Sample Express Innovation Update: Communication to Congregation IV

*Communications based on this template can be shared with the congregation and/or any committee or board with whom you want to open up discussion about your plans for this coming year. This information can be shared any number of ways including via handouts, mail, e-blast, congregational bulletin, announcements from the bimah, etc.*

**[Name of congregation] Expands Innovative Learning**

This fall, [name of congregation] kicks off its effort to engage even more students and their families in meaningful and innovative learning during the upcoming year. Building on what began last year when a small group of [age/grade/class] and their parents experienced our new model of learning [or type of experience or name of the model], plans are in place for more families to meet for exciting learning experiences more frequently this year.

We are very proud that we will be supported in this effort this year by [another/increased] grant from the **Express Innovation** initiative sponsored by The Jewish Education Project and the Experiment in Congregational Education and funded by UJA-Federation of New York. We have received [dollar amount] based on our application submitted at the beginning of the summer that documented our successes, to date, as well as our intentions to expand and deepen the learning [or name of model] this year.

Last year we collected feedback from participants and learning facilitators after each session and, at the end of the year, we surveyed the parent participants as well as our key educational leadership so we could better understand the impact of this new model on the participants’ connections to Judaism, to our congregation and to each other. These reflections helped our planning over the course of last year and also for this coming year. One [child or parent] said, [include a representative positive reflection that was shared last year.]

From this data we now know [offer 3-4 insights gathered from the data; your consultant can help pull the highlights from the surveys]. With this information we are [describe 1-2 ways in which what you have planned for this year directly responds to what you learned from the data].

Additional plans for this year include [choose all that apply]:

* Expanding our planning team that now includes [list names and roles].
* Learning experiences that will occur [frequency] at [learning sites].
* Increasing the number of participants who will now be learning and interacting with each other in meaningful ways, an increase of [x] percent.
* Engaging new participants [describe a unique way].
* Engaging congregational leadership in deeper conversations about what is being learned about our model and our membership.

This is an exciting time for our congregation as we continue in our quest to provide 21st century learning experiences for our families. In the months ahead you will hear more about our efforts, our successes and what we are learning along the way. We already are excited when we think about the impact this new kind of learning might have as we continue to expand into the years ahead.

Consider including photos or links to short videos of:

* The planning team getting ready for the year
* Synagogue lay and professional leadership sharing their excitement about the plans for this year.
* Students and parents engaged in learning
* Student and/or parent participants talking about what is meaningful about their new learning experiences