

**Havurat Torah  
Parlor Meeting  
Wednesday, May 6, 2009**

**Schedule**

**Havurat Torah Schedule, 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Wednesday nights: 6:30pm-8:45 pm  
Core class  
Dinner break  
Elective

AND

- Weekend experience, which includes one of the following:  
Sunday classroom learning, once/month: 11:10-1pm  
OR  
Kabbalat Shabbat or Shabbat morning service  
(6 are scheduled throughout the year)  
OR  
Kadimah event or Family brunch

**Havurat Torah Schedule, 8-12<sup>th</sup> grades**

- Wednesday nights: 6:30pm-8:45 pm  
Core class  
Dinner break  
Elective

AND

- Sunday morning: 9-10:50am, special program once a month

Optional:

- Enrichment track: Sundays, 9-10:50am  
Begins in November

## ***Core Curriculum Descriptions***

### ***7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum: Etgar***

Based on 4MAT, an educational model that engages students in active learning while considering their individual learning styles, Etgar lessons use a variety of learning activities and techniques. Upon entering an Etgar classroom, one might see students engaged in cooperative learning groups and self-directed study; reading excerpts from the Torah and other Jewish sources; writing and performing skits; or viewing and analyzing clips from contemporary movies.

In addition, Etgar units integrate Jewish life beyond the confines of the classroom through family education, community service, and practical applications for Jewish living.

The core curriculum will address the questions of “Who am I, Where do I belong, and “What are my responsibilities?” The three units are:

- Defining Aveivoot
- Pidyon Shvuim- Redeeming Captives
- Zionism

Website to learn more about Etgar:

[http://www.uscj.org/Project\\_Etgar\\_2008207134.html](http://www.uscj.org/Project_Etgar_2008207134.html)

### ***8<sup>th</sup> grade: Facing History and Ourselves***

Throughout this course, students will examine the vibrancy of Jewish life before, during, and after the Holocaust. By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students will make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives. At the heart of the curriculum is the resource Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior, which explores the consequences of hatred. Through written text, video, and web-based materials students learn to recognize bigotry and indifference while they also meet exemplars of courage and compassion in the face of injustice and see that their own daily choices can have major impacts and perhaps even be a critical link to a safer future. Major themes include: identity, membership, and belonging as well as courage, caring and compassion.

Website to learn more about Facing History and Ourselves:

<http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/strategies/outlines>

### ***9th Grade: Judaism and the Environment***

This curriculum demonstrates how vitally relevant Jewish tradition is today and builds understanding of our connection and responsibility to the environment. It uses food and Jewish tradition as focal points to create innovative programming for students. Jewish tradition has a great deal to say about what is fit (i.e. kosher) for us to eat. Today, questions about food have become ever more complicated as we come up against changing nutritional news, the use of chemical pesticides, and industrial farming. Health issues such as obesity and environmental damage are intrinsically connected to our personal and national food choices. One of the goals of this curriculum is to create opportunities for our students to manifest their own Jewish, health, and environmental values and priorities by taking action around the ideas they learn. Through the study of traditional Jewish texts and hands-on activities, students will see how their action impact the environment and explore what their responsibility is in taking care of this world.

Website to learn more about this curriculum:

[www.hazon.org](http://www.hazon.org)

### ***10<sup>th</sup> Grade: JUST: Judaism, Action, and Social Change***

The JUST Action curriculum is rooted in the belief that there is a distinctly Jewish way to pursue social justice.

Over the course of the semester we will implement a social justice initiative based on the unique approach to Jewish service learning as set out by the JUST curriculum. This is a two pronged approach. One prong includes exploration of the Jewish ethical, theological and philosophical basis for engaging in social action. The other includes guidelines for defining an area of focus, and preparation, implementation, reflection and evaluation of the project that addresses the chosen issue all through a Jewish lens. To enhance what we do here, we will attend the Panim Seminar in Washington, DC.

PANIM educates, inspires, and empowers Jewish youth to a lifetime of leadership, service, and advocacy on behalf of the Jewish people and society at large. PANIM's unique approach to Jewish education – integrating Jewish learning, values and social responsibility – reinforces Jewish identity and inspires a commitment to become agents for positive social change in the world.

Website to learn more about this curriculum: [www.justaction.org](http://www.justaction.org)

## **11<sup>th</sup> grade:**

First semester: Great Jewish texts, Great Jewish Ideas

This is a survey of Jewish texts including:

- ❑ *Tanakh*
- ❑ *Mishnah*
- ❑ *G'marah*
- ❑ *Shulhan Arukh*
- ❑ Rambam
- ❑ *She'alot and t'shuvot* (questions and answers based on Rabbinic rulings) and the RA law committee.

In addition, this course will include the study of modern theologians.

Second semester: Packing for College

This is a curriculum designed for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12 graders and their parents that consists of nine sessions over a two-year period. The course covers practical matters, such as how to choose a college and, for graduating seniors, how to develop a personal Jewish Action Plan. It deals with questions about Judaism that teens are likely to be asked and suggests ways to advocate for Israel. It also helps parents and their college-bound children forge a new type of relationship based on their shared personal and Jewish expectations. The program also provides ritual materials to assist families and congregations to celebrate this important life passage.

Website to learn more about this curriculum:

[www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org)

## **12<sup>th</sup> grade:**

First semester: *Kehilla*: Jewish Community, which include:

- ❑ Diaspora communities
- ❑ Israel
- ❑ Agencies that make up a Jewish community and their function
- ❑ Different movements in Judaism
- ❑ The different expression of faith/religions or our neighbors
- ❑ The importance of finding and creating a community

Second semester: Packing for College

See description above

## **Electives:**

In addition to the core classes, each student is required to choose from a selection of electives. These classes will allow our students to flourish in their chosen interests. A description of the elective courses will be made available to you in early August.

## 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Events and Trips

### **7<sup>th</sup> grade:** *Trip to the Jewish Heritage Museum*

The Museum of Jewish Heritage focuses on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This museum displays artifacts related to just about every aspect of Jewish history and culture including books, clothes, artwork and religious objects. Short educational films play at several locations in the museum, which directly relate to the curriculum the 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be studying.

### **8<sup>th</sup> grade:** *Trip to the New York Tolerance Center, NYC*

The New York Tolerance Center, a branch of the Simon Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, is a multimedia facility targeting youth and adults involved in youth education. Through interactive workshops, exhibits, and videos, visitors explore issues of prejudice, diversity, tolerance, and cooperation at school, in the workplace, and in the community.

### **9<sup>th</sup> grade:** *Teva Shabbaton*

Through engaging prayer, hands-on learning, and immersion in the natural world, participants are encouraged to develop more meaningful relationships with Creation and with their own Jewish identities, while building a strong community. Teva's programs emphasize a genuine commitment to *tikkun olam* (healing the world) and becoming *shomrei adamah* (guardians of the Earth).

### **10<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- *Panim el Panim: Judaism and Activism: Face to Face in Washington, D.C.* (Martin Luther King weekend)

This incredible trip is a wonderful opportunity for our students to get a taste of political action while learning more about Israel and our government. This is a culmination of all that they have been learning throughout the first semester through the JUST ACTION curriculum.

- *Kinyan Torah Program*

For the first three years after B'nai mitzvah, our students continue to learn about their Jewish heritage and history, gaining a better understanding about where they come from and what their responsibilities are as a Jewish adult. The Kinyan Torah Program culminates in a ceremony that recognizes our students' dedication to and diligence in their pursuit of Jewish learning. This ceremony gives the community the chance to mark this achievement and to support our students' continued commitment to lifelong Jewish learning. This ceremony takes place during a Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat service in May. A dinner for 10<sup>th</sup> graders and their families follows the service.

**11th & 12th Grade:**

- Trip to a college for Hillel experience– Maryland, Washington, DC or Boston
- Panim or AIPAC conference for teens

*Trip to Israel, biannually*

(During February break)

This trip is a culmination of our students' learning about Israel and what it means to be part of *Am Yisrael*. This biannual trip will include sightseeing and social action projects. Rabbi Gordon Tucker leads this transformative trip to our homeland. This trip does NOT preclude any student from participating in Birthright Israel in the future.

**12th grade Graduation:**

This ceremony will recognize the great strides our students have taken toward a lifetime of Jewish learning and will take place at Rabbi Tucker's house.