

Makom:
The Place to be!
Parent Handbook
2023-2024
5784



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The Makom Vision

The Makom model is a combination of opportunities to experience Judaism, infused with ruach (spirit) and meaning. Through the use of multiple educational modalities and reflective student-centered methodologies, Makom promotes life-long learning, as well as spiritual & educational growth that is centered around relatable, values-based, real-time and community-building Jewish learning experiences.

Adath Israel Mission Statement

At Adath Israel, our educational vision is to foster a community where Judaism is meaningful to each person, that links generation to generation, and leads to life long learning and Jewish living. Our mission is to provide diverse Jewish educational experiences for families and individuals of all ages, according to the views of Conservative Judaism as they relate to Torah and Mitzvot, prayer, the Hebrew language, the people and State of Israel and relationships between people and with God.

Among our central values we strive to promote:

- Kavod Habriot / Menschlichkeit (to cultivate respect and care for oneself and others) by participating in acts of:
Tikkun Olam Tzedakah Gemilut Hasadim
(Repairing the world) (Acts of giving) (Acts of kindness)
- Talmud Torah - to instill a love of Jewish learning and developing students skills for full synagogue participation and Jewish practice.

Tefillah Experience

Each Shabbat (Saturday session) of Makom, we *daven* (pray) in smaller groups based on age group. For example Kindergarten through 3rd grade have one prayer experience and our 4th through 6th graders will have a different prayer experience.

Education Committee

The mission of the Education Committee is to oversee and govern Makom. This is done in cooperation and advisement with the Rabbis and the Makom Education Director. A member of the faculty is also invited to participate on the Education Committee. The Committee consists of congregation members who have demonstrated an interest in and commitment to maintaining high standards of educational excellence. Anyone who has such an interest is encouraged to contact the Education Vice President about becoming a member. Additionally, parents are strongly encouraged to bring any concerns or questions they have to any member of the Education committee or to the Vice President listed below.

Makom Education Committee

2022-2023 5782/3

Education Vice President –Youth and Teens (K-12)

Andrew Poolman makomvp@adathisrael.org

Education Committee

Kate Cohen kateryercohen@gmail.com

Joanne Lane joannetlane@gmail.com

Andrew Poolman aspoolman@gmail.com

Raya Terry raya.terry@gmail.com

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Education Director

Hannah Isaacs-Arkin hisaacs@adathisrael.org

PTO

Another part of the mission of the Makom Education Committee is to serve the needs of the students by fostering a partnership among parents, faculty, the Makom Director, and professional staff through communication, social and educational programming, and financial support.

To Parents & Caregivers: You're Our Partners in Jewish Education

The best way to ensure that your child's Jewish education "sticks" is through continued engagement and reinforcement at home. **You are our true partners in creating the best possible educational experience for your child.**

- **Prepare your child for our program.** Impress upon your child the value of learning and the influence it will have on making them a more knowledgeable Jew and person.
- **Make sure that your child is present and on time.** Our time together is limited—regular attendance and punctuality are essential in order to achieve continuity and foster a meaningful religious and educational experience.
- **Take an interest in the materials and notices that your child brings home.** Your interest can be incredibly motivating to your child.
- **Look for emails from the Director or teachers with updates from Makom and Adath Israel.** Ask your children what they learned and experienced, and discuss how it connects to everyday living.
- **Encourage your child to read Jewish books and participate in Jewish cultural activities.** There are many opportunities outside of Makom, including synagogue functions, youth group, and PJ Library. Ask us for more information.
- **Bring Judaism into your home** by displaying and using ritual objects.
- **Participate in Jewish learning as a family.** Attend Shabbat services and join us for holiday celebrations and special programs. Offer your own talents to the Makom community.
- **Keep the lines of communication open.** We are always eager to hear feedback, and to discuss together how to best meet your child's learning needs and interests. Any problems that come up in Makom should first be discussed with your child's teacher, and then with the education professional staff and/or the clergy. We are always happy to hear from you.
- **Further your own learning.** Ask your children what they're studying and discuss it together. Participate in our adult discussion groups on Shabbat mornings with a member of the clergy, adult education classes or family programming.
- **Celebrate Shabbat and the holidays at home.** Prepare special foods, light candles, and recite Kiddush. Sharing a special family meal with challah and grape juice can be a beautiful way to end the week.

Meet our Teachers!

Wednesday:

Nancy Gorosh - Gimel (3rd)
Matt Rosenbaum - Dalet (4th)
Lindsay Wachs & Leore Miller- Hey (5th)
Jess Meyers- Vav (6th)
Rabbi Andy Markowitz- Zayin (7th)
Linda Jaffe - Hebrew Specialist

Saturday:

Linda Herring Hill-Gan (K) & Alef (1st)
Jacqueline Ketels - Bet (2nd)
Nancy Gorosh- Gimel (3rd)
Matt Rosenbaum - Dalet (4th)
Lindsay Wachs & Leore Miller- Hey (5th)
Jess Meyers- Vav (6th)
Linda Jaffe - Hebrew Specialist

Health Concerns

Members of the school administration and staff are not permitted to dispense medication of any variety to a student unless the medication has been approved for us by the parent and is accompanied by a doctor's note. All medications must be labeled with the student's name and brought to the Makom Director.

Attendance

While we aspire to 100% attendance, we understand that absences are often inevitable and unavoidable. Learning new concepts, especially Hebrew, requires consistency. If your child's attendance is sporadic, we will be in touch with you to discuss alternative arrangements such as private tutoring (which would come at your own expense).

As our time with your child is limited, every minute counts. Please do your best to minimize tardiness and early pick up.

Should you find that early dismissal is required, please follow this procedure:

- Send your child to school with a signed note letting us know the time your child needs to be picked up.
- Please do not go to the areas where the classes gather. Please drive to the school entrance, meet Hannah and your child at the school entrance for pick up.
- Students will not be dismissed before a parent/guardian arrives. The student may not wait outside for early dismissal.

Makom Schedule

Saturday: In-Person

K-6th Grades

9am-12pm Makom Class

Wednesdays: In-Person

3rd-7th Grade

4:00pm-4:30pm Open Drop off

4:30pm-6:00pm Makom Class

2nd Sunday of Each Month: In-Person

7th Grade

9am-12pm

Code of Conduct

Guidelines and Expected Behavior

Students will:

- Attend Makom regularly.
- Arrive on time at the beginning of each session and leave at dismissal.
- Come prepared with a clearly labeled backpack with the following supplies: face mask (optional) and a refillable water bottle.
- Use only appropriate language and gestures.
- Act with *Kavod* (respect) toward others.
- Act with *Kavod* (respect) toward school and individual property.
- Work toward *Shalom Bayit* (Peace in the Home) by resolving any disputes with respect and kindness.
- Remain with class unless otherwise specified.
- Leave chewing gum, phones and other electronics inside backpack.
- Dress appropriately and comfortably for learning. Male identifying students should wear a Kippah or head covering. All other students are encouraged to wear a kippah or head covering. Clothes or T-shirts with inappropriate comments or symbols should not to be worn at Makom.
- Additionally, each class will jointly develop its own set of rules for the creation of an optimal learning community.

Cell Phones

During Makom hours, there is no reason for a child to be using their cell phone. The school has adopted the policy used by Lower Merion School District which follows the Pennsylvania School Code S13-1317.1 which provides:

Cell phones shall be permitted under the following circumstances:

- They cannot be visible during class time.
- They cannot be used during class, unless the teacher allows it for educational purposes.
- They cannot disrupt the class.
- A student cannot be late to class because of a cell phone call.
- To that end, children must place their cell phones in their backpacks.
- The phones must be turned off during Makom hours. If a child is caught using a phone during school hours, the teacher may confiscate it until the end of the day. If this continues, you will be contacted.

Communication

We see parents as our partners in this work.

Every Thursday afternoon the Makom News email will be sent to all Makom families. This email (through Constant Contact) will update you with information about upcoming school events. It is very important that you read this email, since there are many details in it regarding Makom.

In the Makom News there will also be links to blurbs from each Makom class to share what was accomplished during class, some pictures, and what to look forward to.

Our doors are always open. If you have a concern or question about something being taught, or if there is an issue within the classroom, please contact Hannah Isaacs-Arkin, Makom's Education Director. We want to work with you to best address all educational needs.

From time to time a special notice may come home with your child with information about upcoming events and special programs. Please ask your children for anything they might have been given to bring home.

Communication is a two-way street, and one of the best educational tools we have. Please know again that our doors are always open. Any problems, ideas, or feedback are always welcome.

Hannah's email is hisaacs@adathisrael.org, and her direct office line is 610-934-1912

Discipline Policy

We are committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment in our school. If students demonstrate an unwillingness to abide by the rules established for their classroom, then the following steps will be taken:

- The teacher will develop an action plan for those children in conjunction with guidelines provided by our Makom Director, who will identify possible alternative approaches that the teachers can institute. The children's parents will be informed of the contents of this plan and will be updated on the classroom situation.
- If children continue to be disruptive, they will be asked to meet with the Makom Director and their teacher to discuss the situation.
- If the situation does not improve, the children's parents will be asked to meet with the Makom Director, the child/ren, and the teacher.
- If there is no observable improvement, the child/ren will be unable to attend Makom unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Any further infraction will result in the child's suspension from school. Please read and discuss this discipline plan with your child. If you have any questions about the policy, the Makom Director is always available to speak with you.

Gift Shop

The Adath Israel gift shop will be open on Wednesday afternoons for parent/guardians to shop. Students will not be permitted to enter the gift shop before class.

Arrival & Dismissal

Drop off on Shabbat

- Students and their parent/guardians are to come into the Girsh Auditorium via the school entrance to meet their teacher, have a muffin, and a shmooze!
- Students will receive a lanyard to wear from their teacher with their name & grade on it.

Pick up on Shabbat

- Students will be picked up in the Tabas Auditorium at 12:00pm at their Makom-designated tables that have blue table cloths.
- When you arrive, students will give back their lanyard to their teacher; that is our sign that your child has been officially picked up.

Drop off and Pick up on Wednesdays

- Our 3rd-7th graders will be dropped off at the school lobby entrance.
- Pick up will also happen at the school lobby entrance. We will be coning off an area of the parking lot for the students to stand so that the car line can move more efficiently.

7th Grade on their one Sunday a month: Our 7th graders will find either Rabbi Eric, Rabbi Andy, or Hannah at 9am in the Chapel. 7th grade on Sundays will begin with Minyan.

Please drive SLOWLY and carefully in & out of the parking lot.

School Closing Policies:

If there is a school closing, you will receive an email from our school office. We will do our best to anticipate inclement weather early and try to be in touch on Friday before Shabbat.

Food

We will provide a snack for every child on Wednesdays. We will account for dietary restrictions. In addition, there will be a light snack Shabbat mornings before class starts.

Please send a refillable water bottle to Makom!

On Shabbat, once your child has been picked up from their teacher, all students and parent/guardians are invited to join us for Kiddush lunch.

Chewing gum is NOT permitted in Makom

Hebrew

In order to better assist the students in acquiring the skills needed to read Hebrew, the educational staff will administer a diagnostic reading exercise in the Fall to all 4th - 6th graders. The exercise will help with the diagnosis of individual strengths and weaknesses in letter and vowel recognition, letter and vowel sound discrimination and word recognition. Teachers will use the results to determine how to best meet the students' learning needs.

Mastery of Hebrew can only be achieved through practice at home.

Such practice is a great way to be involved in your child's learning. Please listen to your children's Hebrew reading and discuss their progress with them.

Additional Needs

We attend to the special needs of our students on an individualized basis. In consultation with parents, teachers, and any other involved professionals, we will do our best to meet these recommendations. The goal is to enable each child to comfortably participate in Hebrew groups with grade-level peers.

In order to help us appropriately educate your child, please provide us with any relevant information regarding special needs. If your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), please submit a copy to the Makom Director. This helps us to best accommodate your child's learning needs.

Makom Books

Students will receive books during the first week of class. All books will remain at Makom. In the event that your child's book makes its way home and is then lost, please notify the Makom Director immediately so that a replacement can be ordered. Parents will be asked to pay the replacement fee.

Tzedakah & Gemilut Hasadim

Tzedakah (justice) and gemilut hasadim (acts of loving kindness) are two mitzvot that are central to Judaism. Tzedakah, in the form of giving spare change or small dollar amounts, is collected regularly at Makom. At the end of the year the students select an organization or cause to support with their collected funds.

Gemilut hasadim take place in various ways, including grade-level and Makom-wide mitzvah projects.

Please remind your child to bring tzedakah to Makom.

Youth Programs

At Adath Israel, we understand that a sense of belonging is as essential to building a strong Jewish identity as learning. We strive to accomplish this sense of belonging at Makom, and this is also the primary function of our youth groups. Youth groups combine the social with the religious, the social action with the educational, all with an added layer of fun.

Participation in youth groups is a wonderful way for children to develop and maintain strong Jewish peer connections. We have a Kadima group for our 5th, 6th and 7th graders. Please keep an eye out for more information as the year progresses.

We welcome all students to participate and for parents to become involved in all Makom and youth activities.