

THE GAN

Early Childhood @ Adas

Connect, Thrive, Learn, and Grow. Together.



Dear Parents,

Stephanie here, I am using Noah's communication platform to send you an important message. – please **take a moment and read this note in full**, and if not now, remember to come back to it later. I want to share some essential information with you – some context to why our antiracist work at the Gan, including our evening event for parents this spring, is so deeply important to us. **Please join us on May 31, 8:00pm on Zoom, for an important community event.**

In September 2021, we shared with you [this letter](#) which reflected the work our staff did together during our Pathways year and continue to do now. We told you about our co-educator model and why equity motivated that change. We outfitted our classrooms with more diverse toys, books, and materials.

What we did not share with you was why we were doing this work. In retrospect, I imagine many thought we were responding to the Black Lives Matter Movement that followed the murder of George Floyd. And in some ways, that is correct but not in the way you may think. Our Gan faculty had a staff meeting just after the murder of George Floyd during which we learned that for years – many years – our beloved Gan teachers experienced racism within the safe, loving spaces of our preschool. We listened to their stories, watched their tears, and felt their anguish as they described what being a person of color in a predominantly white community was like for them. The experiences they shared continue today, as they are largely cultural and institutional transgressions that are pervasive in daily life. We heard from our staff what we had seen but yet were blind to; a predominantly white parent body going to their white teachers for most questions, concerns, and general communication, at the unknown and unintentional expense of rendering our Black teaching staff invisible and unheard.

Now, after a year of intimate, vulnerable staff discussions held through our school's Antiracist Committee, we will share a bit of the experiences our Black teachers have had while working at our school. We will do so in next week's "It's All Gan" communication. We will be highlighting not only their pain, but also their success and pride – their accomplishments as professional early childhood educators who have nurtured and sustained our school children for many years at the Gan. We know you will feel like many of us did and want to act, advocate, and take the necessary steps to strengthen and nourish the many teachers who for so long have felt invisible. **You can do so by joining us via Zoom on Tuesday, May 31, 2022 at 8:00pm for a meaningful discussion, led by Rabbi Aaron Alexander and Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt. Zoom link will be sent community-wide.**

Your presence at the May 31st event is a beginning to creating a more-just Gan community. Together, we will look ahead – all of us, Rabbis Alexander & Holtzblatt, school leadership, and veteran teachers as we embark on the antiracist journey of Adas and the Gan and its Jewish roots. We turn to you each as partners in relationship- and community- building.

Thank you for listening and we hope to see you all on May 31st.

Stephanie

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adasisrael.org/gan
202.362.4491
gan@adasisrael.org