



A PHILADELPHIA AREA DAY SCHOOL
FOR STUDENTS GRADES 6-12

JACK M. BARRACK HEBREW ACADEMY

(formerly Akiba Hebrew Academy)

223 North Highland Avenue • Merion Station, PA 19066-1798

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*“Presidential Candidates” Barnstorm at Barrack Hebrew Academy
School Holds Political Conference and Mock Convention on February 4
One Day Prior to Super Tuesday*

Senator Arlen Specter & Congressman Patrick Murphy to Launch Events

Merion Station, PA (January 23, 2008): Presidential politics is in the air and on the agenda at the Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy.

The entire school is preparing for its 6th quadrennial Political Conference, with distinguished speakers from the real world of politics, and a Mock Nominating Convention with students assuming the roles of political candidates and luminaries.

Senator Arlen Specter, himself, will launch the day-long program set for **Monday, February 4**, one day prior to Super Tuesday when 24 states throughout the nation will hold their primaries.

Congressman Patrick J. Murphy, 8th congressional district, will be the keynote speaker in the afternoon, kicking off the Mock Nominating Convention.

Every four years students assume the roles of Presidential candidates of the party out of power. This year students will represent Democrats currently running for President: **Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton**, former **Senator John Edwards**, **Congressman Dennis Kucinich**, and **Senator Barack Obama**, presenting speeches and pointing out critical differences that distinguish their candidacies.

This Convention has predicted the actual presidential nominee each of the six years that it has been held.

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The Convention floor will be alive with candidates' signs, hats, banners, and campaign chairs, who will work the delegates representing the 50 states, garnering votes for their candidate. Excitement will reign!

The convention will climax with a roll call, nominating the Democratic Party's Presidential nominee, one day before actual primaries are held throughout the country. Caucuses will follow to nominate the Vice-Presidential running mate.

The morning Political Conference will feature distinguished guest speakers involved in the world of politics and the community who will discuss topics currently being debated by the actual presidential candidates and leaders of their parties.

Notable speakers who will lead the Conference break-out sessions include: **State Representative Joshua Shapiro**, who will talk about healthcare; **David Davies**, columnist for *The Daily News* and frequent contributor to NPR, who will discuss the role of the media in the campaigns; and **Jane Eisner**, Vice President of Programs and Initiatives, National Constitution Center, who will talk about the role of young voters.

Additional guest speakers confirmed at press time include: **Mark Aronchik** (Campaigning); **Wendy Demchik Alloy** and **Mary Pugh** (Child Advocacy Project); **Chris Satullo**, *Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist, (engaging in the political process); **Ron Eisenberg** (death penalty); **David Davies**, *Daily News* columnist, frequent contributor to NPR (role of the media); **Alan Fogel** (prison system); **County Commissioner Joseph Hoeffel**; **Gary Kaplan** (Polling); **City Commissioner Jim Matthews** (The Republican field 2008); Political leader **Lois Murphy**; **Ari Mittelman** (Aide to Senator Casey); **State Representative Tony Payton Jr.** (YDA-Jewish Caucus); **Michael Smerconish**, radio personality (getting involved in politics); **Bonnie Squires** (convention delegate); **Dan Segal** (Clerking for a U.S. Supreme Court Justice); **Aliza Sinkinson** (AIPAC) and the **Honorable Karen Zucker** (role of a local judge.) **A schedule of the day's events and programs is attached to this release.**

"We want all our students to be knowledgeable about political issues and have a voice in nominating the Democratic nominees for President and Vice-President before the states weigh in," shares Sharon Levin, Head of the school's Humanities Department and key organizer of the day-long event. "Our goal is to educate all our students to become active, informed citizens and to play an active role in the political process. Our seniors are registered to vote in the primaries and the general election this year, and many of our juniors will be eligible to vote in November as well."

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**Political Conference and Mock Nominating Convention Schedule
Monday, February 4, 2008**

8:30am: **Senator Arlen Specter** launches Political Conference in school gym

9:15-10am: First series of Political Conference break-out sessions throughout school

10:15-11am: Second series of Political Conference break-out sessions

11:15-Noon: States will caucus

Lunch Break

12:30pm: **Congressman Patrick J. Murphy** kicks off the Mock Nominating Convention held in the school gym

12:50-1:30: Platform planks presented, debated and voted upon

1:30- 2pm: Four Democratic “Candidates” speak

2pm: Roll call of the States. Presidential Nominee elected. Caucuses held to elect Vice-Presidential running mate. Balloons fall, setting off celebrations.

Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy provides a dynamic dual curriculum of college preparatory and Jewish studies to coeducational students in grades 6-12. Barrack Hebrew Academy welcomes students from every spectrum of Jewish observance and life. The school will move to a new 35-acre campus in the fall of 2008. For information, contact Vivian Young, Director of Recruitment and Admissions: vyoung@jbha.org or 610-667-4070 ext 144.

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