

Grade Level Descriptions

K-2nd Grade:

Students will be welcomed into our religion school program with warm, welcoming arms. Each classroom will be built on the foundation of connecting the students to each other and creating a respectful and fun dynamic.

Our curriculum will focus on four cycles throughout the course of the year and build from one year to another:

1. **Beginnings and Blessings**
2. **Jewish Literacy**
3. **Shabbat**
4. **Israel**

We will learn about and celebrate all Jewish holidays as they arrive during the course of the year. Students will learn basic Torah stories, Jewish values, basic blessings, and about their Jewish community.

Hebrew: During Sunday classes, students will be introduced to the Hebrew aleph-bet (alphabet) by learning a new letter every week. Every other week they will be visited by our Hebrew Through Movement Specialist who will introduce our students to the sounds of Hebrew by speaking Hebrew and teaching our students basic modern Hebrew vocabulary.

In late winter, families will gather together on a Saturday evening to share a meal, celebrate Havdalah (the ceremony to end Shabbat), and participate in a social justice program called “Gathering Sparks.” Please refer to your grade-level calendar for the date.

3rd Grade:

Students will explore one subject area in-depth for one semester and move on to a different subject area each semester.

Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. Learning in this setting brings students together in small group working towards accomplishing a specific goal thereby creating and deepening relationships between students.

For the 2018-2019 school year:

3rd Grade: Torah- The Joseph Narrative (1st semester)/ Shabbat (2nd semester)

During the fall, all 3rd and 4th graders will attend a weekend retreat (shabbaton) to deepen their connections to the students in their grade level and celebrate Shabbat together in a fun environment. Shabbatonim are typically held off-site at a local camp and all fees are included in registration.

4th Grade:

Students will explore one subject area in-depth for one semester and move on to a different subject area each semester.

Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. Learning in this setting brings students together in small group working towards accomplishing a specific goal thereby creating and deepening relationships between students.

For the 2018-2019 school year:

4th Grade: Jewish Holidays (1st semester)/ Israel (2nd semester)

During the fall, all 3rd and 4th graders will attend a weekend retreat (shabbaton) to deepen their connections to the students in their grade level and celebrate Shabbat together in a fun environment. Shabbatonim are typically held off-site at a local camp and all fees are included in registration.

5th Grade:

For the 2018-2019 school year we will be introducing Project Based Learning into the 5th grade program. 5th graders share their own personal stories and family history as a launching point towards learning about other Jewish stories from around the world. Students will focus on Ashkenazic, Sephardic and Mizrachi populations and follow stories that lead to eventual immigration to Israel. Each class will create their own fictional story based on real-life examples and then present their creation in a digital storytelling format.

Twice during the course of the year our Bellevue and Seattle 5th grade classes will come together for a day long program focused on expanding their learning as well as building community between the two campuses in preparation for being together in Seattle for 6th grade.

6th-8th Grade:

Our middle school meets together at the Seattle campus on Sunday mornings. Students will gather with the whole community for morning tefillah, and once a month as a middle school group for tefillah.

*Our middle school program focuses on guiding students in an exploration of the question: **What are my responsibilities as a Jewish adult?***

6th Grade: Classes will be split into semesters and there will be two rotations/semester. Each student will have a chance to attend both classes with a break in the middle for socializing. 6th graders will be pulled out individually with a Hebrew tutor throughout the course of the year to be able to receive individual attention for continued Hebrew practice in 5-7 min increments.

1st Semester (Fall): Create Your Own Mitzvah Fair/TBD

2nd Semester (Spring): Passover In-Depth/Holocaust & Humanity

During the spring, parents and students will join together for a field trip to the Holocaust Center in Seattle. 6th Graders will also be responsible for planning and running the Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) service in April for the Seattle school.

6th Grade will also have the opportunity to meet with Sheri Gazitt of Teen Wise 3 times during the course of the year to have important conversations about challenges being Jewish in middle school.

7th Grade:

7th grade will have a base cohort which will consist of the students who will become Bar/Bat Mitzvah around the same date. Small group work, team building, and check ins will be done in this cohort.

7th graders will then have the opportunity to choose between two paths: a stronger educational focus and a stronger social component.

Registration and participation in the 7th grade program is a requirement of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

8th Grade:

8th grade is a highlight of religion school for all of our students. Important Jewish learning begins when you are post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah as our students begin to mature into their religious identity.

8th graders explore Comparative Judaism, God, Being Jewish in a Modern World, and Israel. They also have the option of traveling to Los Angeles in January to explore Jewish LA and have fun bonding and creating memories!

FAMILY EDUCATION FOR ELEMENTARY GRADES:

Successful Religion School education involves a strong partnership between the student families and the school. Through family education programs, we strengthen the Judaic knowledge of both students and their families, and empower families to further enrich their lives with Judaism. These programs will be designed to engage both our students and their families, each leaving the session with something new learned and shared. It is imperative for the success of these programs that at least one parent attend each session with their child. These will take place during Religion School on Sunday mornings. Dates are listed on the Religion School Calendar.

Our continued curricular focus for family education during the 2018-2019 school year will be on social justice programming.