Middle School
Curriculum Guide
2013 - 2014
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MISSION STATEMENT OF BRANDEIS HILLEL DAY SCHOOL
The mission of Brandeis Hillel Day School is to serve the Jewish community by providing children with an outstanding academic program in general and Judaic studies within a dynamic and diverse Jewish cultural environment.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS
The purpose of education is to prepare students to function effectively in the world. To achieve this goal, students and their teachers form partnerships.

A variety of assessments are used to reflect students’ progress. These assessments are aggregated into formal reports, which are used to communicate progress to students and their families. Among these reports are Mid-Quarter Progress Reports, Narrative Progress Reports, Parent-Student-Advisor Conferences and Report Cards.

After the first and third quarters students receive narrative reports as part of the Parent-Student-Advisor conferences. Report cards with letter grades and comment codes are issued after the first semester (second quarter), and again at the end of the year (fourth quarter). Mid-Quarter progress reports are issued at the mid-point of each quarter and help the students see their progress to date and focus on reaching their academic goals before the formal marking period ends. These Mid-Quarter progress reports are issued to all 7th and 8th graders, and to 6th grade students whose grades are below a “C” or whose grade has dropped more than one letter grade since the last report.

These reports are one critical vehicle that Brandeis Hillel uses to communicate learning and growth.

ADVISORY
The Advisory program is designed to facilitate communication and provide support for every middle school student. Each student is assigned a teacher-advisor for the academic year who is a special advocate for that individual. The advisor serves as a home base teacher to whom the students can go with an academic, social or emotional concern. The advisor can help with the problem or refer the student to the school counselor who is the consultant to the Advisory program. Students meet in Advisory groups, comprised of ten to twelve students and their faculty advisor, for one class period per week. Advisory is designed to provide structured activities for students to interact with each other and their advisor. Students examine their own values and behavior, share thoughts about school and age-related issues and gain interpersonal and thinking skills.

The advisor is the parent's primary contact person at school. The advisor keeps abreast of his/her advisees' academic growth and behavior and is responsible for informing the parent about student's progress as needed and at conference time.

Mifgash Boker (Morning Connection): In addition, advisory groups meet daily at the beginning of the day. Mifgash Boker is a time for the advisor and students to be greeted and acknowledged each day and a time for announcements to be made.

HOMEWORK
Homework is an important aspect of a student's education. It teaches the student to take responsibility for a portion of his/her learning and helps develop effective and efficient organizational skills. Homework allows more teaching and learning to be accomplished by extending the learning process beyond limited class time. Homework can also offer an opportunity for parents to interact with their children in the learning process. Statistically, students who are accustomed to completing homework on a regular basis have better success in their academic careers.

It is the responsibility of each teacher to inform his/her classes of specific homework policies and to determine and inform the students of what
percentage of the class grade homework will constitute.

BHDS Homework Policy

Homework assignments are based on an average of 1 - 1 1/2 hours/night (6th grade) (excluding reading); 2 hours/night (7th/8th grade) (excluding reading):

10 - 20 min. Hebrew
20 - 30 min. Math
30 - 40 min./20 - 30 min. alternate Eng./J.S.
20 - 30 min alternate S.S./Sci.
10 - 20 min. Elective

Each teacher will inform each class of how much of the final grade homework will constitute.

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*6th Grade

**See elective descriptions as some electives may have homework

***8th grade science will have nightly homework.

Late Homework
Late homework will receive a grade reduced at the discretion of the teacher.

The advisor is notified if a student has two or more late assignments in any subject during a quarter. At that time the advisor will speak to the student and together they will make a plan for the successful completion of homework assignments. The advisor will then inform the parents of this meeting.

A teacher may also call parents at any time to discuss homework and other issues. The teacher immediately informs the advisor of the communication.

Once a communication has been made to the parents by the advisor or a classroom teacher and the problem continues, the advisor will call the parents to arrange a parent conference with the parents, student, advisor and teacher(s).

Long-term assignments/Projects: Any long-term assignment/project that is turned in late will receive a reduced grade. A student will receive a grade of "Incomplete" in any subject in which a long-term assignment/project is not finished; no other grade will be given until the project is completed and handed in to the teacher.

Absences: Students are given one day’s grace period for every day absent for any excused absence. This applies to daily homework. In cases of extended absence (5 consecutive days or more) students arrange a schedule for making up the homework with their teachers and their advisor.

All long-term projects are due on the day assigned by the teacher. There is no grace period for absences.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah: During the week prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah, students are excused from doing daily homework assignments. Teachers may require that this work be made up the next week. All long term assignment and project due dates remain in effect.

BHDS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
RATIONALE:
The rational behind our policies and procedures for our middle school students are based on the research of Developmental Design, and are intended to create a safe, productive learning environment for all our students.

Expectations CARES:
- Cooperation
- Assertion
- Responsibility
- Empathy
- Self-Control

Needs of adolescents
- Autonomy – I want to be independent.
- Relationship – I want to connect with people.
- Fun – I want to have a good time.
- Competence – I want to experience success in what I do.
Rights And Responsibilities

To emphasize the relationship between rights, responsibilities and rules, the faculty at Brandeis Hillel Day School is working hard to instill in our students a sense of responsibility and respect for the rights of others.

1 Physical Safety
   ➢ Students have the right to be physically safe.
   ➢ They have the responsibility to ensure that others are physically safe.
   ➢ Students are expected to behave in ways that promote physical safety and well-being; to refrain from behavior that endangers their own or others’ safety.

2 Emotional Safety
   ➢ Students have the right to feel emotionally supported and safe.
   ➢ They have the responsibility to ensure others’ emotional safety and well-being.
   ➢ Students are expected to speak and act in ways that are courteous and respectful and to refrain from all forms of hurtful speech and behavior.

3 Enjoy School
   ➢ Students have the right to enjoy this school.
   ➢ They have the responsibility to preserve this school.
   ➢ Students have the right to have their physical property respected and are expected to be respectful and protective of physical property of all members of the school community, and of the school itself. Students should get permission before using or touching the property of others. Students are expected to refrain from behavior that destroys, damages, or defaces personal or school property.

4 Right to Learn and Academic Growth
   ➢ Students have the right to learn.
   ➢ They have the responsibility to respect the learning of others.
   ➢ Students are expected to listen to others, speak appropriately, and otherwise promote a positive learning environment. They are expected to be sincere, honest, and committed learners; to refrain from behavior that interrupts the educational program and interferes with their own, and others’ academic growth.

All students cherish these rights; therefore, each and every student will uphold and honor these responsibilities in preserving these rights for everyone. These rights and responsibilities in

Behavior

Every middle school student is entitled to an education in a positive atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning.

High standards of behavior are expected of BHDS students, not only on campus and in the classrooms, but at all school activities.

It is important that students read the complete explanation of behavioral expectations and consequences in the Family Handbook (pages 26 – 32).

Tardiness

Mifgash Boker and class time are precious and students who arrive late miss out on valuable time and learning. Students are expected to arrive at school on time and be in Mifgash Boker at 8:15. Students arriving at school between 8:15 and 8:30 should report directly to their advisory class for attendance. Students who arrive to school after 8:30 must check in with the front office to receive a late slip. Repeated tardiness will result in tiered consequences including family contact, and recess detentions.

Clothing and Appearance

Students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects positively on themselves and on the school community. School dress reflects a child’s attitude toward his or her learning. We give our students latitude in how they dress, and we expect appropriate dress and grooming that does not distract students from their learning and does not bring negative attention to a child. Please help your children follow the guidelines that are published in our family handbook.

Lockers & Backpacks

Lockers are provided to every middle school student. To provide a safe environment for all of
our students, faculty, and staff the hallways are to be kept clear of backpacks and other materials. Students are expected to keep their backpacks, lunches, and all other materials in their lockers. Students should provide their own lock. We recommend that you go to your locker before school, at snack time, at lunch, and after school so that you will be on time for your classes

_Tfillah_ Procedures
_Tfillah_ is a time each week when we come together as a spiritual community. We expect this time to be one of shared prayer and introspection. Procedures are in place to ensure that we can create this shared environment. Appropriate dress helps create the sense of a special day and is expected on Thursdays and other times of communal _tfillah._

Use of Technology
Computers are valuable tools for learning. Every middle school student is expected to abide by BHDS computer and internet use policy. These policies have been designed to create a school environment and community that is safe and respectful. Such an environment is critical for learning. The policies are also intended to protect the students, the school community, and the school. Use of a computer (be it the school’s or one that was brought from home) is intended for educational purposes and is subject to school guidelines and the school's Acceptable Use Policy. Computers are to be used under the supervision of BHDS faculty and staff, and are not intended for unsupervised use at recess.

Cell Phones
Students may use their cell phones before and after school. During school hours cell phones must be in lockers or backpacks.
6th Grade English  
Mr. Jefferies and Ms. Bisson

Throughlines
1. How does using language well make us powerful?
2. Where do ideas come from? How do we build them?
3. Great readers use both their minds and hearts. How can we become great readers?
4. What is true listening and how is it done?

Writing: Student writing will be organized around a writing portfolio that will be turned in at the end of each semester. Students will read and write drafts in a wide variety of forms and genres and keep a portfolio of their work, as well as regular written reflections on their experiences, growth, and challenges as a writer. Students will regularly conference with peers and teachers during writing workshops to thoughtfully plan, draft, revise and edit their work. For formal assessments, students will choose several of their portfolio pieces to revisit and revise in more depth.

Reading: Sixth grade will focus on exposing students to a wide variety of texts and developing student familiarity with multiple genres. Students will read short stories, poetry, nonfiction texts, and books such as *The Giver* by Lois Lowry and *Ender’s Game* by Orson Scott Card. We will focus on non-fiction with a variety of shorter works from several disciplines. We will read some texts together as a reading community, while other texts will be read in small literature groups or independently. Students will keep a reading reflection journal, process their reading through discussions and activities, and conference with classmates and their teacher to discuss their current reading as well as their progress as a reader.

I-Search: The I-Search project occurs over a six to eight-week period in the spring. During this time, students will focus much of their class time and home time on the process of their individual research. Students will choose a topic about which they are passionate, conduct interviews and research on their topics, and complete several writing assignments about what they have learned from their I-Search.

Vocabulary and Grammar: As part of the reading and writing processes, we will also carefully examine syntax and vocabulary. Students will learn “Rules of the Week” that they must then apply to their writings. Vocabulary will center on Greek and Latin roots, as well as prefixes and suffixes to help students build a foundation with which to decipher unfamiliar words and to better understand a wide range of word meanings. There will be regular quizzes to assess students understanding of vocabulary and grammar.

Student Grades: Grades will be based on the following:
- Homework and Classwork
- Quizzes and Tests
- Reading Workshop Participation and Journal
- Writing Workshop Participation and Process
- Final Writing Portfolio
Throughlines
1. How can we be thoughtful writers and readers?
2. What does it mean to love reading?
3. How does a writer create voice? How can I find my own voice?
4. How do I craft writing that is clear and convincing?
5. How do I change the world through writing?

Whole-Class Units and Texts
Throughout the year, we will read a number of texts together and discuss elements of genre, voice, style, theme, structure, and diction. Some of our units of study include:
- Figurative language in poetry and short fiction
- Vignettes
- Persuasive writing
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*
- Shakespeare/*Romeo and Juliet*
- Short stories

Reading
A main focus of the seventh grade year is on students’ growing maturity and capabilities as independent readers of books. Students set goals for their reading, choose their own books, and read voluminously across multiple themes and genres. Monthly communicate what students are reading independently and provide insight into their comprehension of these texts.

Writing
Our English program centers on the belief that writing develops through practice, therefore the goal is to provide students with many opportunities to practice. Students are expected to write almost every day. Students will write and revise drafts in a wide variety of forms and genres, and will reflect regularly on their experiences, growth, and challenges as a writer. Students will regularly conference with peers and teachers during writing workshops to thoughtfully plan, draft, revise and edit their work. Over the course of the year students will be expected to write narrative non-fiction, short stories, essays and poems.

Vocabulary and Grammar
As part of the reading and writing processes, we will also carefully examine syntax and vocabulary. Students will learn “Rules of the Week” that they must then apply to their writings. Vocabulary will center on Greek and Latin roots, as well as prefixes and suffixes, to help students build a foundation with which to decipher unfamiliar words and better understand a wide range of word meanings. There will be regular quizzes to assess students’ understanding of vocabulary and grammar.

Student Grades
Grades will be based on the following:
- Reading workshop participation and reflections
- Writing workshop participation, process, and final products
- Homework and classwork
8th Grade Language Arts 2013-14
Ms. Jennifer Baumer, Mr. David Jefferies

Throughlines

How do we tell the truth of our lives?
How can we see the world in a grain of sand?
How do we question a text? How do we question the world?
How do we climb into each other’s skin?

Overview

We would like to welcome you to 8th grade English for the 2013-2014 academic year. We look forward to a stimulating, challenging year that will help you develop yourselves as perceptive readers, expressive writers, and accurate, precise thinkers. For us to meet these goals, we all need to come to class prepared and ready to participate. That means keeping up with the reading and having any written work completed, printed out, and ready to hand in or work with at the beginning of class.

Language Arts has numerous strands. We have designed the course to include all of the following: reading from a wide range of genres; creative and expository writing; vocabulary study, both from reading and from a study of Greek and Latin roots; study of sentence structure; and activities to enhance grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and proofreading skills.

Our English program centers on the belief that writing develops through practice; therefore the goal is to provide students with many opportunities to practice so that they can improve. Students are expected to write almost every day. Some of these quick-writes will become early drafts of final pieces the students revise, but other pieces will simply remain in their rough state.

Whole-Class Units and Texts
Throughout the year, we will read a number of texts together and discuss elements of genre, voice, style, theme, structure, and diction. Some of our units of study include the following:

- *This Boy’s Life* and memoir
- Short stories
- Lyric Poetry
- Kinship Project
- Persuasive writing/ Essays
- *Night* and the Holocaust
- Shakespeare/*Macbeth*
- American Literature/*To Kill a Mockingbird*

Introduction to Writing and Reading Workshop
Eighth grade English is designed to foster independence, to encourage a deepening understanding of complex ideas, and to forge a passion for reading and writing. To nurture this passion, many of the class periods are designed as workshops. Classes are structured so that students can work independently or in small groups. Students often conference with the teacher, who guides their writing and reading process and ensures they are on the right track. Students are also encouraged to work with their peers throughout the writing process to help them gain insight into the diverse ways good writing can emerge.
Final pieces will be required in each of the categories below, which are the subject of focused units of study.
   a. Narrative fiction
   b. Memoir
   c. Essays
   d. Poems

**Independent Reading and Writing**

Individual student choice is important to improvement in reading and writing. That is one reason we build in the ability for you to make some choices about what you read and what you write. We both have the expectation that you will be independent readers beyond the books and stories that are assigned, and work connected to those independent books will figure in how you are assessed. You will also make some choices about what you write and submit for evaluation in writing workshop.

We intend that our classes will become a mutually supportive and affirming community of readers and writers. The qualities we expect from you as learners are the same that we look for in an author: empathy, sensitivity, clarity, precision. The rules that we institute are designed to help us become that kind of community.

**Vocabulary and Grammar**

As part of the reading and writing processes, we will also carefully examine syntax and vocabulary. Students will learn “Rules of the Week” that they must then apply to their writings. Vocabulary will center on Greek and Latin roots, as well as prefixes and suffixes, to help students build a foundation with which to decipher unfamiliar words and better understand a wide range of word meanings. There will be regular quizzes to assess students’ understanding of vocabulary and grammar.

**Student Grades**

Grades will be based on the following:
- Class preparation and productive class behavior
- Quizzes and tests
- Independent reading
- Writing process and products, both creative and expository.
Middle School Hebrew Program 2013-2014  
Ms. Mira Peretz, Ms. Tammy Broner,  
Ms. Simi Hoze, Ms. Jody Bloom

Brandeis Hillel Day School’s Jewish vision states the important role that the Hebrew language holds in the education of our children:

1. Hebrew gives us direct access to the writings and conversations of our people from Biblical times to the present day.
2. The multiple layers of meaning in the Hebrew language allow us to explore Jewish religion, culture and history in a deeper way.
3. The Hebrew language continues to connect Jewish people throughout the world, as it has done for thousands of years.
4. The Hebrew language enables an unmediated connection with people and places in the State of Israel.

The middle school Hebrew program is based on the newly revised Neta program. Neta is a dynamic Hebrew language curriculum created by Hebrew language curriculum specialists from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The multi-dimensional program focuses on the four major second language acquisition skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—by immersing students in everything from classical Hebrew texts to Israeli music and from historical documents to poetry and drama.

The curriculum is sequential and based on a structured linguistic progression. Lessons are centered on themes of interest to teenagers ranging from computers and sports to friendship and freedom. Each theme is presented from three perspectives: Jewish tradition, modern Israeli culture, and general world knowledge including art, science, sport, mathematics, literature, and philosophy.

Our goal as your children’s teachers is to spark an interest that will turn our students into lifelong Hebrew language learners. Through an immersion in the language, students will develop their ability to communicate in Hebrew both by speaking and writing, while also learning to understand the language through conversation, reading and listening. In the classroom, students will learn to speak practical Hebrew for various social situations and will develop a good grammatical base. Students will develop an understanding of the different layers of the language by reading primary sources, and will develop an appreciation the centrality of Hebrew in Israeli art and culture.

The Neta Hebrew program has a website, http://neta.cet.ac.il/, that the kids can use at home. At the website there is a copy of their textbook so that they can practice reading and go over the material. There are also games that can help the kids practice their Hebrew.
GRADING:

20% Homework: Homework will be assigned 2-3 nights a week, and should take students around 20 minutes per assignment. We will not accept late homework unless a student has been absent. It is the student’s responsibility to come see us if he/she missed class or if he/she knows that he/she will be absent.

25% Attendance and Participation: Students earn credit for being punctual and prepared and for participating in class! Students should have all materials during class and should participate appropriately every day and support classroom learning.

25% Quizzes: Students will be quizzed approximately every two weeks.

30% Tests and Projects: We will have a test or project after each unit that we complete.

The aspects of this class are inter-related; completing homework on time will allow students to participate in class. Participating in class will prepare students well for quizzes and tests. A continuous effort in all areas will help students achieve success.

Email is the best way to communicate with us. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Looking forward to a great school year!

Mira Peretz - mperetz@bhds.org
Tammy Broner - tbroner@bhds.org
Simi Hoze - shoze@bhds.org
Jody Bloom - jbloom@bhds.org
BHDS Judaics Curricular Visioning

Over the past year, BHDS teachers, staff, community members, and outside field experts worked together to articulate a vision for the Brandeis Jewish Studies curriculum. The document below is a working draft of this effort. It is our goal that when our students complete their education at Brandeis, they will leave with a lasting sense and understanding of the following ideas:

**B’tzelem Elohim - being created in God’s image**

1. There are many legitimate ways to think and talk about God, including questioning God’s existence.

2. Grappling with different perceptions of God helps to develop our own understanding of the divine and our relationship to it. This process is ongoing and dynamic, and continues to unfold throughout our lives.

3. B’tzelem Elohim - being created in God’s image - is a Jewish concept that highlights the divine qualities in each and every person. Awareness of these divine qualities guides us in how we treat ourselves, others, and the world around us.

4. The core values of the Brandeis Hillel Day School community have B’tzelem Elohim at their heart. The study of these Jewish values calls us to be responsible and guides our actions.

**Torah - Jewish learning in its broadest sense**

1. Torah refers to the texts and wisdom of the Jewish people, both ancient and modern.

2. Over the generations the Jewish people have interpreted, questioned and commented on Torah. Through rigorous study we become active participants in this ongoing process.

3. The study of Torah connects us to the Jewish narrative, nurtures Jewish identity and self-awareness. It serves as a foundation for a value-based way of life.

4. Torah becomes dynamic when we study the words of those who came before us, add our voices, and make them relevant to our lives.

**Klal Yisrael - the Jewish people**

1. Jews are connected to one another through shared history, traditions and purpose.

2. The Jewish people are sustained by “Jewish time;” distinctive rhythms of celebration and observance shared by Jewish communities around the world.
3. Jewish life is both enriched and challenged by the diversity of individual Jewish expressions and of Jewish communities.

4. We strengthen the vitality of the Jewish people when we identify, engage and take responsibility for one another.

Ivrit - Hebrew

1. Hebrew gives us direct access to the writings and conversations of our people from Biblical times to the present day.

2. The multiple layers of meaning in the Hebrew language allow us to explore Jewish religion, culture and history in a deeper way.

3. The Hebrew language continues to connect Jewish people throughout the world, as it has done for thousands of years.

4. The Hebrew language enables an unmediated connection with people and places in the State of Israel.

Israel

1. The idea of Israel as the Jewish homeland has endured as a central and defining part of the narrative of the Jewish people for 4,000 years.

2. Jews in Israel, America, and worldwide are interconnected and are partners in shaping the Jewish future.

3. Connections and engagement with the land, people, and state of Israel inform and strengthen Jewish identity.

4. Israel’s religious, ethnic, demographic and political diversity continues to create a dynamic society.

5. The juxtaposition between [the] ancient and [the] contemporary in Israel influences our understanding of Israel and our relationship to it.

6. Appreciation of Israeli arts and culture and of the Hebrew language creates a powerful connection to the State of Israel and its people.

7. The State of Israel is a democratic society, and like other democracies is engaged in the never-ending process of giving the values of freedom and equality their fullest expression.

8. The State of Israel is founded on the belief that Jews have a right to an independent state and culture. Zionism is the ideology that gives modern expression to this belief, and that is manifested today in a range of political views.
6th Grade Judaic Studies
Mrs. Bloom

Throughlines

1. How can we become active participants in the ongoing process of Torah study?
2. How are the words and decisions of those who came before us relevant to our lives?
3. How does the state of Israel inform and strengthen our Jewish identity?

Tanach Study: Leading up to our in depth study of King David students will work collaboratively to research and present to their peers each of the judges, *shoftim*, who led the Israelites against their enemies and guided them in building a new nation. The age of the judges began around 1380 B.C.E. and concluded around 1050 B.C.E. with the rise of Saul, Israel's first king. It was in this period that Canaan became the land of Israel.

King David was known for his diverse skills as both a warrior and a writer of psalms. In his 40 years as ruler, between approximately 1010 and 970 B.C.E., he united the people of Israel, led them to victory in battle, conquered land and paved the way for his son, Solomon, to build the Holy Temple. Almost all knowledge of him is derived from the books of the Prophets and Writings: Samuel I and II, Kings I and Chronicles I. Using a critical approach, students will become familiar with the historical background of this period as well as its literary style. The students will examine key verses from these texts, read different commentaries on key events, discuss them and create their own. In their character analysis, students will compare key individuals of this time to their biblical ancestors. As part of an integrated approach, students will be encouraged to make connections between these biblical periods and other ancient civilizations.

Israel: Students will be using *Eretz Yisrael Throughout the Year*, a new and innovative curriculum developed by The Lookstein Center at Bar-Ilan University. It provides four comprehensive units for Jewish day school students in grades 1-8. In 6th grade the students will focus on the following mini-units: The Coastal Plain; The Third, Fourth and Fifth Aliyot; Israel: Challenges and Triumphs; and Jerusalem- David’s Capital.

Jewish History: Students will begin their study of Jewish history from our earliest ancestors in the Land of Israel to our dispersion in the Diaspora. We will be using the text *The History of the Jewish People: A Story of Tradition and Change*, Volume 1 by Professors Jonathan D. Sarna and Jonathan B. Krasner. On their historical journey, students will reflect on how their lives compare with the lives of our ancestors, how each generation adapts Judaism to its time and place, and how the decisions of our forebears influence our own lives and decisions.

Jewish Holidays: Students will have the opportunity this year to learn about the Jewish holidays through text study. They will delve into different mishnayot, rabbinic texts, that highlight the customs and traditions of each of the Jewish holidays.
**Student Grades** are based on the following categories:

- Class preparation, productive class behavior and participation
- Quizzes and tests
- Homework: Judaic Studies homework nights are Monday and Wednesday. Students are expected to write their homework in their planners in class.
- Classwork and Projects

**Important Information:** Students must come to class every day with their Judaic Studies composition book (journal), three ring binder with a JS section, a highlighter and a writing utensil.
7th Grade Judaic Studies
Mrs. Bloom

“Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof (Justice, Justice, you shall pursue)!” -Deuteronomy 16:20

Seventh grade Judaic Studies focuses heavily on the imperative to act in order to create a world filled with tzedek (justice). This. Our celebration of the Jewish holidays as well as our choice of text study this year will be connected to our social justice focus.

Throughlines

1. What is tzedakah and why is it important?
2. What does Judaism tell us about all of the different needs that exist in our world?
3. How can Judaism guide us when making philanthropic decisions?

Tzedek project: Families have the option of contributing to the seventh grade fund, which becomes the basis for a significant project. The class will learn about philanthropy and nonprofits through the lens of Jewish values. Each student will choose a nonprofit and research that organization. Once students have learned about different causes and organizations, the class then acts as their own philanthropy, deciding amongst themselves how to distribute their funds. On Friday, January 24th, we will have a presentation ceremony to share our learning and honor the organizations that received funds.

Service: Students will have the opportunity to do direct and indirect service throughout the year. Service is an important part of the Tzedek curriculum because it promotes self growth, develops character, helps students to understand others (especially those in need), empowers students to reach out, helps students realize how lucky they are, and above all, makes students realize that even they, can make a difference in the pursuit of tzedek. Whenever possible, service projects will take place during the school day in Judaic Studies.

Jewish Holidays and Text: Jewish Holidays and Text will be studied through the Tzedek framework. We will look at text that discusses tzedakah and Jewish holidays and students will strengthen their Biblical Hebrew skills.

Jewish Values through Photography: Students will be exploring values and community through photography using the work of renowned photographer Zion Ozeri. Through their participation in this curriculum, students will explore values that are central to Judaism, investigate the history and traditions of different Jewish communities around the world, consider the nature of their own Jewish communities, experience a personal connection to Jewish values through artistic expression and relate their investigation of Jewish values and notions of community to their own emerging identities.

Israel: Students will be using Eretz Yisrael Throughout the Year, a new and innovative curriculum developed by The Lookstein Center at Bar-Ilan University. It provides four comprehensive units for Jewish day school students in grades 1-8. In 7th grade the students will focus on the following mini units: The Israel Defense Forces; Caring for
the Land; Zionism; and Jerusalem in its Glory: The Second Temple Era. We will also connect the tzedek curriculum to Israel and look at how Israel helps those in need and how we can help those in Israel in a variety of ways.

**Jewish History:** Students will continue their study of Jewish history from our dispersion in the Diaspora to the rise of anti-Semitism in late 19th century Europe. We will be using the text *The History of the Jewish People: A Story of Tradition and Change*, Volume 1 by Professors Jonathan D. Sarna and Jonathan B. Krasner. On their historical journey, students will reflect on how their lives compare with the lives of our ancestors, how each generation adapts Judaism to its time and place, and how the decisions of our forebears influence our own lives and decisions.

**Student Grades** are based on the following categories:

- Class preparation, productive class behavior and participation
- Quizzes and tests
- Homework: Judaic Studies homework nights are Monday and Wednesday. Students are expected to write their homework in the planners in class.
- Classwork and Projects

**Important Information:** Students must come to class every day with their Judaic Studies composition book (journal), three ring binder with a JS section, a highlighter and a writing utensil.
8th Grade Judaic Studies  
Rabbi Shalom Bochner

“It is important that the high values of the Talmud should not be lost to modern minds among the Jewish people nor to science, but should operate further as a living force.” —Albert Einstein

I. Mishnah and Talmud / Rabbinic Literature

“Students of the wise (students of wisdom) increase the peace in the world.” - Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Brachot, 64a

This year we will become familiar with basic terms, style, and methods of the Mishnah and Gemara in addition to exploring selections of the content in more detail. We will understand the historical context of the Mishnaic period, why that book was compiled and by whom. We will develop the skills and confidence necessary to learn Mishnayot independently and the proficiency required to analyze and interpret the text. Students will learn to recognize and explain the main arguments and rabbinic themes in the text, teach Mishnah to others, and apply issues to contemporary life. Our rabbinic literature unit is the essence of Torah - Jewish learning in its broadest sense and making meaningful connections between the texts and our own lives.

II. The Shoah

“And God said unto these dry bones, I will cause a breath to enter into you, and you shall live” - Book of Ezekiel 37:5

Supplemented with other reading material and media, the core of this year’s Holocaust unit is based on Facing History and Ourselves: Holocaust and Human Behavior. The material provides an interdisciplinary approach to citizenship education. We will move from thought to judgment to participation as we confront the moral questions inherent in a study of violence, racism, anti Semitism and bigotry. We will discuss the consequences of discrimination, racism, and anti Semitism by holding up "the tarnished mirror of history" to one of the most violent times in world history -- the 1930s and 1940s. As we read and reflect, we’ll investigate the forces that undermined democracy in Germany, betrayed a generation of young people, and ultimately led to the Holocaust. In doing so, we hope to uncover many of those forces that may threaten our society and freedoms today. These lessons will help us discover how our decisions can make a positive difference in our community, nation and the world. This unit will be focused on Klal Yisrael - the entirety of the Jewish people and how we identify with and take responsibility for other Jews.
III. Modern Zionism and the Creation of the State of Israel

“The fortunes of Zion are restored! We were like dreamers. Our mouths were filled with laughter.” - Psalm 126

Zion is an ancient name for Jerusalem and the land of Israel. We will look closely at the vision and profiles of the individuals and governments that worked toward the re-establishment of a Jewish state. Students in the Middle School will be using Eretz Yisrael Throughout the Year, a new and innovative curriculum developed by The Lookstein Center at Bar-Ilan University. It provides comprehensive educational units for Jewish day school students in grades 1st through 8th. Here in 8th grade the students will focus on Jerusalem, Israel and the Diaspora, the Arab - Israel Conflict and Israel: A Jewish Democracy? We will also be connecting the students with their Israeli peers from our partner school Eynot Yarden through internet and other communications. We will learn about contemporary realities, religious expression, Israeli diversity, and 21st century Israeli culture. In preparation for and as part of the 8th grade Israel trip, this unit will deepen the students’ understanding of Israel, its people, its landscapes, its government, its challenges, and opportunities. Students will gain a deeper sense of Israel as the Jewish homeland. Through conversations and explorations of Israel, we will help forge meaningful relationships and connections with the land and its people.

Grading

“Be not like workers who serve [only] for the sake of receiving a reward.” - Mishna Avot 1:3

Active participation in class and Tefillah 30% of class grade
Weekly journal entries and homework 30% of class grade
Tests/Quizzes/Projects 40% of class grade

Our classroom community will strive to reinforce:

כבוד Kavod(respect) demonstrated by respectful behavior and language toward teachers, fellow students, and about learning; openness to a variety of opinions and beliefs; acknowledging your sources in written and oral presentations; avoidance of lashonhara (hurtful speech); ability to suspend judgment; refraining from embarrassing or blaming others; actively honoring others; self-respect. With a deep awareness for B’tselem Elohim - being created in the divine image, we will truly and fully value diversity in ideas, opinions, and beliefs.
Middle School Mathematics Course Overview
Mr. Anderson, Ms. Davidovich, & Ms. Frank

Grades 6, 7, and 8 use McDougal Littell curriculum. The philosophy is that BHDS middle school students, with the assistance of the text, their peers, and the instructors are given the opportunity to construct their own understanding of a specific topic. Within the parameters of our curriculum, the students generate their own problem-solving techniques to analyze different mathematical ideas and formulate solution strategies. The students explore and learn critical mathematical concepts through discussion, cooperative learning, and small group activities. The use of games, manipulative techniques, projects, presentations, and explanatory writings are used to enhance specific lessons.

The 6th grade uses McDougal Littell Course 1. The comprehensive concepts include, but are not limited to: integers and data interpretation, solving equations, order of operations, fractions and decimals, area, ratios and proportions, measurement, geometry and probability. Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. Student daily grades will include coming to class in a timely manner, having all necessary materials, and appropriate participation and behavior. Student graph composition books should be dated and every problem number is to be clearly labeled. There will be individual tests given as well as team tests. There will be informal student observation and anecdotal record keeping during teacher-guided instruction, strategy sharing, group work and activities. Students will be assessed through discussions and writings of the concept at hand. They will spend significant amounts of class time in study teams doing guided investigations to develop and consolidate concepts and procedures.

The 7th grade uses McDougal Littell Course 2. The comprehensive concepts delve into; integers, graphing linear equations, ratios, proportions, percents central tendency, probability, and the geometric concepts of area and perimeter. The emphasis for students in grade 7 is placed on their ability to generate their own understanding of concepts, and problem solving techniques. The students explore and learn critical mathematical concepts through classroom lectures, discussions, cooperative learning, and applied projects. Students are assessed through individual and team tests, as well as homework, class participation, and overall work habits. The ultimate goal of the grade seven math program at Brandeis is to provide students with a strong mathematical foundation to transition into Algebra in grade 8.

The 8th grade uses McDougal Littell Algebra I (High School version). The comprehensive content and varied real life applications covered give students a strong mathematical foundation. Real-world applications and suggestions for appropriate use of technology are integrated throughout the series. This particular text allows students Internet access to an at home tutor, an “e” edition of the textbook (no heavy books to carry home!), and e-workbook for extra practice. (www.classzone.com). Concepts covered include but are not limited to; expressions, equations, and functions; properties of real numbers; solving linear equations; graphing linear equations and functions; writing linear equations; solving and graphing linear inequalities; systems of equations and inequalities; exponents and exponential functions; polynomials and factoring; quadratic equations and functions; radicals and geometry connections; rational equations and functions; probability and data analysis. Students are assessed through quizzes and tests, as well as homework, class
participation, and overall work habits. There will be informal student observation and anecdotal record keeping during teacher-guided instruction, strategy sharing, group work and activities.

The ALEKS program
The middle school has also adopted a digital online math program called ALEKS. ALEKS will be used predominately outside of school. This program provides each student an individualized learning plan to practice and master the material. The adaptive nature of the program allows students to move at their own pace and to challenge themselves appropriately.
6th Grade Science
Mr. Anderson

Community of Learners: Students develop and maintain class guidelines, are responsible for weekly jobs, participate in frequent pair and group work, and bring their own strengths and areas of growth to the class.

Growing as Learners: Students acknowledge that we all have a particular starting point in our learning, set goals, take risks, make mistakes, take advantage of additional support, reflect on their learning (formally and informally) and share openly.

Units of Study: In sixth grade science, students learn important Earth and space science concepts through firsthand investigations, computer simulations, reading, writing, using visual representations, and discussions.

Scale and Models: Students investigate scale and models in Earth and space systems, and learn how to read and interpret maps.

Rock Transformations: Students learn how geologic processes shape the surface of Earth and investigate how rocks provide evidence for these processes. Students focus on understanding the scale of geologic time and how the fossil record and sedimentary layers provide evidence about Earth’s past.

Plate Tectonics: Students investigate the interactions between tectonic plates that cause surface features and events on earth.

Current and Earth’s Climate: Students learn how differences in density cause currents in Earth’s ocean and atmosphere. Students investigate how air and ocean currents, along with the water cycle, affect regional climates.

Space and Gravity: Students learn how objects on Earth and in space interact through the force of gravity. Students investigate the nature of stars, and how the characteristics of a star and a planet make it suitable or unsuitable for life.

Grading: The grade for the 1st semester will be composed of:
30% Tests & Quizzes, 15% Projects, 35% Classwork & Labs, 15% Participation, 5% Homework

* Percent adjustments are made depending on balance of actual class activities.

Tests & Quizzes: Tests and quizzes are used to gauge understanding at a particular moment in time. Quizzes will be given periodically throughout each unit and tests are given at the end of most units. There will be opportunities for test corrections.

Classwork & Labs: Students will maintain a science notebook for each unit, which will be graded periodically. Occasionally, class work must be completed at home.

Projects & participation: There will be individual, partner, and group activities. Most units contain a design project. Grading rubrics will be handed out at the beginning of a project.

Participation: There is a possibility of 10 participation points per week, everyone begins with 9 participation points which are deducted for disruptive behavior or not participating in an activity. Points are added for vocal participation, positive attitude, helpfulness, and remaining focused.
**Absenteeism:** If a student is absent, it is his/her job to find out what he/she missed. You have one day for each day you were absent to turn in any missing work, otherwise it is late. You may have to come in during study hall to complete a lab activity.

**Extra help:** I am available for extra help by appointment mornings from 7:30am-8am, study hall or during the lunch period. In addition, students may seek clarification via e-mail (tanderson@bhds.org).
7th Grade Science  
Mr. Matthew Lowe

My primary goal in teaching your student is to inspire and train them to develop their skills as a “scientist”. These skills include: how to observe, hypothesize, question, experiment, and draw conclusions from the living world around us. I prefer to teach a laboratory-based class where students can spend 50% or more of their time learning how to utilize technology to make sense of the world. I emphasize thinking. Learning content/facts is important, but helping students to think like scientists (critically, logically, using justifications for arguments, etc.) is my emphasis. I want students to understand cause and affect relationships and appreciate the complexity and diversity of life. I feel that all students in my classes can succeed and excel. I feel that the way the class is structured and taught encourages my students to be responsible and interested. With my guidance and support I hope to make the academic school year for your student’s 7th grade year a productive and exciting academic adventure.

Curriculum

We will be using a blend of two main curriculums. A CPO curriculum and Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP) Issues. I expect the students will find these units important, challenging and hopefully relevant to their lives.

A. Nature of Science: Students explore the nature of science, the traditional scientific method and experimental design.

B. Body Systems: Students explore the role of organ systems in maintaining health. We will dissect various preserved and live specimens to understand anatomy and physiology.

C. Cell Biology and Disease: Students study how cells and the immune system work. We will conduct a bacteriology unit where the students will grow, stain, and classify bacteria.

D. Genetics: Students explore principles of genetics in pea plants and humans. Through computer simulations and hands on activities, students will learn where traits are derived and how genes and our environment influence who we are as humans.

E. Ecology: Students learn how the parts of an ecosystem interact by exploring the nature surrounding us. A trip to Lake Merced and the coastline will allow us to collect data, observe different niches, and explain how we impact our environment.

F. Evolution: Students explore fossils and examine evidence for evolution, natural selection and mutations. The students will learn how to classify changes over time and make connections on how living beings relate morphologically and genetically.

G. Bioengineering: Students consider how biotechnology can improve the lives of humans.
Classwork

Classwork will involve what I call “hands on, minds on” science. Students will have engaging and fun experiences, but I will also ask them to think deeply about what they can learn from them. We will explore the topics above through experiments, activities and discussions both independently and in partners and groups.

Homework

Students will have science homework on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday nights. I will assign the homework in class and it will usually be listed on Schoology. The purpose is to give students a chance to engage with the in-class content independently and at their own pace to help solidify understanding, however students should be able to complete the homework in 20-30 minutes.

Middle School Curriculum Guide 30 September 2012

Assessment and Grading

30% Tests & Quizzes
45% Classwork & Labs
15% Projects
10% Participation

Student Help

If a student needs extra help they can contact me via e-mail or through my work extension. I also can be reached before school, during Study Hall, after school, or by appointment.

Home-School Communication

You, your student, and I, form a partnership that is the foundation for learning. If you have concerns about your student’s progress please e-mail me. I am usually available to meet with parents after school. E-mail is definitely the most efficient means of communicating with me. Please encourage your student to email me with questions, comments, and concerns. This is excellent practice for self-advocacy.
Eighth Grade Science  
Mr. Tim Anderson  
Mr. Matthew Lowe

Our Learning Goals & Teaching Style: The middle school science courses at Brandeis are centered on learning through inquiry. Our goal is for students to learn about and explore scientific phenomena through experimentation. These concepts will be subsequently supported through various texts, classroom discussion/lecture, and student projects.

Our goals for students:  
-To provide students with a well-rounded and deep understanding of science so that they can pursue a challenging high school science curriculum.  
-To gain confidence (organization, self-promotion, study skills, etc..)  
-To understand the process of scientific experimentation and engineering design cycles  
-To practice working in groups (communication, group roles, and cooperation)  
-To understand how science is connected to their daily lives  
-Major themes & Units of Study for the 8th Grade:

Our major units for the year will include:  
• Introduction to Physical Chemistry  
• Design Cycle

Grading Policy:  
The grading categories and weights for eighth grade science are presented below:  
Test & Quiz 35%  Class Work & Labs 45%  Projects 10%  Participation 10%

Homework:  
Eighth grade students can expect to have science homework on most nights. Most of the year, we will be studying chemistry and conducting 2-3 labs a week. Most homework will involve pre-labs that take around 15-20 minutes to complete. Other nights, students might need to complete a lab or other classroom activity and therefore need to spend 30-40 minutes on science homework.

Re-writes:  
In 8th grade science re-write will only be accepted for formal lab conclusions. These will be written about once every 3-5 labs. Not every lab requires a formal lab conclusion. All other assignments including lab worksheets, quizzes & tests, and projects are not re-writable.

Double Periods: This year we are continuing to use a double lab period for science and social studies. This means that one day a week your student will have a longer science class that will serve as our time to do labs and activities. As a result of this schedule, there will be one day a week where your student does not have science. It is very important that students try not to be absent on our double period days as they will need to schedule a make up date outside of class to complete the lab.

Student Help: If your student needs extra help or clarification on an assignment they should try to make an appointment with their instructor before school, during study
hall, or after school. Those appointments are best made via email. Short questions can be answered via email as well.

**Two Instructors:** Mr. Anderson and Mr. Lowe are very excited to be able to collaborate on teaching 8th grade science this year. Mr. Anderson is teaching the 8B section and Ms. Lowe is teaching the 8W section. While your student will be taught by one of us, they can use us both as a resource outside of class as our grading, policies, and curriculum will be similar.

**Staying informed:** Ask your son or daughter to look at his/her lab sheets. Your child should be able to describe what he/she learned by conducting the labs. If you have concerns about your student’s progress or any questions about assignments please email their instructor first. We are available to meet with parents before or after school on most days. Email is definitely the most efficient means of communicating with us.

**Parent Communication:** If we need to get in contact with you we will email or call your home phone. We are very excited to have the opportunity to work with your student this year!
6th Grade Social Studies
Ms. Mikaela Bock

This will be a memorable year as the students gain a deeper understanding of the events, people and places that comprise our past.

Class Philosophy:

The sixth grade Social Studies classes use the TCI curriculum (www.teachtci.com). It is a teacher-designed curriculum that strives to engage students of all learning styles. Students read and analyze primary historical documents, participate in a variety of simulated historical events, and independently exhibit their learning through creative projects, presentations, and written assessments.

Class Goals:

- All students will exhibit mastery of unit Guiding Questions.
- All students will compare, contrast, analyze and connect historical perspectives and modern experiences.
- All students will examine and articulate how geography, beliefs, economics, arts, politics, and social structure have shaped the development of civilizations, empires, and historical eras

6th Grade Syllabus and Approximate Unit Sequencing:

- Introduction to classroom procedures and historical analysis
- Early Hominids
- Ancient Sumer and the Mesopotamian Empires
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Israelites Part 1
- Ancient India
- Ancient China
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient Rome
- Ancient Israelites Part 2

Grading:

Grades are based on the following categories.

- Classwork and Projects 35%
  - Most Social Studies assignments and projects will be completed in class. The purpose of classwork is to process and apply what has been taught during the lesson.
- Homework 20%
  - Social Studies homework nights are Monday and Wednesday. Students are expected to write their homework in the planners in class.
Homework is to be completed neatly and done in pencil to receive full credit. The purpose of homework is to reinforce the information you have learned in class or to preview the information you will learn the following day.

- **Unit Tests and Quizzes 30%**
  - Unit tests and quizzes assess students’ learning. Unit tests are usually fifty percent multiple choice and fifty percent creative processing and written response. Quizzes usually follow a matching or fill in the blank format.

- **Notes 15%**
  - Students take notes during each unit. The notes are expected to be taken in the manner and order presented in class. Students who are absent must copy the notes from a friend or copy the notes from the class packet after school or during lunch or study hall.

**Social Conduct Expectations:**

This is **OUR** classroom and we will be working **TOGETHER**, collaboratively, all year. We need to have a class that is safe and promotes everyone’s learning. I care about **EVERY** student in this classroom and I want **EVERY** student to be successful. Behaviors that interfere with the community’s collective learning will not be tolerated.

The Brandeis Middle School has adopted the Developmental Designs approach to classroom community and culture. Developmental Designs recognizes that adolescents have four basic social needs (relationships, competence, autonomy, and fun). It then strives to teach students the skills they need (community, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control) to ensure that their needs are met in a thoughtful and productive manner.

All middle school students took part in drafting a school constitution at the retreat. When that constitution is finalized, students will be held accountable to behaving in a manner aligned with the constitution.

**Important Information:**

Students must come to class every day with their Interactive Student Notebook (workbook), SS binder, a pencil, and an eraser.

Each student has been issued a login for the TCI website. This login allows students to access the web-based textbook. They will need to use this login frequently to complete their homework assignments. To access the website follow the steps below.

1) Go to [www.learntci.com](http://www.learntci.com)
2) Enter teacher email mbock@bhds.org
3) Enter username and password (they are written in the cover of their ISN)
7th Grade Social Studies
Ms. Mikaela Bock

This will be a memorable year as the students gain a deeper understanding of the events, people and places that comprise our past.

Class Philosophy:

The seventh grade Social Studies classes use the TCI curriculum (www.teachtci.com). It is a teacher-designed curriculum that strives to engage students of all learning styles. Students read and analyze primary historical documents, participate in a variety of simulated historical events, and independently exhibit their learning through creative projects, presentations, and written assessments.

Class Goals:

★ All students will exhibit mastery of unit Guiding Questions.
★ All students will compare, contrast, analyze and connect historical perspectives and modern experiences.
★ All students will examine and articulate how geography, beliefs, economics, arts, politics, and social structure have shaped the development of civilizations, empires, and historical eras.

7th Grade Syllabus and Approximate Unit Sequencing:

• Introduction to classroom procedures and historical analysis
• The Rise and Fall of Rome
• Medieval Europe
• Islam and the New Muslim Empires
• Africa
• Japan
• The Renaissance and Reformation
• Early Modern Europe

Grading:

Grades are based on the following categories.

• Classwork and Projects 35%
  o Most Social Studies assignments and projects will be completed in class. The purpose of classwork is to process and apply what has been taught during the lesson.
• Homework 20%
  o Social Studies homework nights are Monday and Wednesday. Students are expected to write their homework in the planners in class. Homework is to be completed neatly and done in pencil to receive full
credit. The purpose of homework is to reinforce the information you have learned in class or to preview the information you will learn the following day.

- **Unit Tests and Quizzes 30%**
  - Unit tests and quizzes assess students' learning. Unit tests are usually fifty percent multiple choice and fifty percent creative processing and written response. Quizzes usually follow a matching or fill in the blank format.

- **Notes 15%**
  - Students take notes during each unit. Seventh grade students are encouraged to experiment with different forms of note taking after first consulting with Ms. Bock. Students who are absent must copy the notes from a friend or copy the notes from the class packet after school or during lunch or study hall.

**Social Conduct Expectations:**

This is OUR classroom and we will be working TOGETHER, collaboratively, all year. We need to have a class that is safe and promotes everyone’s learning. I care about EVERY student in this classroom and I want EVERY student to be successful. Behaviors that interfere with learning will not be tolerated.

The Brandeis Middle School has adopted the Developmental Designs approach to classroom community and culture. Developmental Designs recognizes that adolescents have four basic social needs (relationships, competence, autonomy, and fun). It then strives to teach students the skills they need (community, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control) to ensure that their needs are met in a thoughtful and productive manner.

All middle school students took part in drafting a school constitution at the retreat. When that constitution is finalized, students will be held accountable to behaving in a manner aligned with the constitution.

**Important Information:**

Students must come to class every day with their Interactive Student Notebook (ISN), SS binder, a pencil, and an eraser.

Each student has been issued a login for the TCI website. This login allows students to access the web-based textbook. They will need to use this login frequently to complete their homework assignments. To access the website follow the steps below.

1) Go to [www.learntci.com](http://www.learntci.com)
2) Enter teacher email
3) Enter username and password (they are written in the front cover of your student’s ISN).
The eighth grade course of study is United States history. This year we will use five key events as the hubs of information.

The goal of the eighth grade social studies class is to develop students who are on their way to becoming literate citizens - individuals with knowledge, skills and civic values they need to become active and thoughtful participants in the world of the twenty-first century.

The course of study will include the history, geography, government and economics of the United States.

Knowledge and understanding of the American culture will be developed through the study of our ethical and belief systems, and the social and political systems. Civic values are stressed as we investigate issues of national identity and citizenship, with an emphasis on our constitutional heritage.

We will continue to develop the students’ study skills, map and globe skills and critical thinking skills.

The social studies component of the integrated project will include teaching, practicing and reinforcing the following skills: note taking, outlining, bibliography and internet research. The historical, political and cultural contexts of the projects will be discussed during the course of the semester.

The Five Key Events

I. Constitutional Conventional
   - Why did the colonies seek independence?
   - What were the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?
   - How did the Constitution emerge from conflicts?
   - How did geography lead to conflict?
   - How did ratification lead to the two party system?
   - How does the Bill of Rights complement the Constitution?

II. Dred Scot Decision
   - How did the Constitutional Convention fail to address the issue of slavery?
   - How was the Civil War a result of the failure of the Constitutional Convention to resolve the issue of slavery?
   - How did the country deal with the issue of slavery as the country grew?
   - Why is the Dred Scot decision important?
   - What was the life of slaves like?
   - What is sectionalism?
   - What is the origin of the abolitionist movement?
   - What were the major events of the Civil War and what were the results?

III. The United States in 1876: the Centennial Year
   - What conflicts and issues arose from westward expansion, especially treatment of the Native Americans?
   - How did the US become an industrial power?
How did industrialization and the rise of corporate America change American life?
What was Reconstruction and how did it affect African-Americans and the South in general?
How did the United States' changing view of itself as a world power contribute to the conflict between isolationism and imperialism?

IV. The Great Depression
How did involvement in WWI change the United States' role in the world?
What were the major social and political movements of post WWI United States?
What were the major theories of how involved government should be in business?
What were the major causes and effects of the Depression?
How did the New Deal attempt to transform American society?
How did we finally recover from the Great Depression?

V. 1968
Why is WWII a watershed event?
How did the Cold War mentality manifest itself in the United States?
What were the major events of the modern civil rights movement?
How were the events of 1968 emblematic of the major events of this era?
What does American history teach us about our responsibilities as citizens?
Why is social action important to understanding our history?

Grading:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests / Quizzes / Projects</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Work / Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Middle School Spanish Program 2013-2014
Ms. Masson and Mrs. Mullin

Spanish 1, 2, and 3 focuses on connections through language. Students will identify language patterns and use them to communicate about their own community and Hispanic communities. Stress is on personally relevant listening and speaking exercises, practice in pronunciation, and the acquisition of basic vocabulary and grammar through the mastery of realistic dialogues and supplementary materials. All students will practice writing skills through daily activities. Also, all students will work up to their own unique potential in speaking, writing and reading comprehension. Effort and progress are more important than perfection in all Spanish courses.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Understand authentic language in real-life situations
- Speak enough Spanish to communicate in various social situations
- Write effectively in Spanish for practical needs
- Read authentic material in Spanish with understanding
- Appreciate the Spanish language, culture, and behaviors

Grades for Spanish will be based on the following:

Homework:
Homework will be assigned most nights, and should take you 20 - 25 minutes per assignment. We do not accept late homework unless a student has been absent. It is the student’s responsibility to come see us if he/she missed class or if he/she knows that he/she will be absent.

Attendance and Participation:
Students earn credit for being punctual, prepared and for participating in class! They should be working on the warm-up assignment when the bell rings, should have all materials during class and should participate every day and not be disruptive.

Quizzes:
Students will be quizzed about once a week.

Tests and Projects:
We will have a test or project after each chapter that we complete.

In addition, Spanish 3 will also be graded on the following:
Oral Proficiency: Students are expected to use only Spanish in the classroom unless told otherwise. On occasion, they will also be given short oral assessments.
Middle School Physical Education Overview
Ms. Corrie Mizusawa

Grades 6, 7 and 8 curriculum focuses on empowering students to enjoy regular, lifelong physical activity and help them lead healthy, active lives. This class will focus on mastery of skills, teamwork, cooperation, respect, responsibility, communication, fitness and fun. Curriculum and unit choices are specifically designed for developing overall fitness and wellness as modeled in the California State Physical Education Standards, the standards of the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) theory. Components of these resources will support the students’ development of movement and social skills while improving physical and emotional health and encouraging a positive self-image. All grade levels will participate in a combination of the following units: cooperative games, fitnessgram, volleyball, basketball, dance, team handball, hockey, pickleball, soccer, nutrition, Olympics and yoga. Unit activities will be taught in a manner that will allow students to have the opportunity to experience individual success.

Student Grades will be based on the following:

A. Daily Points (70%)
   1. Active participation and effort in all class activities
   2. A respectful attitude and display of good sportsmanship
   3. Self-improvement when appropriate, new skills learned and used
   4. Preparedness to learn - arriving to class on time with loose fitting clothing and suitable sneakers properly worn and tied

B. Written Work (30%)
   1. Exams, worksheets and group assignments as required
Boys Middle School Physical Education
Mr. Spencer Stanton

Program goals:
The curriculum’s overarching learning goals are modeled after the California State Physical Education Standards and the Taking Personal and Social Responsibility teaching model. A combination of the two frameworks will allow students to reach moderate to vigorous levels of activity during class time while simultaneously improving understanding and undertaking of our school wide core values of integrity, kindness and service. Students who actively participate throughout the year can expect: exposure to a number of different physical activities including team sports, self defense, fitness, individual/dual activity and dance; improving physical ability and cognitive understanding as they relate to the curriculum; improving overall fitness; creating and maintaining a healthy and safe environment for learning; having a voice in important class decisions; healthy personal and social responsibility growth—respect, effort, self-direction and leadership—as it applies to physical education.

Unit list:
The activities and learning experiences vary from grade to grade. While all grades may be participating in a unit on Ultimate Frisbee, grade level progressions and objectives will be age and ability level specific—per the California State Physical Education Standards. For example, during team sports units, 8th grade students will be challenged with more stringent rules, more difficult skill progressions, more opponents and will be tasked to working through and create team specific strategies. In the 6th grade, students’ time will be spent mastering basic movements, competing against fewer opponents with fewer rules and working through the very basics of in-game tactics.

Tentative unit order:
Cooperative
Fitnessgram (1)
Capoeira
Pickleball
Creative Game
Volleyball
Tinikling
Ultimate Frisbee
Fitnessgram (2)
Olympics
Student Grades:
60% of the grade from 3 daily points:
  1 point will be given for preparedness to learn.
  1 point will be given for participation.
  1 point will be given for responsible behavior

40% of grade from formal assessment:
  Performances in Capoeira & Dance
  Written quizzes
  Rules
  Fitness components
  Journal entries
  Written work samples
6th Grade: ADM (Art, Drama, Music)

DRAMA: Ms. Amelia Stewart

Throughlines:
1. What does it mean to create as a theater artist?
2. How do playwrights and actors bring stories and characters to life?
3. What is the process of producing a live performance?
4. How can we collaborate effectively?

The drama ADM rotation aims to develop students who think as artists. Class work will focus on the creation and rehearsal of original scenes. Students will be encouraged to listen and observe closely, in order to approach dramatic obstacles in an unorthodox manner. All members of the drama class will gain experience in improvisation, creative writing, text analysis, and the rehearsal and performance of original scenes. Homework will include writing and line memorization. Family and friends will be the invited audience for our class scene performance at the end of each rotation.

Homework: Line memorization and light writing.

Drama grading rubric
Complete homework on time - 20%
(short original written scene and memorization for final performance)
Group support - 20%
(consideration and respect for teacher/fellow classmates)
Take stage direction - 15%
(blocking, character development, vocal energy)
Responsible classroom behavior - 20%
(complying with rules, attentive listening, coming to class prepared and on time)
Active classroom participation - 20%
Performance in final class for an invited audience - 10%

Total percentage earned out of 100%
A = 93 to 100, A- = 90 to 92, B+ = 87 to 89, B = 83 to 86, B- = 80 to 82, C+ = 77 to 79, C = 73 to 76

ART: Ms. Danielle Denton

The sixth grade art curriculum is a one-unit program, which lasts for approximately eleven weeks. The unit focuses on deciphering and exploring contemporary art, and creating meaning in the students' own artworks. The program emphasizes not just making art, but also engaging in critical analysis of art. The unit is broken into three parts:

1. Reading artworks - students discuss and write about artworks, using the artist’s manipulation of the elements and principles of art to “decode” the meaning. Student learning goals for observing art will include: Describe image, make connections to image, analyze image, interpret image, evaluate image

2. Creating artworks - students design and then create their own artwork in response to their chosen piece of contemporary art. The intention of the artwork should be to use the elements and principles of art, and symbols and metaphors, to voice and enhance a strong opinion that the student holds. Students may work with a range of materials
and will be expected to spend time developing their ideas.

3. **Presentation** - students will present their art to the class, explaining their artwork and the original piece they were inspired by.

**The following skills will be utilized and developed:** Aesthetic valuing, critical thinking, problem solving, appropriate selection and use of tools and supplies, planning and sketching ideas, critiquing/evaluating own and others’ work, using art-specific vocabulary, planning work flow.

**Students will be graded as follows:**

- 25% Written work and presentation
- 25% Development of ideas
- 25% Attention to craft
- 25% Participation
- 100% Total points possible

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**MUSIC: Mr. Sam Holmes**

This course is designed to appreciate music in a performance-based atmosphere. We will create and perform music upon different manipulative platforms. Examples include, but are not limited to, world drumming, Orff instruments, recorders, pitched/non-pitched percussion instruments, as well as singing. Participation is a vital, and crucial, part of music performance.

We will also study the basics of music notation and rhythmic reading. These units will incorporate different exercises and quizzes, as a reflection of reading music notation (treble and bass clef) and rhythms (different note values and their respective groupings).

The course will also explore various aspects of music technology, creating and composing through different music-based computer programs.

**Grading for Music**

- 50% Active participation/appropriate behavior
- 20% Notation Unit: appropriate quizzes and exercises
- 20% Rhythm Unit: appropriate quizzes and exercises
- 10% Music Technology: appropriate projects, as assigned by instructor
Tuesday Electives
Held Tuesdays 9:20-10:10 – for grades 7 & 8

**Peer Helpers – Ms. Baumer**

8th grade students receive priority placement
now open to 7th grade by special permission

The students who choose the peer helper elective spend elective period on Friday in a lower school classroom helping the classroom teacher in a variety of ways. They might be working one on one with a student, helping with a classroom activity, grading papers, hanging children’s work on the walls, or playing with the children outside or during choice time. It is a wonderful community-building program that the lower school children, as well as the Eighth graders, look forward to all week. It is an important opportunity for the Eighth graders to build their leadership skills and practice being good role models.

**Kabbalah 101: Jewish mystical concepts and texts – Rabbi Bochner**

This elective will explore what Kabbalah is, what are its basic ideas, and how we can relate these mysterious teachings to our understanding of life and Judaism. Kabbalah is Jewish mysticism, or magic. While much of this information has been taught as guarded, secret information, many Kabbalistic insights are also found in the Siddur, TaNaKh, and mainstream Jewish practice. This elective will explore these insights and texts through lively discussion.

**Awaken The Right Side Of Your Brain! – Ms. Denton**

Learn how to work with clay using 21st century methods. Create and design new and fun objects such as Sculptures, Jewelry, Tea pots, Masks, mobiles, as well as work in new techniques like Poloroid transferring on clay. These are just a few of the creative things we will learn how to make and work with in Exploring Ceramics. We will also study and meet local contemporary artists who work in clay. Come prepared to use your creativity and bring your ideas to life!

**Strategic Games – Mr. Dossick**

Strategy is an under appreciated part of games and sports that we all participate in on a daily basis. We will look into the different strategies that are involved in existing games that we have all played as well as new games that might not be as popular in the U.S. as other parts of the world. We will choose different games and break them down to create strategies that we can use to play the game more effectively and efficiently.

**Making a Mural – Ms. Goldstein**

In this elective we will be continuing the mural by the play-scape. We will be looking at other murals and mural artist for inspiration and then we will work as a team to design an additional panel or border for our school’s mural. From brainstorming ideas, to making sketches, to painting outside, the students will be involved in all parts of designing and making a mural.

**World Drumming – Mr. Holmes**

Explore rhythms and drums from around the world. This class will focus on rhythms from various world cultures. We will create, improvise, and perform different types of drums, as well as pitched and non-pitched instruments. From African drum circles to a Stomp-style performance, each class session will offer a variety of musical activity. The class will also focus on rhythmic reading and composing. If you like rhythm and drumming, this is the class for you!
**Explore Your Passion – Distance Learning – Mr. Jefferies**

Enrollment may require additional examinations

Students will have a chance to take a formal course with leading national organizations that explores one of their passions. Working with the Center for Talented Youth (CTY) at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland and with an online education wing of University of California (UC - Scout) qualifying students will take a distance-learning course under the supervision and with the support of our faculty.

**Yearbook – Mr. Lowe**

Offered both Tuesday and Friday. Choose either day or both. Enrollment limited

Make the Brandeis Hillel Day School’s 2013-2014 school year an exciting one to remember for everyone! This is a chance for your art, photography, and writing to forever be in the hands of each person here. Join the yearbook crew and develop skills in journalism, photography, computer graphics and design, editing, team-building and critical thinking. Each student will be responsible for at least one spread in this year’s book as well as taking photographs, interviewing students and teachers, and writing stories and captions. Join the crew and help showcase our school!

**Brain Games – Mr. Masson**

Do you like board games? Do you enjoy activities that involve strategy or make you think? Come play (or learn to play) different board games or card games such as chess, Dominion, Settlers of Catan, and Bananagrams. The games offered will make you use your brain while having fun in the process.

**Conversational Spanish – Ms. Mullin**

¡Hola! ¿Qué tal? Have you noticed that in California the Spanish language surrounds us? From food to music to our friends and neighbors, we can find Spanish everywhere. Come join us as we learn how to use Spanish in everyday situations, including: introducing ourselves, ordering food, and speaking about our families. You will have the opportunity to write and perform skits, play games in Spanish, and even learn a bit about Spanish and Latin American culture! After this elective, you will be able to use some useful Spanish phrases out in the real world. This elective is appropriate for students with little to no experience with Spanish.

**Hebrew – Ms. Peretz**

Want to go to Israel and be able to talk to your students from our twin school? To your cousins? To the shop keeper who is selling that very cool gift you want to bring home? Then this is the course for you. This class will engage students at their level and focus on conversation and communication in the Hebrew language. The student’s interest will be a critical guide to our topics.

**Fitness Elective – Mr. Stanton**

The purpose of the Fitness Elective is two fold: identify then create an individual workout plan that will help students meet their personal fitness goals. Be it activity specific –athletics, dance, gymnastics- or health related, we will identify, inform and work towards creating a fitness plan that will place students on the path of attaining their personal fitness goals. Some of the topics that will be covered during the elective include: 5 components of fitness, exercise and the brain, nutrition and goal setting. This elective is for anyone who is interested in improving his or her physical and mental well being.

**Tinkering: Creativity with Technology – Mr. Stern**

Enrollment limited to 12 students

Students in this elective course will have a chance to ‘tinker’ in a variety of formats. Some of the possibilities include:

- Learning the Python Programming Language and how to program computers using the Raspberry Pi
• Creating games with Scratch/Tynker, programming environments that foster creativity
• Building and programming robots with Lego Mindstorms
• Learning electronics with an Arduino board
• Developing and building mobile apps

The class will be structured using the ‘Flipped Classroom’ model, in which students will direct their learning with teacher provided materials (links, videos, tutorials) and then be provided support by Mr. Stern during class meetings. If you are curious about technology and like to be creative, this elective is an excellent choice for you.

Active Play Reading – Ms. Stewart

Have you ever wanted to be Maria or Tony from "West Side Story"? Perhaps you dream of playing Cinderella or Jack from "Into the Woods"? Or maybe you've never heard of either of these plays? This is your chance to expand your cultural literacy and portray iconic roles without the pressure of line memorization or performance. Each Tuesday morning we will explore some of the most influential and popular plays from the American Theater. Every student in this elective will have the opportunity to play a starring role as we read through these plays (and listen to musical numbers, when applicable). This is a fun and engaging way to become immersed in some of the most famous Broadway shows of all time! Plays read will include "West Side Story", "Our Town", "Show Boat", "You Can't Take it With You", "Kiss Me Kate", "The Children's Hour", and "Into the Woods".
Friday Electives
Held Fridays 8:40-10:10 – for grades 6, 7 & 8

**Hebrew – Ms. Arzt-Mor**

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**The Nature of Judaism: Environmental and Nature-based Texts Within the Jewish Tradition – Rabbi Bochner**

In this elective, which will frequently meet outside, we'll explore the many connections between Judaism and nature such as the agricultural origins of the pilgrimage festivals, blessings relating to plants and natural wonders, and stories and teachings from our tradition about the environment. If you like spending time outdoors and want to deepen your understanding of earth-based Jewish practices, this is the elective for you.

**Move and Groove – Ms. Bisson and Ms. Mullin**

Dance is human expression at its most elemental and pure. We will study the fundamentals of dance and the vast array of dance styles. We will also work on creating an original choreographed dance. The study of dance helps with coordination, poise, and helps build confidence – it's also just really fun! Join us and get down!

**Basketball – Mr. Dossick**

Enrollment limited to 16 students

The objective of the Basketball Elective is to learn, practice, and understand the basic fundamental skills of basketball. Students will have better awareness and knowledge of individual based concepts of basketball, such as ball handling, shooting, passing and defense. Students should develop a competitive yet sportsman like spirit, through warm-up, instruction, drill work, and competitive play. The emphasis of this class will be on physical fitness, individual skill development, skill comprehension, and enthusiasm towards participation.

**Make it Abstract! – Ms. Goldstein**

Enrollment limited to 10 students

Have you ever looked at a painting and thought, “this is just lines and scribbles?” or wondered why some art doesn’t show something recognizable? In this elective we will be exploring Abstract Art- why artist make it, and the approaches and methods they use to create it. We will be using a range of medium including painting, sculpture, photography and textiles. We also will be learning about abstract art in the past, as well as becoming familiar with contemporary artists, including having artists visit our class! Come ready to look and talk about artwork, and most importantly, be open to exploring new ways to make art work!
Middle School Band – Mr. Holmes

Prerequisite: has taken band at lower school level, either at BHDS or previous school; have an instrument from previous class; ability to read notation and rhythms, as instructed from the Standard of Excellence series (Level I). All other students at discretion of instructor.

This course is a continuation from band at the Lower School level. We will continue with the Standard of Excellence series, as well as repertoire from various styles of music. All instruments are welcome, but the students should be aware that the program is primarily comprised of wind instruments and percussion. Performance opportunities will be available throughout the school year.

Explore Your Passion – Distance Learning – Mr. Jefferies

Enrollment may require additional examinations

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Small Sided Team Sports – Mr. Stanton

Enrollment limited

Students who sign up for Small Sided Team Sports will participate in a number of different team sport activities in modified smaller spaces. The team sports that will be covered in this “playground style” elective are Hockey, Football and Baseball. The majority of class time will be spent participating in small-sided game play. Smaller fields and lower player numbers guarantee that players will receive countless sport specific practice repetitions.

Digital Expression: Photoshop and the BHDS Yearbook - Mr. Stern

Enrollment limited

Students in this highly creative elective course will take pictures, work with images and produce digital art using Adobe Photoshop. The focus of the class will be to produce images that will be used in the yearbook. While the course will begin with a basic instruction of Photoshop Elements, we will quickly be generating stunning pieces of photographic art using the software. Students that enjoy technology, photography, art, and being creative will thoroughly enjoy this class. This class is designed for beginners as well as advanced students. Advanced students will have the opportunity to jump in and start creating products for the yearbook.
How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying – Ms. Stewart

Enrollment limited

The fall drama production is a short comedic spoof, in which secret agents detail the tips and tricks to sailing through the academic rigors of high school. The drama ensemble will collaborate on staging, character development, as well as the creation of scenic, prop, and costume elements. Homework will include line memorization. All members of the ensemble will gain experience in improvisation, auditioning, script analysis, and rehearsal. This elective will require two after school rehearsals just prior to the Middle School Performance Night in late January (date TBA).