



Parent Notes:



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2019 — 2020

PARENT CURRICULUM GUIDE

KINDERGARTEN



Hillel Community Day School partners with families to promote critical thinking, academic excellence and a love of learning for each child. In service to the entire Jewish community, we inspire a meaningful connection to Jewish customs, values and Israel.



Music — Mr. Jack McMahon

The content of the HCDS Music curriculum will include songs that teach Hebrew vocabulary, Jewish holidays, Torah stories and Jewish values. Secular and American holiday music will also be included.

Kindergarten Music Students Will:

- Learn Hebrew vocabulary through song
- Learn Torah stories through song
- Sing Jewish and American holiday songs
- Sing traditional Jewish music, as well as songs by contemporary song writers
- Tap out simple rhythms, using rhythm instruments
- Develop the ability to match pitches

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Movement songs
- Simple dances
- Rhythm and pitch exercises
- Preparing for performances at school events and in the community

What Can Parents Do?

- Ask your child about what they learned in class.
- Take your child to Jewish and other musical events in the community.
- Provide opportunities for your child to listen to a varied musical repertoire.



Physical Education — Mr. Ken Soble

The Physical Education program at Hillel strives to give our newest students a safe, fun environment, with both structured individual and group activities for free play and creativity.

Kindergarten Students Will

- Learn and perform basic motor and manipulative skills.
- Become more aware of how their body works and what it can do for them (as well as what they can do for it!).
- Learn how to be a part of a group, including being a teammate and negotiating with peers for equipment.
- Gain competency in a variety of physical activities and knowledge in sports.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Physical activities (games, sports, exercises) that provide conditioning for fitness
- Races and contests – individually as well as in pairs and groups
- Body balancing, maneuvering and musical exercise
- Simple games with simple rules, to include different types of balls, hoops, scooters, beanbags and parachutes
- Accomplishing areas of physical fitness measurement.
- Activities to understand the relationship of physical activity and individual well being

What Can Parents Do?

- Parents should not only learn about the child's activities, but also his/her level of understanding and enjoyment. If the child is unable to communicate this, please call the teacher for appropriate and complete explanations.
- To get involved, parents need to question students to learn what their children are doing so they can extend that participation through home play and exercise.



Media/Library

Kindergarten students are beginning a magnificent journey towards informational literacy. Over the course of this school year they will tap into their innate curiosity and inquisitiveness to build understanding. Kindergarteners begin to distinguish between fiction and nonfiction, as well as fact and opinion. Most importantly, they become increasingly independent in finding accurate answers to their questions and begin to efficiently summarize and record their findings.

Kindergarten Students Will:

- Connect ideas to own interests
- Understand the basic organizational structure of books
- Distinguish between fiction and non-fiction resources
- Demonstrate simple organizational skills such as sorting and categorizing

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Read out louds & think out louds
- Small group direct instruction
- Multi-media projects
- Book reviews

What Can Parents Do?

- Talk with your child. Discuss topics that make you "wonder". Find answers together.
- Read with your child every day.
- Listen to your child read every day.
- Ask your child about what they are reading (e.g. What is the problem in the story?; What would you do if that happened to you?; Who else might like this book?, etc...).
- Help your child choose "just right" books in a variety of genres.



S.T.E.A.M. — Ms. Tara Wiseman

The S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) program at Hillel naturally engages students in the lab. The hands-on, minds-on activities are selected to foster creativity, ingenuity, and critical thinking. The curriculum encourages learners to begin with an appropriate level of challenge and advance as far as they are individually able. The emphasis on choice and autonomy allows learners to further personalize learning by tailoring projects to their own interests.

Kindergarten Students Will

- Interact, collaborate and create with peers through STEAM learning

Classroom Activities and Group Challenges May Include But Are Not Limited To the Following Tools:

- Geometric Shapes
- Let's Go Code!
- Maker Boxes
- Osmo
- Ozobot
- Pixie
- Simple Machines
- Zometools
- Zoob Builders
- Solar Ovens

What Can Parents Do?

- Raising a "thinker": Encourage your child to think outside-the-box and to problem solve. Have them participate in everyday activities around your home (i.e. food preparation). This process allows for a series of steps to be follow-- the end result being a completed project and a sense of achievement. Have them ask questions along the way to foster engagement, logical reasoning, and overall understanding of the process.
- I can "tinker": Give your child access to a wide array of child-safe materials, such as craft supplies and overall "randomness". Ask them to simply create. You can expand on this by offering a scenario. Have your child identify a solution and execute it via a physical build using the provided materials. This is a fun exercise to promote critical thinking and a problem-solving growth mindset.
- Set an example for collaboration and compassion: Be a strong role model and mentor to your child. Make working with others and having an open mindset a priority (Making Caring Common Project: www.p21.org/tips/rolemodel).



Social Studies - Ms. Lori Donnelly

The social studies program at the kindergarten level focuses on helping students develop awareness of themselves as growing individuals. Children's unique qualities as well as similarities to others are stressed. Children learn about values, ideas, customs, and traditions through folktales, legends, music, and oral histories.

Kindergarten Social Studies will include:

- My family, myself, and others
- My school and school community
- My neighborhood
- Location of home, school, neighborhood, and community on maps and globes
- Basic human needs and wants
- People helping one another to meet needs and wants
- Symbols of citizenship
- Rights, responsibilities, and roles of citizenship
- People making and changing rules and laws

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Geographical, cultural, and governmental attributes of the U.S.
- Construct compare/contrast charts about topics
- Discussing how we make good choices within our classroom/school community
- Reading stories related to themes in Social Studies

What Can Parents Do?

- Share with your child information about your family. Children love to know more about the people in his/her life
- Provide your child with opportunities to attend or become involved in community events (parades, fundraisers, groups of interest etc.)
- During holidays, read books and discuss traditions that you find meaningful

ELA — Continued

In Writing, Kindergarten Students Will:

- Learn to form and write English using Handwriting without Tears techniques and New Phonics.
- Write his/her first name using first letter, upper case only.
- Recognize and write high frequency words (sight words).
- Use pictures to organize ideas and convey meaning.
- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose original opinion pieces.
- Follow left to right progression (English).

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Practice and review letters/sight words learned on a weekly basis using a variety of methods, such as writing the letters in the air, rainbow writing, tracing worksheets, sight word hunt, word wall, etc.
- Daily opportunity to use paper to illustrate and/or “write” messages and cards during center based play.
- Writing centers that incorporate engaging activities from *Handwriting without Tears* and *New Phonics* program.
- Using music to teach letter formation, posture and writing strokes.

In Listening and Speaking, Kindergarten Families Will Need to Remember:

- Learning to **listen** requires children to pay attention and understand what is said. Children benefit from a cue being given before directions are stated. Repeating directions can be helpful.
- Learning to **speak**, means knowing when to speak, using appropriate language, volume and tone, and being able to speak for a purpose. In Kindergarten, children learn to express ideas and feelings completely and respectfully.
- We practice listening politely while others are talking.

What Can Parents Do?

- Read to your child on a daily basis and let them see you reading independently as well. Besides books, children benefit from listening to other forms of literature, such as newspapers, magazines, poetry, lists, books on tape/CD/MP3 (which can also be played in the car), environmental print, etc.
- Provide your child with opportunities to read parts of texts that may be familiar, repetitive, and/or sight words.
- Provide ample opportunities to express himself/herself through writing. Support them by having him/her explain what was written/illustrated, along with modeling, guiding correct letter formation, proper pencil grip, and posture.
- Encourage your child to express his/her feelings and share his/her feelings verbally.



ELA — Ms. Lori Donnelly

Language Arts includes four fundamental components that are interrelated: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students begin with learning to recognize upper and lower case letters of the English alphabet, their sounds, and to recognize words in print. They will also be learning to express ideas through speaking and writing. Our Kindergarten program utilizes a child-friendly approach that integrates the common core curricula with research-based developmentally appropriate learning units.

In Reading, Kindergarten Students Will:

- Enjoy being able to read and looking at different genres of literature
- Demonstrate knowledge of print.
- Ask and answer questions about key ideas in text.
- Recognize and use rhythms, rhymes and repetition, picture clues, and sight vocabulary (sight words).
- Retell a simple story using beginning, middle, and end.
- Identify characters, settings, and major events in stories.
- Learn to recognize upper and lower case letters of the alphabet and their sounds through the New Phonics curriculum
- Recognize selected words in print.
- Use words effectively to discuss connections between self, text, and the world around them.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Listening to stories and using strategies, such as predicting and picture walks to understand author's purpose and/or message.
- Use drawing, dictating, and writing to compose original pieces of opinion writing, and then reading these to the class.
- Exploring digital tools to read with peers, with guidance from adults.
- Identifying words when reading aloud, independently, and/or buddy reading.
- Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.
- Use venn diagrams and Y and T charts to compare and contrast characters, events, and different stories.
- Guided reading groups that are differentiated based upon assessed reading levels.



Art — Miss Abbey Brothers

In Kindergarten, our young artists explore ideas visually with different kinds of materials. They are introduced to artists, their work and techniques. The goal of the Kindergarten art curriculum is to help the children realize their uniqueness, while fostering their ability to persevere in approaching art problems that the curriculum presents. It is imperative that students at this age learn that the quality of one's work is more important than quantity.

Kindergarten Artists Will Learn:

- About expressive qualities, artistic vocabulary and the language of art in English and Hebrew, including the elements of art and principles of design.
- To distinguish different kinds of lines, shapes, space (overlapping), and texture.
- To recognize different paint and drawing tools.
- To create: demonstrate use of skills, tools and processes with quality craftsmanship when planning and creating.
- To understand: primary and secondary color mixing. To develop an understanding of what good craftsmanship looks like, and be able to self assess their own progress and work.
- Presenting & Producing: students refine and prepare work for presentation.
- Responding: analyze, interpret, and evaluate works of art; demonstrate knowledge of art vocabulary.
- Connecting: relate artistic work with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Drawing - Colored Pencil, cray-pas, crayons
- Painting – Watercolor/Tempera
- Printmaking
- Mixed Media
- Fibers and Craft Media
- Sculpture

What Can Parents Do?

- Take their children to see visual art in the community.
- Help with transportation on a field trip to a gallery or museum.
- Acknowledge your child's visual insights.



Hebrew — Mrs. Rachel Mory

Hebrew is the language of the Jewish people and is essential to understanding texts, prayers, and literature. We use a variety of activities, songs and materials to engage all the senses, stimulate imagination and foster love for the Hebrew language.

Kindergarten Hebrew Units Include:

- Learning the Alef Bet letters, sounds and vowels.
- Recognizing and writing student's own Hebrew name.
- Reading skills: beginning decoding from right to left, identifying high frequency Hebrew words.
- Listening skills: following simple directions given in Hebrew.
- Speaking skills: developing the ability to communicate in Hebrew using basic linguistic patterns.
- Developing a beginning Hebrew vocabulary (family members, parts of the body, days of the week, Jewish symbols, colors, food and animals).
- Connecting Hebrew to everyday social situations related to the children's experiences in the home, at school, in encounters with friends, and holiday celebrations.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Using Hebrew expressions throughout the day.
- Creating student's own "milon" (dictionary.)
- Multisensory lessons (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic.)
- Exploring, recognizing and writing the student's Hebrew name.
- Games, song and projects that incorporate the Alef Bet, the high frequency words in Hebrew, and Hebrew vocabulary.

What Can Parents Do?

- Use Hebrew vocabulary at home in conversation.
- Play games that your child shows you, in order to enhance learning.
- Listen to Hebrew songs.
- Share your excitement for learning a new language with your child.



Israel — Mrs. Rachel Mory

Israel is a special home for the Jewish people. We learn about the country's attributes and how important Israel is to Judaism.

Kindergarten Israel Units Include:

- Understand geographical, cultural and governmental attributes of Israel.
- Study important cities and landmarks in Israel.
- Connecting with our sister school in Modi'in.
- Learning popular Israeli songs and Israeli dances.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Taking virtual trips to Israel's cities and landmarks.
- Making a connection via mail, email, and skype with students in Israel.
- Participating in parallel learning activities with our sister class in Modi'in.
- Constructing compare/contrast charts about Israel and America.

What Can Parents Do?

- Share with your child your love for the land of Israel.
- Participate in the project "The Same Moon" and help your child write letters to their partner friend in Modi'in.

Math — Ms. Lori Donnelly

Mathematics includes the exploration and written formation of numbers, identifying patterns, and acquiring problem-solving skills. Children will observe, compare, and apply different strategies to find solutions, and discuss their ideas in cooperative and whole group settings. They will use manipulatives to learn integrated Common Core curriculum concepts and exhibit his/her understanding of the concepts being taught.

Kindergarten Math Students Will:

- Recognize, extend and create patterns (calendar)
- Compare sets of objects
- Sort and classify objects
- Describe spatial relationships
- Identify, draw, and use shapes
- Use graphs to communicate information
- Use whole numbers (Identify, count, skip count and write)
- Use length, weight, and capacity
- Understand simple addition and subtraction
- Identify and understand importance and use of coins
- Practice reading and telling time
- Identify half versus whole fractions

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Daily “Morning Meeting,” the use of calendar to practice counting and identifying a pattern through the use of pictures and letters, such as ABAB or ABBABBA, and counting the number of days in school using straws. Also, identifying how many “ones” make a “ten” and learning what numbers are needed to write the number.
- Sort different shapes by identifying attributes, such as color, size and shape. Locating various shapes in the environment and then describing the characteristics that identify that shape. For example: a triangle has 3 sides, 3 angles, and is flat.

What Can Parents Do?

- Ask your child to help you count out objects, measure out ingredients when baking/cooking, and find coins needed to pay for purchases.
- Encourage child to count in both English and Hebrew.
- Play “I Spy” with your child at home, in the car, doctor’s office, etc. Use attributes such as color, shape and size to describe objects for child to locate and then ask your child to challenge you.
- Identify patterns and encourage child to identify similarities and differences between objects.
- Have your child help you “sort” laundry/other objects around the house and verbalize understanding and reasoning for sorting method.



Customs/Values — Mrs. Rachel Mory

In Kindergarten we learn to see our world through a Jewish lens. Mitzvot (commandments) are our uniquely Jewish guideposts to ethical living. We learn Mitzvot found in the Torah and Jewish ways of living throughout the day in class, on field trips, and home projects.

Kindergarten Customs/Values Units Include:

- Being God’s Partner in caring for the world
- Tikkun Olam (Making the world a better place)
- Derech Eretz (Following rules and having good manners)
- Tzedakah (Giving to those in need)
- Kavod (Respect - Honoring parents)
- Bikkur Cholim (Visiting the sick)
- Tzaar Baalei Chayim (Taking care of animals)
- Hachnasat Orchim (Welcoming guests)
- Likboah Mezuzah (affixing a mezuzah)

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Recognizing mitzvot (commandments) found in the Torah and practicing them at school and in the community.
- Collecting tzedakah and working together to decide where to donate.
- Family projects (e.g. making a recycled menorah for Chanukkah).
- Celebrating Shabbat in the classroom and inviting guests.

What Can Parents Do?

- Encourage your child to incorporate Jewish Values into his/her daily life (give tzedakah, make a picture for someone who is not feeling well, invite guests for Shabbat dinner, make Challah with your child).
- Send a note recognizing your child doing Mitzvot to be read and displayed in the class.
- Discuss your values and beliefs with your child. Ask your child what he or she thinks.



Torah — Mrs. Rachel Mory

The Torah is the resource for Jewish life. It defines the character of the Jewish People and is the bond that unites Jews around the world. In Kindergarten, the Chumash (5 books of Moses) is used as the foundation for developing a sense of Jewish identity and Jewish traditions.

Kindergarten Torah Units Include:

- Exploring the Torah Scroll (What is it made of; How is it written; Where is it kept).
- The names of the 5 Books of Moses.
- Studying the weekly Parsha (Torah Portion).
- Learning about biblical characters.
- Understanding mitzvot (commandments) found in the Torah.
- Applying the biblical characters' traits, stories, and lessons from the Torah in the student's daily life.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Learn and practice the Torah stories on many levels, (e.g., Noah's ark), literature (e.g., Benjamin's Goblet), role play (e.g., pretend to be Moses and Aaron asking Pharaoh to let my people go), games (e.g., Jacob's ladder), critical thinking skills (e.g., Why didn't Yosef's brothers recognize him?), and art projects (e.g., make the coat of many colors).

What Can Parents Do?

- Read biblical stories with your child.
- Talk with your child about what was discussed during Torah time that week.
- Help your child find the traits that made the biblical characters successful (or not successful) and motivate your child to adopt success patterns in their own lives.
- When taking your child to synagogue, encourage your child to tell you what he/she is learning about the Torah Scroll.



Science — Ms. Lori Donnelly

Science activities engage children in the exploration of their physical and living world. Children observe, ask questions, make predictions, and describe what they learn.

In becoming scientists, Kindergarten units include:

- Weather and seasons
- 5 Senses
- Living vs. Non-Living
- Life Cycles
- Plants

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Having children observe, discuss and record the current weather conditions during daily morning meeting.
- Using senses to observe objects in the classroom with eyes and through magnifying glasses. Recording his/her findings on a chart using drawings.
- Using five senses to explore various aspects of the environment.
- Use KWL charts and Venn diagrams as organizational tools to guide and expand learning.
- Incubating and hatching eggs to learn about the life cycle of chickens.

What Can Parents Do?

- Encourage daily conversations about the changes taking place in their environment. This encourages your child to use his/her senses to observe and make sense of the seasonal changes and daily weather changes taking place.
- Go on nature walks. Bring a magnifying glass to explore the small, living and non-living objects outside.
- Supply your child with fun and engaging picture books on many topics.



Holidays— Mrs. Rachel Mory

Students will celebrate and explore the significance, traditions and symbols of each holiday throughout the Jewish year.

Kindergarten Holiday Units Include:

- Shabbat
- Rosh Hashanah
- Yom Kippur
- Sukkot
- Simchat Torah
- Hanukkah
- Tu B'Shevat
- Purim
- Passover
- Omer
- Shavuot

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Exploring artifacts and symbols of the Jewish Holidays (e.g. seeing/touching a shofar).
- Holiday projects (e.g. making a sukkah, creating a Haggadah).
- Literacy projects, songs, art and stories to learn holiday practices.
- Celebrating the Holidays in the classroom.
- Field trips (e.g. visiting Community Sukkot).

What Can Parents Do?

- Share with your child information about your family traditions for each holiday.
- Provide your child with opportunities to attend or become involved in events in the Jewish community during the holidays (e.g. meals in the sukkah, dancing with the Torah on Simchat Torah, community menorah lighting event, family seder, etc.).
- Sing along when you hear your child singing! Your child is a great teacher and enjoys teaching you the things he/she learns in school.



Tefillah— Mrs. Rachel Mory

Prayer is a central component of Jewish life. Through prayer the students learn Jewish values and connect with G-d and the Jewish Community. Tefillah gives students an opportunity for personal expression and for asking questions about God. Tefillot also functions as a tool to build self-esteem and self-discipline and to facilitate a positive social environment.

Kindergarten Tefillah Daily Lessons and Units Include (but are not limited to):

- Selected brachot (blessings) over food and relevant to Shabbat (the Sabbath) and Jewish holidays.
- Modeh/ah Ani
- N'tilat Yadaim
- Reshit Chochmah
- Mah Tovv
- Adon Olam
- Selected Birchot Hashachar
- Shema & Veahavta
- Aleinu
- Oseh Shalom
- Birkat Hamazon

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Morning tefillah with the whole school.
- Learning the meaning of prayers in the classroom.
- Reciting berachot (blessings) before and after eating.
- Using a variety of melodies for each prayer, rather than simply recitation.
- Identify key Hebrew words in the prayers

What Can Parents Do?

- Share information about how your family prays. Children love to know more about the people in his/her life.
- Take the time to allow your child to say the prayer for various foods at each meal.
- Attend synagogue services at your Temple, and encourage your child to actively participate in worship. (Children's Services are conducted in many synagogues around town and many are open to the community - See our Weekly Newsletter).



Garden & Sustainability

The garden and sustainability program will provide students with a broad knowledge base that will empower them to take a leading role in caring for Hillel's outdoor learning garden. In addition to the practical aspects of gardening, students will gain a deeper appreciation for where their food comes from, the importance of local and global environmental stewardship, and the relationship between agriculture, ecology, and Jewish ethics.

Kindergarten students will learn:

- Practical gardening aspects and plant care
- The importance and process of composting and soil health
- How soil affects plant growth and crop yield
- How to select plants for planting based on season
- Plant and crop life cycles
- The concept of seed saving
- How growing food for local consumption can benefit the community
- The relationship between the natural environment and plant/crop health
- The necessity of a long-term mindset for growing food
- Alternative growth systems

Classroom activities may include, but are not limited to:

- **Journaling to reflect on weekly activities**
- **Classroom based projects related to gardening, life science, and food systems**
- **Outdoor garden activities like watering, weeding, planting, and harvesting**
- **School wide food waste collection for composting**

What can parents do?

- Encourage your child to think about where the food they eat comes from
- Examine and observe the living things around them.
- Visit farms, gardens, and the Lambertton Conservatory
- Start a home garden



Social Work/Guidance - Mrs. Jackie Smith

Each week Ms. Daphne Futerman will meet with the Kindergarten team to work on Social Skill Development and learning about emotions and feelings.

Kindergarten Students Will:

- Learn about the 7 Habits of Happy Kids, as well as understanding and dealing with a range of emotions and feelings that are a part of every day life.
- Work towards looking at the world in a way that maximizes their innate abilities and strengths; Build cooperative relationships with adults, peers and family, and help children realize their full leadership potential.

Classroom Activities May Include, But Are Not Limited To:

- Listening to books and stories
- Active discussion
- Role playing
- Drawing pictures and images related to the 7 habits.

What Can Parents Do?

- Reinforce the habits that are being taught, by asking your children to teach you what they are learning.
- Read books with your children, especially books linked to the 7 habits.