

Congregation Hakafa **Religious School Curriculum Outline**

All-School Education Days

Three times throughout the year, our Kindergarten through Eighth Grade students come together for special All-School Education Days designed to provide our students with creative, intensive, experiential, and mixed-age Jewish learning on a specific topic.

Field Trips

Each grade level (K-8) has its own field trip (or a special program in place of a trip) during which students and their parents participate in a program designed to help create community and provide our students and families with experiential Jewish learning in the greater community that is related to the grade level's curriculum.

GRADES K – 2

In addition to core curriculum at each grade level and weekly music and Israeli dance instruction, students participate in our Hebrew Readiness Program. Through this program, students are introduced to basic Hebrew words through music and games. Students work in books in which animated text introduces each Hebrew letter along with Jewish symbols that begin with the corresponding letter. In addition, students begin to learn and recite blessings associated with Shabbat, Hanukkah, and Pesach. Upon completion of second grade, students bring home their book that has followed them through these three years.

Core Curriculum:

Jewish Holidays, Shabbat, Jewish Symbols, and Jewish Heroes

Additional topics include:

- Introduction to Bible Stories
(*Oral* presentation of the stories of Creation, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Esau, Rachel and Leah, Joseph, Noah, Tower of Babel, Moses, and Jonah)
- Tzedakah
 - Helping others and being good to others
 - Charitable acts: Shalach Manot, kindness to people and animals.
- Introduction to place of worship
 - Meet the Rabbi
 - Experience Torah, Aron Kodesh, Eternal Light

GRADES 3 - 5

Core Curriculum: The Basics of Judaism (3-year cycle)

Year 1: Judaism as a Way of Life

Students will follow the Jewish calendar and holidays, discover the Jewish life cycle events, and focus on rituals and symbols. In addition, they will explore a few core values that guide us through our Jewish lives.

Year 2: Judaism as a Religion

Students will explore the Torah and other foundational Jewish texts. They will also delve into the meaning and practice of G'milut Chasadim.

Year 3: Judaism as a Place

Students will explore Israel's centrality to the Jewish experience as a homeland, including an exploration of its people, culture, geography, and history.

Curriculum Enhancement:

Each core curriculum lesson is paired with a "chug hour" activity or lesson designed to complement and enhance the core curriculum.

GRADES 6 - 8

Core Curriculum: Jewish History, Mitzvot, and Israel:

6th-8th graders will explore Jewish History, Mitzvot, and Israel. Specific lessons within these units build over a three-year cycle and explore the following concepts:

- Jewish History
 - Struggles throughout Jewish history
 - Responses to struggles throughout Jewish history
 - Ramifications and Hope
- Mitzvot
 - Ecology
 - Honoring Parents and the Elderly
 - Visiting the Sick
 - Welcoming the Stranger
- Israel
 - What is a homeland? What is a Jewish homeland?
 - What does a homeland look like? Exploration of Israel as a Jewish homeland.
 - What are the challenges of a homeland? What are Israel's challenges?

Curriculum Enhancement:

6th-8th graders will have the opportunity to participate in cultural experiences such as Israeli Folk Dance, a few field trips, and a special Intergenerational program taught by Sharon Morton.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM: **Leadership Development – Becoming a Jewish Adult**

Our program/curriculum for Hakafa students in high school (9th – 12th grades) has been developed in order to help our students gain knowledge and skills as community leaders while they grow into Jewish adulthood and become active, voting members of our congregation.

- In place of weekly classes and/or retreats, students in 9th through 11th grades meet (by grade) four times a year on Sunday late afternoons (4:00-6:15 p.m.). These four class sessions incorporate dinner with all 9th-11th grade students together.

Curriculum: 9th Grade: The Jew and the Self

10th Grade: The Jew Beyond the Self

11th Grade: The Jew and the Greater Community

- The 12th Grade program consists of both Confirmation Classes/Prep Meetings and participation in two senior-specific workshops that focus on Jewish life after high school.
- All high school students (grades 9-12) meet three times during the year to do social action and/or community projects/outings.
- All high school students (grades 9-12) have the opportunity to participate in an educational out-of-town trip each year.
- The year kicks-off for all high school students with a BBQ.