

CESJDS Middle School (Grades 6–8)

Identity. Community. Action.



Timeless Lessons.
Enduring Values.
Brilliant Futures.

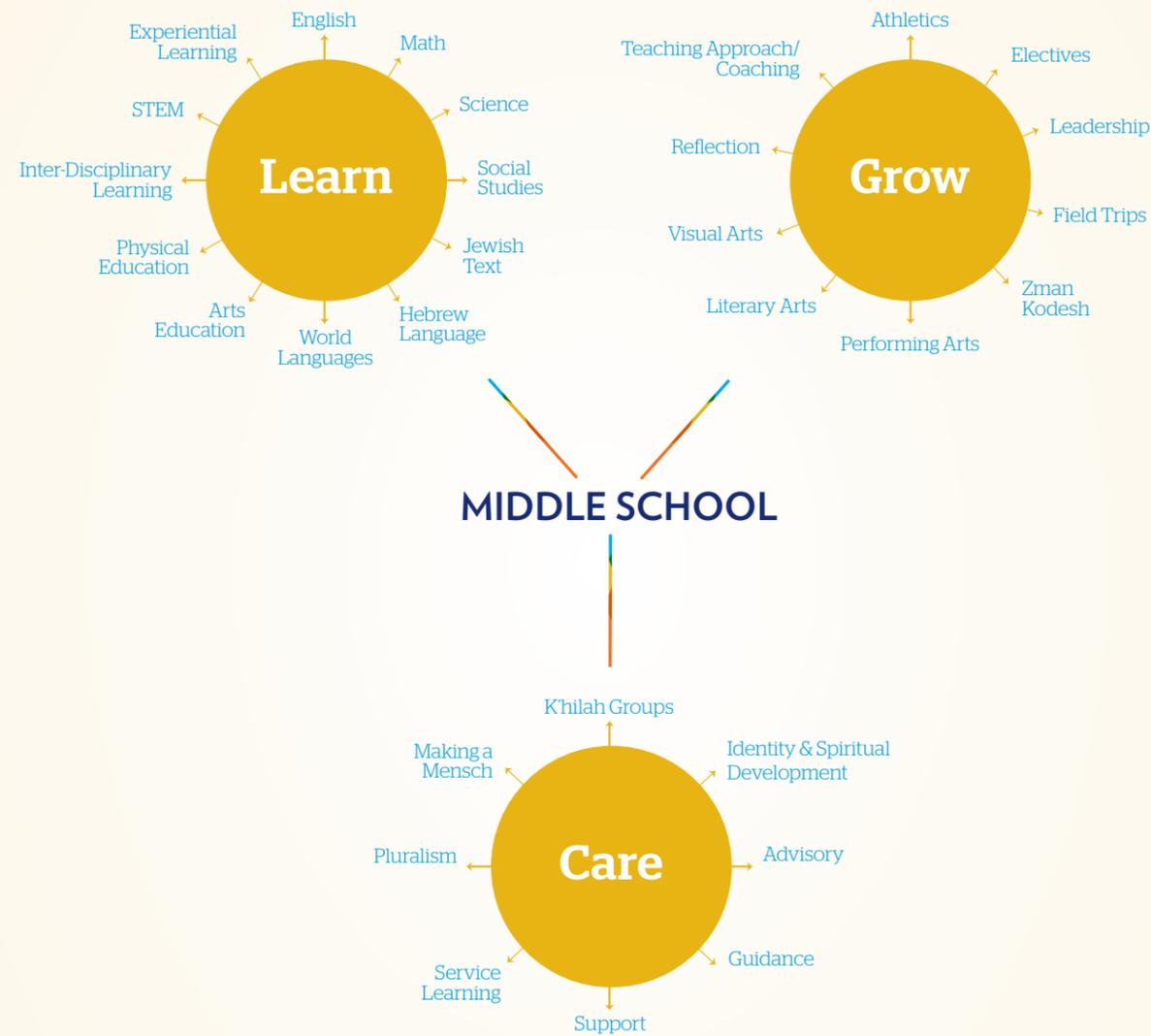
“If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
And when I am only for myself, then what am I?
And if not now, when?”

- HILLEL THE ELDER

אם אין אני לי, מי לי?
וכשאני לעצמי, מה אני?
ואם לא עכשיו, אימתי?



The CESJDS Middle School embraces early adolescents' intellectual and developmental needs as we stretch their minds and nurture their souls at this critical stage in their lives. We have a dynamic educational experience organized around three major themes: **Identity** (Grade 6), **Community** (Grade 7), and **Action** (Grade 8). Each year presents students with a variety of opportunities to **learn, explore, and grow** as they seek greater independence and identify their own interests and strengths. Our purposeful approach challenges students to discover that their increased independence calls for increased responsibility for self, respect for others, and engagement with the world.



FAST FACTS

<p>17 AVERAGE CLASS SIZE</p>	<p>5 AVERAGE GRADE-WIDE FIELD TRIPS PER YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL</p>	<p>1:1 LAPTOP:STUDENT RATIO EVERY STUDENT IS PROVIDED WITH DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP TRAINING</p>	<p>12 TEAM SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES (8 MIDDLE SCHOOL-DEDICATED TEAMS)</p>	<p>41% STUDENTS RECEIVING TUITION ASSISTANCE</p>
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Identity (Grade 6)

— If I am not for myself, who will be for me?

אם אין אני לי, מי לי?

CESJDS is thoughtful in how to help 6th-grade students transition into Middle School. The coursework and programming purposefully focus on skill building, social-emotional development, identity exploration, study skills, community building, and robust academics. Students are challenged, provided exposure to new settings and experiences, and prepared academically for the rest of Middle School. Our talented teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies to engage all learners and develop positive connections with every student.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: In 6th grade, students research, write, and produce a “TEDtalk” about a topic of personal interest. In the vein of the TEDtalks, these research-based assignments are interdisciplinary. Through this project, students learn how to ask big questions about their topics and review available sources looking for answers to their questions. Past topics have included deforestation, teamwork, self-confidence, volunteering, and more.





Community (Grade 7)

And when I am only for myself, then what am I?

וכשאני לעצמי, מה אני?

The theme of community takes center stage in Grade 7 as students ask how and where they fit with their peers, across the school, and within the broader world. Through the Contemporary Challenges Conference, students have the opportunity to create a visual presentation board demonstrating their mastery of research and writing to analyze a challenge facing the world.

CESJDS partners actively with parents to support the student community around their B'nei Mitzvah. Information sessions, grade-level communication, and class-wide *tz'dakah* contributions in lieu of gifts create a shared sense of community and inclusivity as students and families celebrate this significant milestone.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: Through the Am Ehad curriculum, we challenge students to broaden their understanding of Jewish peoplehood and their place within the Jewish community. Students explore various communities within the larger Jewish people and how these communities celebrate and live by the Jewish calendar. During Sukkot, students develop a digital Sukkah graphic featuring diverse faces with biographical profiles reflecting the backgrounds of Jews around the world.



Action (Grade 8)

And if not now, when?

ואם לא עכשיו, אימתי?

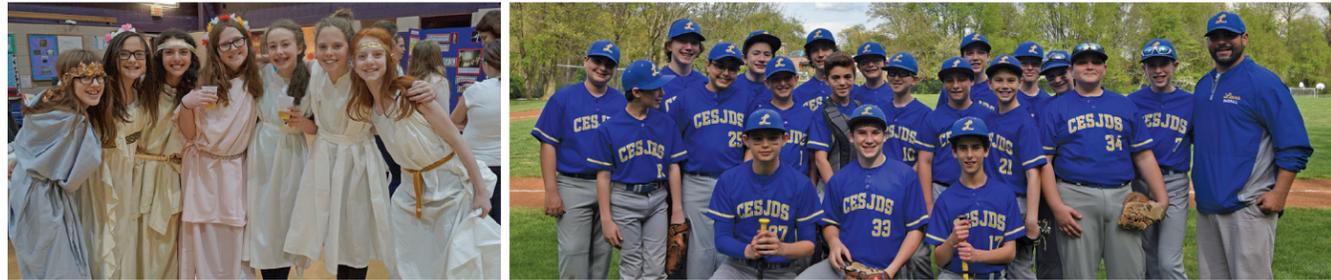
In the last year of Middle School, students put the knowledge and skills they have acquired into action. Through simulations such as Model Congress, they apply debate, negotiation, and presentation skills. At the Weinberg Science Fair, students integrate all aspects of the scientific method by designing, executing, analyzing, and presenting the results of a unique scientific experiment. Students complete their B'nei Mitzvah year working collaboratively on a philanthropy project distributing *tz'dakah* funds to charitable causes they choose.

In 8th Grade, students participate in a class-wide Shabbaton (Shabbat Encampment) off-campus. Students have the opportunity to learn, bond and experience a meaningful Shabbat in a warm and relaxed setting.



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: Students culminate their Middle School experience with an interdisciplinary 8th Grade Capstone Project. Each student works closely with faculty to identify an area of interest, specific skills, and Jewish values that they will showcase for the project. The project includes critical writing, speaking, creative presentation, and problem solving. At the close of the year, students present their work at the 8th Grade end-of-year celebration.





Middle School Highlights

All middle school students have the opportunity to participate in intra- and inter-division co-curricular and extracurricular activities including:

♦ Athletics

There are 8 sports teams (both competitive and practice) solely for Middle School students: boys and girls soccer, boys and girls volleyball, boys and girls basketball, boys baseball, girls softball, track, and cross-country. Our athletic coaches work within the philosophy of our whole program to develop leadership, teamwork, fair play, and derekh erez/respect in every player.

♦ Performing Arts

Middle School students gain confidence in themselves when they perform before a supportive audience, learn to work as a team, and enhance their creativity. There are a wide variety of opportunities for Middle School students in the performing arts — the Middle School musical, seasonal concerts, and many special assemblies and programs.

♦ Zman Kodesh (Sacred Time)

A period of sacred time each day allows the active expression of identity, community, reflection, and learning. Zman Kodesh allows students to develop skills needed in a communal prayer setting, exercise leadership, and be exposed to the values associated with prayer, reflective time, and space.

♦ K'hilah (Community)

Several times a week, students gather with peers in cross-grade groups to get to know each other and feel a part of a sub-community within the division. Discussion topics for this time include social issues, pluralism, appreciation, and diversity; 7th and 8th graders are afforded leadership opportunities, and 6th graders are able to learn and gain wisdom from their older peers.

♦ Calendar-based Programming

Weekly, monthly, and yearly holidays, commemorations, and celebrations allow students to begin to choose actively how they want to participate and what aspects of a holiday they want to understand and own. Our programs allow for exploration, action, creativity, and a deeper, more sophisticated understanding of the significance of events on the Jewish, American, and Israeli calendars. The weekly Kabbalat Shabbat program, for example, gives students the opportunity to prepare a D'var Torah or engage in a musical or other talent performance. Zimriyah, CESJDS's celebration of Yom Ha-atzma-ut/Israel Independence Day, brings together each grade as a team to create a banner, choreograph a dance, and learn an Israeli song to perform in a healthy, spirited competition.

♦ Tikkun Olam: A Commitment to Service

There are many opportunities for students to get involved in social-action initiatives. For example, the Service-Learning Day sends Middle School grades into the community to volunteer at local nonprofit organizations. In addition to volunteering, students learn about the organizations' mission, the populations served, and ways to get involved.

♦ STEM

The Middle School features several STEM opportunities for students. In addition to elective options allowing students to explore coding and robotics, we offer a competitive LEGO Robotics club for interested students.

High School Preview



THE PAST THREE SENIOR CLASSES HAVE ATTENDED **89** DIFFERENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES INCLUDING CARNEGIE MELLON, CORNELL, EMORY UNIVERSITY, OBERLIN COLLEGE, PRINCETON, DICKINSON COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND-COLLEGE PARK, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, SWARTHMORE COLLEGE, WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS, AND YALE.



16 JV AND VARSITY SPORTS ARE AVAILABLE TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



90% OF THE SENIOR CLASS PARTICIPATES IN THE 13-WEEK EASTERN EUROPE AND ISRAEL CAPSTONE TRIP



OVER **2 DOZEN** FIELD TRIP OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF GRADES 9-12

30:1

CESJDS SENIOR TO COLLEGE GUIDANCE COUNSELOR RATIO

The **CESJDS Middle School** engages students in an environment that carefully transitions learners from childhood to adolescence, while preparing them for the opportunities and demands of high school.



41% PARTICIPATE IN TEAM SPORTS

28% INVOLVED IN PERFORMING ARTS



40 STUDENTS TAKE CLASSES IN GENETICS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY



“On my first day at CESJDS, teachers that I had never met before introduced themselves to me. Students from all different grades knew my name and smiled at me in the hallway. I loved that I had no reason to be nervous coming to school in the morning because it felt as though I was just going to see my 85 best friends.”

- SAMANTHA HAAS '17