

Beth Israel Lee & Frank Goldberg Family Religious School

Curriculum 5779





Our Mission & Vision

We engage our students in **meaningful experiential learning** that is relevant to their lives. We teach to our students' emotional, spiritual and intellectual capacities. Our curriculum teaches core Jewish values and competencies, and we **nurture Jewish identity**, a sense of belonging to the Jewish people, a connection to Israel, and a commitment to Judaism.

Rooted in Jewish values, **relationships are the core of our practice** and the building blocks of our school. Educators partner with the whole family to encourage children on their journey to becoming lifelong learners.

Class Descriptions

TK-2nd Grade Core Classes

Transitional Kindergarten - Beginning The Journey

Our youngest students are welcomed into a warm, nurturing environment as they are introduced to the religious school community. The curriculum revolves around getting to know the people and places in a synagogue and learning about the Jewish Holidays and celebrations as they begin the journey of exploring their Jewish identity. Students will also begin exploring stories from the Bible, as well as developing their Hebrew skills with a special focus on Shabbat. Learning will take place through music, arts and crafts, drama, storytelling and participation in school programs. They will learn Hebrew blessings over food, for Shabbat and other holidays.

Kindergarten - Beginning The Journey

The curriculum revolves around getting to know the people and places in a synagogue and learning about the Jewish Holidays and celebrations as they begin the journey of exploring their Jewish identity. The Kindergarten program also involves parents in the learning process, as students identify their own rituals and practices. Students will also begin exploring stories from the Bible, as well as developing their Hebrew skills with a special focus on Shabbat and Hebrew versions of familiar songs. Learning will take place through music, arts and crafts, drama, storytelling and participation in school programs. They will learn Hebrew blessings over food, for Shabbat and other holidays, color words, animals, parts of the body, and begin to identify Hebrew letters. Jewish value vocabulary will also be introduced.

1st Grade - Living Torah Through The Jewish Story

The First Grade program is aimed at building and strengthening the student's Jewish identity. Jewish functional skills will be further developed and creative thinking, experience and expression will be encouraged. The highlight of the year is the Consecration ceremony, which signifies the beginning of the students' formal Jewish

education. At this age the students will develop new perspectives on themselves and others as they strive to gain Jewish insights. Jewish heritage, including an introduction to the Hebrew letters, alef - yud will be taught with a wide choice of approaches such as art, music, discussion and games to meet the needs of the students at each stage of their reading readiness. The study of Torah will also be done in an age appropriate manner through Bible Stories and the Chai Curriculum.

2nd Grade - God & Mitzvot

The Second Grade program is focused on understanding the Jewish relationship with God, and how that is lived out through Mitzvot (commandment, good deed, "This is something very important to Me that you do."). Building knowledge of the Hebrew letters continues, with a focus on expanding Shabbat vocabulary. Learning will take place through music, arts and crafts, drama, Bible stories, storytelling, and participation in school programs.

TK-2nd Grade Breakout Classes

Hebrew Helpers

Every Sunday our Pre K, Kindergarten, First and Second grade students meet with Eemah and her Madrichim to learn Hebrew through songs, games and finger plays. They learn basic vocabulary in areas such as greetings, family, body, colors, food and numbers.

Music & T'filah

Every week, students will learn Jewish songs and prayers with our song leader. Once a month, one of our Rabbis will lead a service with the students. The emphasis on these services is to gain familiarity with the concept of prayer and prayer in a communal setting so even our youngest students can become integrated and contributing synagogue citizens.

Rabbi Time

Approximately twice a month (depending on the month), students will have an opportunity to learn with one of our Rabbis. The Rabbi will tell stories, use concepts from our Hebrew

Through Movement curriculum to teach Hebrew words related to Shabbat, and teach our tradition in a relevant, age-appropriate, and engaging way.

Family Education

Once a year, we will have a family education day. The day will begin with an activity just for the parents which will focus on parenting in today's changing times, as well as having healthy, meaningful conversations as a family on Jewish topics. Students will join their families for the second half of the day which will include a family activity and a project in support of our Caring Community.

Class Shabbat

Each class will be the host for one of our first Friday "Young Family Shabbat" services. During the service, the class will lead songs from the bimah. After the service, there will be a class dinner for students and their families. Be on the look out for more information.

Tz'dakah

We encourage our students to bring tz'dakah to Sunday class regularly. Fulfillment of the mitzvah of tz'dakah should be emphasized, though not rewarded. Throughout the year, teachers will present 3 organizations the students can choose between to allocate their collections.

3rd - 6th Grade Core Classes

3rd Grade - Holiness

In Third Grade, Hebrew and Judaica tracks are separated. In the Judaica classes, students will refine their own understanding and definition of k'dushah (holiness) and apply that understanding to how ritual objects, symbols, prayer, and our behaviors can make moments and places special, holy, and closer to God. An overarching theme is that Torah study is lifelong and ongoing. The mitzvot are rules that are designed to help us feel God in all aspects of our lives, even the seemingly mundane. In Hebrew classes, students move beyond letter recognition to develop decoding skills, and will start the journey of mastering Hebrew reading skills. Havdalah prayers will be emphasized. During midweek

Hebrew sessions, students will rotate through classes that will include Hebrew conversation, prayer through music, and reading/comprehension. During holiday classes, Judaica classes will cover the values, big ideas, and stories; Hebrew classes will cover the prayers and rituals with increasing depth in each consecutive year.

4th Grade - Tikkun Olam & Israel

In Fourth Grade, Hebrew and Judaica tracks are separated. Judaica Class: In the first half of the year, students will learn about Tikkun Olam, repairing our world, as they prepare for and put on the famous Mitzvah Mall. In the second half of the year, students will engage with the people, land, and values of Israel through the Torah strand in the Chai curriculum. Hebrew Class: The intensive study of prayer continues. Proficiency in reading and writing skills is reviewed. By the end of the year, students should be able to read and identify the big ideas of Bar'chu, Ma'ariv Aravim, Yotzeir Or, Sh'ma, V'ahavta, and Mi Chamocha. During midweek Hebrew sessions, students will rotate through classes that will include Hebrew conversation, prayer through music, and reading/comprehension. During holiday classes, Judaica classes will cover the values, big ideas, and stories; Hebrew classes will cover the prayers and rituals with increasing depth in each consecutive year.

5th Grade - History & Heroes

In Fifth Grade, Hebrew and Judaica tracks are separated. At a time when many children are approaching a significant life-cycle celebration, bar/bat mitzvah, the Judaica component focuses on the history of our people by focusing on our people, our heroes, with the goal of having our students see themselves as heroes as they make history. In Hebrew classes, the intensive study of prayer continues. Proficiency in reading and writing skills is reviewed. By the end of the year, students should be able to read and identify the big ideas of Hashkiveinu, Shabbat blessings, Kiddush, Avot v'Imahot, G'vurot, and Shalom Rav. During midweek Hebrew sessions, students will rotate through classes that will include Hebrew conversation, prayer through music, and reading/comprehension. During holiday classes, Judaica classes will cover the values, big ideas, and stories; Hebrew classes will cover the prayers and rituals with increasing depth in each consecutive year.

6th Grade - Revelation & Megilot

Jewish life has not only its private dimension but its communal celebration. Part of that communal celebration is reading from the Ketuvim (writings) of the Bible. In the Judaica classes, students will immerse into Ruth, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Psalms, and have the

opportunity to present their learning to the school community. In Hebrew classes, the intensive study of prayer continues. Proficiency in reading and writing skills is reviewed. By the end of the year, students should be able to read and identify the big ideas of K'dushah, Shalom Rav, Sim Shalom, Oseh Shalom, L'cha Dodi, V'shamru, Shalom Aleichem, Torah and Haftarah blessings. During midweek Hebrew sessions, students will rotate through classes that will include Hebrew conversation, prayer through music, and reading/comprehension. During holiday classes, Judaica classes will cover the values, big ideas, and stories; Hebrew classes will cover the prayers and rituals with increasing depth in each consecutive year.

3rd - 6th Grade Breakout Classes

Opening Ceremony

Each Sunday will begin in the Courtyard with songs, cheers, and ruach (spirit)!

Hafsakah

Hafsakah is our break time, which allows students to hang out with each other in a relatively unstructured environment. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, our day begins with Hafsakah. On Sundays, Hafsakah is in the middle of the day. New this year for our Sunday Hafsakah, we will have Israeli dancing, facilitated games, and other fun activities going on for those that choose.

Family Education

Once a year, we will have a family education day. The day will begin with an activity which will focus on the b'nai mitzvah journey, as well as having healthy, meaningful conversations with as a family on Jewish topics. Students and families will also participate in a project in support of our Caring Community.

Shira B'tzibur

Every Sunday, we will end the day with Shira B'tzibur - Singing in community! This ruach-filled song session will be led by our Song Leader. Songs in Shira B'tzibur will reflect the

holidays as well as reinforce Jewish values, providing our students with a song-bank of Jewish music they will sing when attending camp or other Jewish communal activities.

Hebrew Through Movement

Students will engage with Hebrew Through Movement, a Hebrew curriculum designed to make prayers and other Jewish vocabulary more accessible with our limited learning time. HTM introduces Hebrew in a playful and meaningful way, supported by the latest linguistics research on learning, providing an aural foundation for Hebrew that reinforces the Hebrew decoding and reading that will take place in their dedicated Hebrew classes. 3rd grade will focus on the Synagogue Unit and achieve phase 1. 4th - 6th grade will focus on foundational material and reinforce the prayers they are learning in their Hebrew classes and achieve phase 1 and 2.

Rabbi Time

During Wednesday or Thursday sessions, students will periodically have an opportunity to learn with one of our Rabbis. During this time, students will take a deep dive into the prayers they are learning in their Hebrew classes as they prepare for their class Shabbat. The goal of this time is simple: Students should know and make a personal connection to the meaning of our prayers.

T'filah

Wednesdays and Thursdays will end with a brief service or holiday observance, depending on the time of year. The emphasis on these services is to gain familiarity with the concept of prayer and prayer in a communal setting so our students can become integrated and contributing synagogue citizens and feel comfortable when they attend services with their family.

Tz'dakah

We encourage our students to bring tz'dakah to Sunday class regularly. Fulfillment of the mitzvah of tz'dakah should be emphasized, though not rewarded. Throughout the year, teachers will present 3 organizations the students can choose between to allocate their collections.

Class Shabbat

Each class will be the host for one of our first Friday “Young Family Shabbat” services. During the service, the class will lead prayers, songs, and offer teachings from the bimah. After the service, there will be a class dinner for students and their families. Be on the look out for more information.

7th Grade

Overview

The 7th grade program is designed to encourage a blend of community building, developing bonds between those who are already friends, those who have similar b’nai mitzvah dates, and the cohort as a whole. Each day will begin with a nosh and time to just be with friends. Students will examine their Jewish journey through the lens of b’nai mitzvah, with an eye towards integrating their past journey into the Jews, learners, and the Jews they are becoming. Students will use the arts to explore their Jewish identity, Hebrew to get more out of their B’nai Mitzvah journey (beyond “prayer” Hebrew), and will engage in social action projects throughout the year, including making meaningful, intergenerational connections. The day will also begin with an experimental, social and spiritual t’filah experience, and end with a closing circle as a community. Throughout the year, there will be holiday specific collaborative classes where the B’nai Mitzvah Journey and Jewish Identity classes will be combined, coming together for a special program around the holiday’s theme.

Kehilah Kedoshah

The phrase Kehilah Kedoshah means “Holy community.” During this block, we will create a Kehilah Kedoshah! For about half of the sessions, students will participate in experimental, outside the box T’filah (prayer) experiences (emphasizing the “Holy”). For the other half, we will do fun, meaningful, and engaging all-class activities, helping the entire class get to know each other on a deeply personal level.

Social Action/Justice

Each week, all students will explore service-learning and experiential social action and engagement. In this class, students will hear from speakers from local non-profit organizations, engage in monthly thematic projects, and connect with seniors in our community. This class will work in partnership with the Beth Israel Social Action Committee, building connections between the students and the greater Congregational community.

Israel

This year, we are blessed to have a Shinshin, named Amit, joining the Religious School teaching team doing a gap year between graduating High School and beginning her army service. Amit and one of our all-star teachers will be teaching Israel, taking something abstract, complex, and foreign and making it relevant, personal, and meaningful.

Torah Poster Art

Poster art is a genre of art where a scene, story, or message is conveyed within a simple rectangle. After studying poster art from a variety of settings, including Israel's Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) poster art throughout the years, students will go through their B'nai Mitzvah Torah portions, choose a scene, story, or message, and present it on their own poster. At the end of the semester, the students will present their posters in a public setting.

8th - 12th Grade Core Classes

Overview

Our High School program builds on the values and lessons of what is learned in TK-7th grade, and expands to a forum where students have the opportunity to develop their Jewish identities. In each grade, students have leadership and identity fulfilling opportunities. Each Tuesday begins with dinner, followed by a core class and an elective. At the end of the day, we will all gather in the courtyard for a closing circle.

8th Grade - Holocaust (half the year)

Students will study the Holocaust through their eyes by looking at art, music and daily life during this period of time. Students will confront the historical circumstances relating to the development of anti-Semitism, Hitler's accession to power, the Third Reich, Nazism, and the "Final Solution". To this study of history are added the perspective of Jewish values and Jewish experience: the situation of the Jews in Germany and Eastern Europe before, during, and after the war; ghetto life, revolt and resistance, testimony of survivors, and the questions which confront all humanity after Auschwitz.

8th Grade - World Religions (half the year)

This course is an effort to understand our Judaism more deeply by comparing and contrasting it with other major faith traditions. We will explore Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and atheism, both on their own terms and in the context of Jewish texts, beliefs, and history. We will also discuss the accelerating tension between liberal and fundamentalist strands of all faiths; strategies for engaging with missionaries; and the consequences of religious tribalism in today's global and domestic politics. Reference texts include: History of the Holocaust Student Pack - Torah Aura; Teaching the Holocaust (Simone Schweber & Debbie Findling); Apples and Oranges - Torah Aura

9th Grade - Ethics & Relationships

What influences our personal ethical choices? How do we deal with peer pressure and make good decisions? How does Judaism help us with these tough decisions? Students will begin to understand the connection of Jewish texts to their own lives and learn where to go for answers and who to turn to for guidance. Modern and relevant topics will be discussed. TEXTS: Living Jewish Values Series - Vol. 1, Be Your Best Self, by Joysa M. Winter & Rabbi Mark Levine; Our Shared World and Be a Good Friend, by Aviva Werner; Tough Questions Jews Ask, by Rabbi Edward Feinstein; Today's Hot Topics, by Aviva Werner

10th Grade - Confirmation

What is it, exactly, that we are confirming? Are we confirming that we are continually developing and exploring our Jewish identities? Are we confirming a commitment to make the world a better place? Are we confirming our roles as leaders in the Jewish community? Yes, yes, and yes! This year, the Confirmation class will consist of three units: 1) Exploring our Jewish identities, and examining all of the parts of ourselves that make us who we are;

2) Preparing for, going on, and taking home the L'taken experience in DC; 3) Developing and leading a meaningful service at the end of the year. This year, we're not just confirming who we are, we're owning it!

11th Grade - Israel & Platt Trip

This class offers a unique opportunity for students to gain deeper more relevant knowledge and perspective about the land and culture of Israel before we take our journey to the homeland in December. The first semester will focus on the trip, using the itinerary as a guide, as students prepare to get as much out of the trip as possible. During the second semester, students will join the 12th graders to continue a conversation about how to continue to be an Israel advocate in college and beyond.

12th Grade - Relationships, and AIPAC

Our successful Relationships class is back! This class will delve into the relationships that are pivotal in making us who we are. Student's will be looking at and discussing their relationship to (in no particular order): parents, community, Judaism, school, sex, God, authority, Israel, and peers, all within a Jewish context. Using Torah text as our resource, students will interpret and guide each other in conversations while forming a close connection to each other and their community. In the second semester, the class will participate in the AIPAC Conference in Washington D.C. as they experience affirmations of support for Israel from leaders around the world, as well as find their place in the complex world of Israel dialogue.

8th - 12th Grade Electives

Madrichim in Training (8th Grade Only)

Students will develop and learn a variety of leadership skills. In addition, upon completion of the course students will be eligible to become an aide in the classroom, a Hebrew and/or Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor, a weekend camp counselor, and a library, art, dance, or music assistant. Topics include: How to become a Jewish leader; How to teach in a Jewish setting. The sessions include lesson planning, teaching songs and games, teaching Hebrew reading and vocabulary and storytelling. In addition students will write and produce a teaching DVD. They will develop a strategy and lesson plan, write and film a DVD to be used in the classroom or in an informal education setting.

Elective 1 - TBA

Elective 2 - TBA

Elective 3 - TBA

Elective 4 - TBA