni record videos to share with their peers
	+ Engage staff- Family Feud or other structured game or task
* Online structure needs careful consideration and moderation
* Consider asking each class how they want to connect- some may want to connect virtually, others may want to postpone

**Programming: Town Halls**

* Young alumni are not necessarily connected to synagogues, so this has become part of our community
* Weekly town halls engage medical professionals to provide updates and “cut through the news noise” for the entire community
	+ Consider inviting alumni to stay on for another 30 minutes to connect
	+ Early on, alumni only briefing that allowed them to have access to leadership

**Programming: Things to Consider**

* Faculty engaging in facilitation:
	+ What does citizenship look like in a pandemic?
	+ How to evaluate halachic considerations?
* Launching a 4-week adult education program (for young adults +) and will repurpose for college aged alumni
* Gap year tisch to allow students an opportunity to connect after they came home
* Ask favorite teacher to lead a study session
* Ask alumni to lead sessions for each other in an area of expertise- create “celebrity status”
* Alumni have formed tutoring programs for younger kids
* Ideas from the field:
	+ Live @ 5: Weekly sessions for enrichment opportunities- alumni are featured and talk about their time at school and how they got to their current profession
	+ Alumni “speed dating” event for regional/field-wide day school alumni
	+ Regional events for all alumni in the area with specific focus
		- Local colleges
		- Breaking into the scene
		- Business introductions
	+ Invite other schools’ alumni to join your programming
	+ Trivia night- ask school alumni to form teams to compete against eachother
	+ Empower alumni to plan their own events

**Alumni Giving**

* Post-Pesach has re-started fundraising
	+ Mostly soft-touch
	+ Refocus on gratitude campaigns
* A single campaign for the whole community, rather than multiple campaigns for different demographics (even where ordinarily would happen)
* Check in with alumni with outstanding pledges
* Gratitude is driving giving right now