



# JCDS PK-6 Curriculum Guide

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## JCDS Mission Statement

The mission of Jewish Community Day School (JCDS) is to instill a love of learning invigorated by academic excellence. JCDS is grounded in Jewish tradition, fostering spirituality (emunah), dedication to repair our world (tikkun olam), and commitment to the entire Jewish people (k'lal Yisrael). JCDS is a nurturing school where families of all backgrounds are welcomed and children are prepared to be engaged compassionate leaders.

At JCDS we ensure that:

- Students become inquiring, capable youth who are passionate lifelong learners.
- Teachers are dedicated to best educational practices.
- Families are engaged in their children's academic achievement and holistic development.
- Ethics and morals of our students are nurtured through commitment to Jewish values.
- Positive connections to the language, land, culture and people of the State of Israel are created.
- Children are primed for full participation in our global society

## Curriculum in the Multi-Age Classroom

### *Why Multi-Age Classrooms?*

While multi-age classrooms may appear to be a necessity of a small school, they are inherent in our child-centered approach to learning. A multi-age setting allows students to develop at their own pace and allows the teacher to tailor learning to each child through small group and individualized instruction, as well as multidisciplinary thematic projects. Each child gets to be, in turn, a mentor and a mentee. Children get to know, in alternating years, the grade cohorts above and below them as classmates, furthering our sense of community. Multi-age classrooms promote a sense of confidence and self-worth, all while appropriately scaffolding skills as students develop.

### *Skill Progression vs. Content*

A multi-age classroom does not mean that children are limited in any way, nor does it mean that they repeat the same material two years in a row. Material such as themed projects and literature repeats on a two year cycle. For example, one age cohort may study rainforests in prekindergarten and the Arctic in kindergarten, while the next age cohort will get the Arctic in prekindergarten and rainforests in kindergarten. What is asked of students around these themes, though, may vary based on their grade level and developmental needs. A writing assignment for a fourth grader may be held to a

higher standard than that of a third grader, though they are writing about the same novel. Skills continue to scaffold from year-to-year within a multiage classroom.

### *Grade-True Instruction*

Sometimes, content and skills are inextricably intertwined, such as in learning a second language or in math. Students are placed in grade-true Hebrew classes, though students capable of advanced study or remediation can have their needs met through acceleration or small group instruction. Similarly, math, through the Eureka Math curriculum, is taught in grade-true groups, typically counter-scheduled against Hebrew. Should talented students be in need of acceleration, the school will accommodate them to ensure that they are appropriately challenged. Small group instruction addresses the needs of students requiring additional attention.

## **Prekindergarten and Kindergarten**

### *Math*

Prekindergarteners focus first on numeracy, learning the numbers and what they represent. As they develop that numeracy, which is reinforced through daily routines and interdisciplinary instruction, students learn about addition and subtraction. As at all levels, while fluency is important, more so is the conceptual understanding behind the answers students are asked to provide. Activities may include:

- Counting how many objects are in a group and comparing the quantities of two groups of objects
- Comparing two numbers to identify which is greater or less than the other
- Understanding addition as putting together and subtraction as taking away from
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately
- Breaking up numbers less than or equal to 10 in more than one way (for example,  $9=6+3$ ,  $9=5+4$ )
- For any number from 1 to 9, finding the missing quantity that is needed to reach 10
- Representing addition and subtraction word problems using objects or by drawing pictures
- Solving addition and subtraction word problems involving numbers that add up to 10 or less or by subtracting from a number 10 or less

Kindergarten, in addition to reviewing the above topics, begins the Eureka Math curriculum, which has a K-5 theme of “A Story of Units.” The contents therein are covered as follows:

- Module 1: Numbers to 10
- Module 2: Two-Dimensional and Three-Dimensional Shapes

- Module 3: Comparison of Length, Weight, Capacity, and Numbers to 10
- Module 4: Number Pairs, Addition, and Subtraction to 10
- Module 5: Numbers 10–20 and Counting to 100
- Module 6: Analyzing, Comparing, and Composing Shapes

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Counting and Cardinality
  - Know number names and count sequence
  - Count to tell the number of objects
  - Compare numbers
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
  - Understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
  - Work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value.

### *English/Language Arts*

Thematically, prekindergarten and kindergarten rotate each year between the overarching themes “Causes and Effects” and “Cycles and Patterns.” Consistently, however, the teachers endeavor to help each student learn:

- To become kind, safe, responsible, and respectful citizens;
- That he or she is part of a community that includes family, classroom, school, and city;
- That actions, behaviors, and listening skills are necessary for effective citizenship;
- That writing and reading are powerful tools for communicating;
- To explore the environment and recognize that print is everywhere;
- That language is used to communicate our needs;
- That readers use a variety of strategies and tools to help them understand and read text;
- That vocabulary is acquired through reading, writing, listening, and speaking;
- That active listeners make meaning from what they hear by questioning, reflecting, responding, and evaluating;
- That a solid foundation for independent reading is made by:
  - Recognizing and decoding printed words
  - Developing phonemic awareness
  - Learning concepts about print and letters

### *Social Studies*

As in ELA, prekindergarten and kindergarten rotate thematically each year between “Cause and Effect” and “Cycles and Patterns.” To that end, students learn:

- Rules and routines are important to maintain order;
- A successful community works when all members are contributing;
- All people are different and should be respected and treated fairly;
- People can help and hurt a community;
- There are different kinds of communities;
- Holidays help us to remember the past;
- People make their decisions based on their needs and wants;
- Traditions and practices were passed from one generation to the next;
- Maps help us to better understand and locate regions and places;
- We share a responsibility to transmit the connection, knowledge, and pride of Israel from one generation to the next;
- Students distinguish between events, people, and symbols in the past and present;
- Students understand how to participate and use effective citizenship skills at home, in school, and in the community;
- Students develop an understanding of economic concepts and develop decision-making skills.

### *Science/STEAM*

Essential to Science/STEAM instruction at this level is the understanding that everyone, even kids, have the ability to conduct scientific inquiry. Like ELA and Social Studies, Science/STEAM will alternate years between the themes of “Cause and Effect” and “Cycles and Patterns.” To aid in this focus, Science/STEAM will drill down even further to examine forces and interactions, Earth and human activity, and engineering design.

Topics covered will include:

- Force is simply pushing or pulling an object;
- Pushes and pulls can have different strengths and directions;
- Pushing and pulling on an object can change the speed or direction of its motion and can start or stop it;
- When objects collide, they push on one another and can change motion;
- A bigger push or pull makes things speed up or slow down more quickly;
- There is a relationship between the needs of different plants or animals (including humans) and the places they live;
- Living things need water, air, and resources from the land, and they live in places that have things they need;
- Humans use natural resources for everything they do;

- There needs to be a focus on ways to reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment;
- Some kinds of weather are more likely than others in a given regions;
- Weather scientists forecast severe weather so that the communities can prepare and respond to these events;
- A situation that people want to change or create can be approached as a problem to be solved through engineering--such problems may have many acceptable solutions;
- We all have the ability to do scientific inquiry;
- Objects and materials have different properties;
- Concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention enhance health;
- Cycles of living organisms change;
- There are many characteristics of organisms;
- Conservation and recycling have a strong impact on our earth.

### *Hebrew*

Prekindergarten and kindergarten have Hebrew once per week to instill a love of the language, pique their interest, and begin a basic understanding of Hebrew as it is part of the life of the school. Teaching includes a lot of songs, stories, body movement, and fun. Children will be introduced and become familiar with the following in Hebrew during the year:

- Greetings: Shalom, Boker Tov, Shana Tovah, etc. (Hello, Good Morning, Happy New Year)
- The days of the week
- The body parts
- Colors
- Weather concept
- Fruits and vegetables
- Animals
- Concepts and symbols of the holidays

### *Jewish Studies*

In a two-year cycle that is often recursive, students learn about the Jewish holidays and the basic tenets of Jewish beliefs and practices, usually through hands-on activities.

The questions this thrice-weekly course seeks to help students answer include:

- How do we know God? How do we thank God?
- What can we learn from this week's Parsha (Torah portion)? What is Israel? Why is Israel special to us?
- What mitzvot can I do? How do I celebrate the Jewish holidays?

## First and Second Grade

### *Math*

First grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum's thematic focus of "A Story of Units."

Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Sums and Differences to 10
- Module 2: Introduction to Place Value Through Addition and Subtraction Within 20
- Module 3: Ordering and Comparing Length Measurements as Numbers
- Module 4: Place Value, Comparison, Addition and Subtraction to 40
- Module 5: Identifying, Composing, and Partitioning Shapes
- Module 6: Place Value, Comparison, Addition and Subtraction to 100

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
  - Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction
  - Understand and apply properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction
  - Add and subtract within 20
  - Work with addition and subtraction equations
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
  - Extend the counting sequence
  - Understand place value
  - Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract
- Measurement and Data
  - Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating length units

Second grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum's thematic focus of "A Story of Units."

Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Sums and Differences to 20
- Module 2: Addition and Subtraction of Length Units
- Module 3: Place Value, Counting, and Comparison of Numbers to 1000
- Module 4: Addition and Subtraction Within 200 with Word Problems to 100
- Module 5: Addition and Subtraction Within 1000 with Word Problems to 100
- Module 6: Foundations of Multiplication and Division
- Module 7: Problem Solving with Length, Money, and Data
- Module 8: Time, Shapes, and Fractions as Equal Parts of Shapes

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
  - Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction
  - Add and subtract within 20
  - Work with equal groups of objects to gain foundations for multiplication
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
  - Understand place value
  - Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract
- Measurement and Data
  - Measure and estimate lengths in standard units
  - Relate addition and subtraction to length

### *English/Language Arts*

First and second grade ELA encompasses four major areas, speaking and listening, phonemic awareness, reading, and writing. The two-year thematic cycle for the first/second grade class alternates between “Time, Continuity, and Change” and “People, Places, and Environments.” Understandings students are expected to gain include:

- Speaking and listening allow us to understand ideas presented to us and respond meaningfully;
- Spoken words can be broken into sounds and sounds can be blended together to make words;
- A syllable is a word, or part of a word with one vowel sound;
- You can add, delete, or substitute sounds in words to create new words;
- Reading is a lifelong skill that helps us learn, provides enjoyment, and expands our understanding of the world, people, and ourselves;
- Reading involves accuracy, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary;
- People use more than one source to obtain information, and new information can change a person’s ideas or beliefs;
- Writing is a process that includes planning, drafting, and revision;
- Writers write for a reason;
- Correct spelling, punctuation, and handwriting makes writing easier to read.

### *Social Studies*

While the content of Social Studies, which is integrated closely with ELA and Science, alternates in the two year cycle to cover the themes of “Time, Continuity, and Change” and “People, Places, and Environments,” skills taught include:

- Exploring the significance behind symbols such as holiday, landmarks, and cultural events;

- Examining history through “turning points” those moments when significant and dramatic change occurs.
- Comparing and contrasting cultures through traditions, customs, languages, and foods;
- Exploring the relationship between a people and their environment;
- Reading nonfiction for understanding;
- Writing about people and places, current and in the past, based on source material;
- Recognizing how people in our community can be primary sources to learn about history and culture.

### *Science/STEAM*

Alternating each year between the themes of “Time, Continuity, and Change” and “People, Places, and Environments,” students will understand:

- Science is the method of observation and investigation used to understand our world.
- Matter can be described, organized, and classified for understanding.
- Matter can be classified as a solid, liquid, or gas.
- Matter takes up space and has weight/mass.
- Matter is made up of particles (molecules/atoms).
- Matter can be identified by its properties.
- Science is the method of observation and investigation used to understand our world.
- Some matter can change its properties and form through the addition or removal of energy.
- Some changes are reversible and some are irreversible.
- Energy is important in everyday life.
- Light, sound, and heat are forms of energy.
- Energy can move from one object or material to another object or material.
- Planning and conducting investigations to provide evidence.
- Making observations to construct evidence-based accounts.
- Constructing an argument with evidence
- Using tools and materials to design and build a device with a specific function.

### *Hebrew*

First grade learns according to the *Talam 1* program, which is organized in four interrelated tracks, three of which are the focus of the year. Each is supported by workbooks for student practice. The learning will include printed materials as well as the *iTalam* digital program.

- “Ariot” focuses on the development of Hebrew reading, writing, and language skills. Students learn the Aleph Bet letters, the name of each letter, the letter’s sounds with vowels, how to correctly write the letter, and vocabulary related to each letter. They will also practice their reading and writing skills. The letters will be taught in a two-year cycle.
- “Shalom Bakita” focuses on daily life in the classroom. This unit will familiarize the children with their fellow students of the Talam Virtual Class as a model of their own class. Vocabulary includes the classroom environment and the objects in it, daily routines, and how we learn.
- “Chag Sameach: The Holidays” provides student learning about the High Holidays, Sukkot, Chanukah, Tu Bishvat, Purim, Pesach, Shavuot and Yom HaAtzmaut (Israeli Independence Day).

Second grade continues learning the Hebrew alphabet using *Talam* workbooks and *iTalam*. Their curriculum is divided into three major areas:

“Ariot” continues through the rest of the Aleph Bet to complete the unit begun in first grade.

- “Shalom Bakita” and “Shalom Babayit U’Vachutz” focus on learning the vocabulary of daily life in the classroom, as well as the familiar objects and daily routines of the home. “Shalom Babayit U’Vachutz” also includes the vocabulary surrounding the various weather phenomena that exist in nature.
- “Chag Sameach: Kol Hashana” is a holiday-based unit that teaches about the High Holidays, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu Bishvat, Purim, Pesach, Shavuot, and Yom HaAtzmaut, building on previous knowledge.

### *Jewish Studies*

Working in a two year cycle, students learn the fundamental rituals, prayers, and history of Jewish practice, culminating in a “Siddur Project,” the development and decoration of a personal siddur (prayerbook), along with the gifting of a siddur to each child from his or her parents in a formal ceremony. Major concepts covered include:

- Understanding what Torah is and how we learn from its stories
- Understanding and learning *middot*, our Jewish values
- The Jewish holidays and how we celebrate them

## **Third and Fourth Grade**

### *Math*

Third grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum’s thematic focus of “A Story of Units.” Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Properties of Multiplication and Division and Solving Problems with Units of 2–5 and 10

- Module 2: Place Value and Problem Solving with Units of Measure
- Module 3: Multiplication and Division with Units of 0, 1, 6–9, and Multiples of 10
- Module 4: Multiplication and Area
- Module 5: Fractions as Numbers on the Number Line
- Module 6: Collecting and Displaying Data
- Module 7: Geometry and Measurement Word Problems

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
  - Represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division
  - Understand the properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division
  - Multiply and divide within 100
  - Solve problems involving the four operations and identify and explain patterns in arithmetic
- Number and Operations--Fractions
  - Develop understanding of fractions as numbers
- Measurement and Data
  - Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects
  - Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition

Fourth grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum’s thematic focus of “A Story of Units.”

Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Place Value, Rounding, and Algorithms for Addition and Subtraction
- Module 2: Unit Conversions and Problem Solving with Metric Measurement
- Module 3: Multi-Digit Multiplication and Division
- Module 4: Angle Measure and Plane Figures
- Module 5: Fraction Equivalence, Ordering, and Operations
- Module 6: Decimal Fractions
- Module 7: Exploring Multiplication

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
  - Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
  - Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers
  - Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic

- Numbers and Operations--Fractions
  - Extend understanding of fraction equivalence and ordering
  - Build fractions from unit fractions by applying and extending previous understandings of operations on whole numbers
  - Understand decimal notation for fractions, and compare decimal fractions

### *English/Language Arts*

Third and fourth grade themes alternate each year between “History, Influence, and Culture” and “Community, Connection, and Communication.” Students learn about the universality of themes through a study of their immediate world, their city, and their state in the context of the nation and the larger world. They also learn about how form conveys meaning. Areas of focus include:

- The place we live informs who we are; place influences identity.
- Setting plays a central role in writing and literature.
- Learning about characters by examining them in the context of their surroundings
- How figurative language conveys meaning
- Primary and secondary sources, historical evidence and interpretation of that evidence, are equally important perspectives in research writing
- The links between literature and history
- An age-appropriate edition of a Shakespeare play is tackled each year to practice breaking down unfamiliar texts for literal and thematic interpretation through:
  - Grammatical and syntactical analysis
  - Viewing the text performed
  - Performing the play themselves
- Development of creative writing, particularly poetry in various forms, and the exploration of poetic form
- Typing and cursive writing
- Vocabulary study

### *Social Studies*

As in ELA, third and fourth grade themes alternate each year between “History, Influence, and Culture” and “Community, Connection, and Communication”. Students learn about the universality of themes through a study of their immediate world, their city, and their state in the context of the nation and the larger world. Third and fourth grade includes fulfillment of the Louisiana History requirement of state standards. Areas of focus include:

- How communities form and change
- The cultural, geographical, and ecological impacts on communities.
- The historical significance of primary resources

- Distinguishing between primary and secondary sources
- Conducting simple research
- Summarizing actions/events and explaining their significance
- The universalities that persist over time within and across cultures
- The impact of leadership on communities and cultures
- The Native American cultures of Louisiana
- The impact of the interaction between cultures, both positive and negative
- How to compare and contrast past and present viewpoints on a historical topic
- Examination of cartography, including an in-depth study of the map of Louisiana, its parishes, and its resources, as well as basic map-reading and writing elements as reading a key/legend, a compass rose (with cardinal and intermediate directions), latitude/longitude, and scale
- Government and political systems, including a comparison of Louisiana governmental structure to that of the United States.

### *Science/STEAM*

While the third and fourth grade alternating themes of “History, Influence, and Culture” and “Community, Connection, and Communication” are less directly tied to science, they do give rise for interdisciplinary study, particularly the examination of ecology and human interaction with the environment in particular and science as a whole. Areas of focus include:

- Generating and comparing multiple solutions to problems threatening the Earth’s resources and environment.
- Analysis and interpretation of data to provide evidence that plants and animals have traits inherited from parents and that variation of these traits exists in a group of similar organisms.
- Use of evidence to support the explanation that traits can be influenced by the environment.
- Consideration of how energy in all its forms is a catalyst for change.
- Use of evidence to construct an explanation.
- Asking questions and predict outcomes
- Application of scientific ideas to design, test, and refine a device that converts energy from one form to another (interdisciplinary projects include the design and construction of a novel form of iron lung in connection to a novel read by the students).
- Development of models to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but all have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death.
- Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction; use of found plant life as examples.

- Analyzing and interpreting data from fossils to provide evidence of the organisms and the environments in which they lived long ago.
- Using evidence to construct an explanation for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing.
- Constructing an argument with evidence that in a particular habitat some organisms can survive well, some survive less well, and some cannot survive at all.
- Making a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change.
- Representation of data in tables and graphical displays to describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season.
- Obtain and combine information to describe climates in different regions of the world.
- Make observations and/or measurements to provide evidence of the effects of weathering or the rate of erosion by water, ice, wind, or vegetation.
- Design and build barometers to take home and monitor air pressure during severe weather.
- Engineering Design
- Plan and carry out fair tests in which variables are controlled and failure points are considered to identify aspects of a model or prototype that can be improved.
- The impact that we as humans have on our environments will be evaluated by linking past practices with current ones (concerning natural resources and weather-related hazards).
- Investigate and explain conditions under which matter changes.
- Identify evidence from patterns in rock formations and fossils in rock layers to support an explanation for changes in a landscape over time.
- Define a simple design problem reflecting a need or a want that includes specified criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost.
- Generate and compare multiple possible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

### *Hebrew*

Third grade studies the *iTalam 2* program after having completed *iTalam 1* over the course of first and second grade. The daily life unit and the holiday unit in this program are aligned to reinforce the development of learning, thinking, and language skills.

The curriculum is presented via blended learning, printed materials, and digital materials of *iTalam*.

- The unit “Tov BaKita U’Babayit” examines the vocabulary surrounding life in the classroom and home. The content of this unit is based on the activation of knowledge acquired the previous year. This unit also focuses on vocabulary of the daily routines at home concerning clothing, cleanliness, and nutrition, while instilling the mitzvot and corresponding customs.
- For the holidays, the class will be guided by the unit “Chag Sameach: Sheli Veshlanu”

Fourth grade learns *iTalam 3*, supplemented by the Hebrew cursive workbook “Ktav Bekalut.” Additionally, students will learn the following two units:

- “Behatlacha Bakita” includes
  - “The Memory Box” that helps students remembers what they learned in the past and help them remember new information
  - Rules for learning that help students learn successfully in the classroom
  - The concept of multiple intelligence that help us think, learn and accomplish multiple types of tasks successfully.
- “Chag Sameach: Etlenu Bakita” is the holiday unit that helps students develop an understanding of the history behind the holidays and also teaches the blessings said on each holiday.

### *Jewish Studies*

In a two year cycle, students learn about the ways in which Judaism teaches us to behave towards other people, as well as about what modern Judaic practice looks like in Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox synagogues, culminating in visits to the neighboring synagogues and the construction of each child’s model synagogue.

Concepts covered include:

- How we read Torah and what we learn from it
- The impact of *gemilut chasadim* (acts of loving kindness)
- Hillel’s “Golden Rule” and how we can apply it in our lives
- The levels of tzedakah (giving) as stated by Maimonides, what this hierarchy looks like in our world, and what we can learn from it.

### **Fifth and Sixth Grade**

#### *Math*

Fifth grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum’s thematic focus of “A Story of Units.”

Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Place Value and Decimal Fractions
- Module 2: Multi-Digit Whole Number and Decimal Fraction Operations
- Module 3: Addition and Subtraction of Fractions

- Module 4: Multiplication and Division of Fractions and Decimal Fractions
- Module 5: Addition and Multiplication with Volume and Area
- Module 6: Problem Solving with the Coordinate Plane

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Number and Operations in Base Ten
  - Understand the place value system
  - Perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and with decimals to hundredths
- Numbers and Operations--Fractions
  - Use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add and subtract fractions
  - Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to multiply and divide fractions
- Measurement and Data
  - Geometric measurement: understand concepts of volume and relate volume to multiplication and to addition

Sixth grade math uses the Eureka Curriculum's thematic focus of "A Story of Ratios."

Content covered includes:

- Module 1: Ratios and Unit Rates
- Module 2: Arithmetic Operations Including Dividing by a Fraction
- Module 3: Rational Numbers
- Module 4: Expressions and Equations
- Module 5: Area, Surface Area, and Volume Problems
- Module 6: Statistics

Major emphasis clusters include:

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships
  - Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems
- The Number System
  - Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions
  - Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers
- Expressions and Equations
  - Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions.
  - Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities.
  - Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables

### *English/Language Arts*

The themes for fifth and sixth grade alternate each year between “Sense of Place, Past and Self” and “Energy and the Power of One.” This year includes a particular focus on social justice and leadership, inclusive of the fifth and sixth grade leadership of the “No Place for Hate” schoolwide program developed by the Anti-Defamation League. Areas of focus within ELA include:

- Discovering empathy through connecting the experiences of others to our own experience
- The ability to empathize is an important tool in letting us better understand the world.
- The perspective from which we are told a story colors that story significantly.
- People may (will) experience the same event(s) differently than each other.
- Dialogue is one effective way to tell a story; it gives characters depth.
- Metaphors, similes, and personification paint pictures (imagery) with words.
  
- Writing and reading are powerful tools for communicating.
- Students explore the environment and recognize that print is everywhere.
- Language is used to communicate our needs.
- Readers use a variety of strategies and tools to help them understand and read text.
- Active listeners make meaning from what they hear by questioning, reflecting, responding, and evaluating.
- A solid foundation for independent reading is made by:
  - Recognizing and decoding printed words
  - Developing phonemic awareness
  - Learning concepts about print and letters
- Basic essays follow a set format; we can divert from that format (break the rules) once we have learned it.
- Vocabulary is acquired through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- Continued vocabulary study individualized through the Membean program.
- Grammar and syntax in context.

### *Social Studies*

Heavily informed by and closely intertwined with literature choices in ELA, Social Studies in fifth and sixth grade, themes alternate each year between “Sense of Place, Past and Self” and “Energy and the Power of One.” In addition to the continued focus on social justice, fifth and sixth grade study the settlement and establishment of the United States from 1492 through the American Revolution in alternating years with the history

of race in America, civil rights, and justice with a concentration on the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Areas of focus include:

- A region/society is largely defined by its natural resources.
- People are shaped by the resources to which they have access.
- The social and economic conditions of different groups can lead to conflict.
- People want to feel seen and heard (by their government).
- Certain forms of government work for certain populations; certain ones do not.
- The narrative (perspective) of the victorious group in a conflict is typically the one that prevails in history books (websites, etc.).
- Prejudice and hate are often born out of ignorance.
- Combating prejudice and hate does not mean we need to ignore differences; rather, it means we should celebrate them.
- In life as well as fiction, conflict/cruelty and struggle are powerful teachers.
- Some people have to work a lot harder than other people to live freely.
- Our actions can shape our futures, but some people face more obstacles and constraints than others.
- The people who stood up and fought racism put themselves in danger in order to change the world.
- In addition to movement leaders, everyday people participated in the freedom struggle.
- The civil rights movement made progress, but there is still much work to be done.
- Prejudice and hate are often born out of ignorance.
- Combating prejudice and hate does not mean we need to ignore differences; rather, it means we can celebrate them.
- Examine primary and secondary sources to research early American Colonial history
- Compare and contrast different points of view of key individuals and groups in early colonial American history
- Produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences through the following tasks:
  - Conducting historical research
  - Evaluating a broad variety of primary and secondary sources
  - Comparing and contrasting varied points of view
  - Determining the meaning of words and phrases from historical texts
  - Using technology to research, produce, or publish a written product

### *Science/STEAM*

Placed within the context of the larger themes of “Sense of Place, Past and Self” and “Energy and the Power of One,” fifth and sixth grade science focuses on scientific method, genetics, and the solar system. Areas of focus include:

- The Scientific Method is a universal process scientists use to perform experiments.
- For an experiment to be successful, scientists must identify and control the variables being studied.

- There are different types of variables (independent, dependent, and controlled). When you design an experiment, all variables must be controlled (kept the same) except one (the independent variable).
- Everything is made of atoms; atoms combine to form molecules.
- When different materials or substances are combined, they react.
- Genes are units of heredity.
- Genetic factors as well as local conditions affect offspring.
- Organisms reproduce and transfer their genetic information to their offspring.
- Cause and effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural systems.
- Phenomena may have more than one cause, and some cause and effect relationships in systems can only be described using probability.
- Traits not only refer to physical characteristics, but behaviors as well.
- How is the solar system organized?
- How do the physical properties of the sun and moon affect the Earth?
- Why does the moon look different at different times?
- Why do the movement and relative position of the Earth cause changes?
- What causes the seasons?
- How has our knowledge of the sun, earth, the planets (of our solar system), and moon changed over time?
- How have humans applied technological skills to explore space?

### *Hebrew*

Fifth and sixth grade students graduate from *iTalam* to the more advanced *Besod Halvrit* curriculum. While still offering points of access for students newer to the language, this new curriculum allows the teacher to differentiate instruction for those ready for more conversational Hebrew. Skills and practices include:

- Writing a short blog about one's family in Hebrew
- Being able to talk about oneself in Hebrew
- Examining differences between Hebrew and English, including word order patterns
- Identifying cognates and familiar words in popular Israeli media
- Hebrew dialogue practice
- Practicing parts of speech and grammatical gender in Hebrew

### *Jewish Studies*

Jewish Studies in fifth and sixth grade is on a two-year cycle that enables students to take their place as role models for Jewish values in the community. Most importantly, it focuses on the critical thinking that is required of the highest level of observance, engaging texts by applying prior knowledge and further developing one's own beliefs. Concepts covered include:

- How we learn about aspects of God from various Jewish sources

- The concept of *Mishnah*, the first recording of the oral law passed down by the rabbis, and how students can engage Torah in the same manner they did.
- The milestones in the history of the Jewish state of Israel
- Understanding the mitzvot/ middot of Torah (Jewish learning), *avodah* (service), and *gemilut chasadim* (deeds of compassion)

## **Schoolwide Programming**

### **Library and Technology**

The Berenson Learning Lab at JCDS provides an accessible, enjoyable, welcoming place for students, teachers and staff to find books, resources, and materials that will promote a love of reading and lifelong learning. Each class enjoys a weekly visit in addition to any time scheduled with the library to address specific learning needs. Our students enjoy quality literature and take an active part in learning the information literacy skills useful both immediately and as their needs become more sophisticated.

Computer skill instruction, woven throughout the curriculum, introduces our students to technology as a learning tool. They learn to use technology creatively, responsibly, and collaboratively to solve problems and to access, analyze, and communicate information. Keyboarding is taught during this time as a component of our handwriting curriculum. Our students learn to use laptop and desktop PCs, iPads, and Chromebooks as they integrate technology into daily learning. Teachers emphasize digital citizenship as integral to any technology use.

### **Music**

In addition to the pure joy of making and listening to music, children will:

- Survey a range of musical genres and styles.
- Listen to and describe music from recordings and live performances.
- Discuss music in relationship to history and culture.
- Move and dance to music.
- Sing a variety of music from American folk music to musical theatre.
- Learn to read music through Solfège syllables (do re mi) and hand signs.
- Recognize and begin to interpret musical symbols and notation.
- Keep tempo through rhythmic instruments and body percussion.
- Recognize the instruments in an orchestra.
- Learn songs appropriate to the Jewish holidays, including preparing for special school programs.

## **Visual Arts**

Young artists are enveloped in an environment that allows them to experience, experiment, create, fail and preserve. They are exposed to a variety of materials, from traditional paper and pencil to found recyclables and organics. They practice techniques from drawing to collage to building 3D. Students sharpen fine motor skills, hand eye coordination, observational skills and critical thinking.

Sometimes we will finish a project in one day, but more often we work on a project for several art classes. This invites them to contemplate an idea more deeply and provides an opportunity to discover the process of creating a finished piece from concept to display. Many of our projects are collaborative with other subjects, such as Jewish Studies, as well as school wide, with other grades.

We have mini self critiques throughout the art making, developing confidence and language around art. We hope to promote and instill artist identities as well as an appreciation and love of creativity and curiosity.

## **Physical Education**

All JCDS students participate in twice weekly PE classes with Coach PJ Jones. In addition to embedding healthy habits for a lifetime, goals and activities include:

- Creating a fun and safe environment where students can participate in all activities
- Develop an attitude of sportsmanship and fair play in all activities
- Develop locomotive movements (walk, run, hop, skip, jump, gallop, slide, and leap)
- Rolling, balancing and weight transfer
- Throwing, catching, kicking, punting, volleying and striking
- Chasing, fleeing, dodging (skills used in tag and group games)
- Body awareness (body parts and body shapes)
- Spatial awareness (moving through space by self and with others; moving in different directions; at different levels; and on different pathways)
- Developing executive function (planfulness and personal control)
- Practicing relationships (partners, cooperative group activities, and team sports skills)
- Recreational play and games with lifetime emphasis on health and fitness
- Building confidence and self-esteem through acquired skills