

**What a  
Solomon Schechter  
Kindergartner  
Should Know  
and  
Be Able To Do!**

Judaic Studies

General Studies

Specials Program

דשננתם לבניד

“And you shall teach  
your children...”



**SOLOMON SCHECHTER  
DAY SCHOOL OF NASSAU COUNTY**  
Barbara Lane, Jericho, New York 11753 • (516) 935-1441  
Dr. Cindy Dolgin, Principal  
Mrs. Sandi Swerdloff, Assistant Principal

## A Message to the Reader

This brochure lists skills and abilities in Judaic Studies, General Studies, and the Specials program that students should acquire by the end of Kindergarten to earn promotion to the First Grade. It answers questions that everyone in the school community needs to ask, such as:

- What are students expected to know and be able to do?
- How are their achievements measured?

This document is the product of extensive work by our faculty and administration, taking into account guidelines published by the New York State Education Department, the Board of Education of the City of New York, and the unique needs of our school community. Besides detailing the curricular goals and objectives of this particular grade, this document is designed to be part of the overall K-12 curriculum of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County. Similar brochures can be obtained for other grades.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please be sure to contact either Mr. Dickstein or Mrs. Hirsch at 516-935-1441. We value your feedback and input.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County is to provide a caring and nurturing environment within which Jewish students grow educationally, culturally, socially, and spiritually, and to promote the observance of mitzvot and traditions that are the foundations of the Jewish religion.

## Statement of Purpose

The Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County is a co-educational private Jewish day school affiliated with the Conservative Movement. Through the efforts of a dedicated and qualified staff, the school offers rich and innovative curricula for students from Kindergarten to 12th Grade in both general and Judaic studies, and strives to help students and their families lead meaningful lives, instilled with the values of American democracy, pluralism, and the love of Israel.

## Judaic Studies

### Conservative Judaism

We are a school proudly aligned with the Conservative Movement. We adopt the guiding principles of our Movement for our school's curriculum and program. As such, we provide learning and experiences that encourage:

- Development of a personal relationship with God
- The centrality of Mitzvah and Torah Study
- Valuing and cherishing Jewish plurality and diversity, both within our school and the larger world around us
- Identity with Jews in Israel and the world

### Mitzvah

As a Conservative Day School, we teach, experience, and celebrate mitzvah. All of the mitzvot are both taught and observed throughout our school program. Much of the Mitzvah curriculum is implicit in all phases of our school program. This applies both to mitzvot we traditionally call "ritual" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'Makom*) and those we sometimes refer to as "ethical" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'Chavero*). For example, all children give tzedakah during their weekly Kabbalat Torah celebrations. So too, Kashrut is required for all food brought to the school. At the same time, we teach respect for teachers through an emphasis on proper behavior. Children observe the mitzvah of *kavod ha Brit* through recognition of the differences among our students and teachers.

While we recognize the wide range of observances among our families, the school remains committed to the observance of mitzvot for our children and families.

As the first year of our school program, Kindergarten children begin their exposure to a wide range of daily, lived mitzvot in school. These mitzvot are taught and observed as the way Jews live.

*Among the mitzvot lived in Kindergarten are:*

- Tzedakah
- Shabbat – Candles, Kiddush, Challah, Tefillah
- Food – Kashrut, Brachot
- Tefilah

### Tefilah

Tefilah is seen as the central way we express our thoughts, needs, and wishes as Jewish people. Tefilah teaches us the central categories of Jewish values and helps us communicate with God. Because the school sees Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people, tefilah is always done in Hebrew. Boys and

girls participate equally in all aspects of the school's curriculum and Jewish experiences.

We teach tefilah both to help children learn the *matbayah tefilah* (the way the tefilot are recited in the synagogue services) and the ideas and aspirations the tefilah encompasses. Our Staff Development program is centering on tefilah.

Tefilah is a sequential curriculum. Each year builds on the tefilot learned in the previous school years. By the end of their learning in the Elementary School, the children are capable of leading almost all of the daily and Shabbat tefilot.

Because we do not formally teach reading or writing of Hebrew in Kindergarten, tefilah is done orally as a class experience. The children master each of the tefilot through choral singing. In Kindergarten the children learn the central tefilah vocabulary, such as *tefilah, HaShem, siddur, sbliach tzibiur, talit, Torah, Aron Kodesh*.

Tefilah is a daily experience. On Friday, the children anticipate the beginning of Shabbat through the Kabbalat Shabbat. An overt connection is made between our school celebration and home observances and celebrations. For example, the children will invite guests to their room and a Shabbat Eema and Shabbat Abba lead the class celebrations. The children learn the central Friday night tefilot. They also learn about Havdalah.

*By the end of Kindergarten, the expectation is that our students will be familiar with the following tefilot:*

*Bracha for Wearing a Talit; Modeh Ani; Mah Tov; Shema; Amidah – Avot Bracha; Oseh Shalom; Torah Tzeva Lano Moshe; Adon Olam.*

## **Shabbat and Holidays**

Through the weekly and monthly life of the school, the children see Shabbat and the Jewish holidays as special moments for Jewish celebration. Connections are made between the mitzvot of the Torah, our Jewish life in school, and our lives as Jews at home and in the wider world.

Since the holidays are annual celebrations, the classes review and include the learning from previous years.

Each week the children learn to celebrate Shabbat with a Kabbalat Shabbat program. The children learn to light the Shabbat candles, say the brachot over the wine and chalah, and learn many Shabbat songs. They also learn the mitzvah of *bachnasat orchim*, inviting guests to our homes. The emphasis is on the beauty of the home Shabbat rituals.

## **Torah Study**

The goal of Torah study is to fulfill the mitzvah of *Talmud Torah*. We study the Torah as the central unifying story of our people's understanding of the world and our relationship with God. By studying the Torah, we come to identify with our Jewish history and fulfill God's covenant with the Jewish people. Finally, we begin to appreciate God's commands and wishes for us as responsible and committed Jewish people.

The children in Kindergarten learn about the major story cycles of the Torah. Following the holiday of Simchat Torah, when we begin anew the reading of the Torah, the Kindergarten children learn about God's creation of the world, the story of Noach and the Flood, the major life events of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov, Yosef, and the story of the Egyptian slavery and Exodus.

The learning is done through a wide variety of class lessons, ranging from crafts to dramatics, from storytelling to song. The design of the lessons is to engage each child in the wonder of the Torah stories and the holiness of Torah learning. While the majority of the lessons are conducted in English, the Hebrew names for people and places are exclusively used.

By the end of the year, the children will be familiar with the major stories of the Torah. They will also have acquired a love for the Study of Torah.

## **Hebrew Language**

The school assumes that the children coming to our school do not bring any Hebrew background. The goal of the Kindergarten year is to immerse the children in spoken Hebrew. By the end of the school year, the teacher is speaking approximately 75% of the time in Hebrew. The children feel comfortable hearing the teacher speak in Hebrew and responding in simple dialogues. While there is an exposure to written Hebrew, it is not a formal part of the program.

## **Medinat Yisrael**

All children in the school learn about the State of Israel. Focusing primarily on modern-day Israel, the children daily express our love of Medinat Yisrael by singing *Hatikvah* at the start of the school day. The children learn about the Flag of Israel.

Through our annual celebration of Yom haAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day), the children learn about

different aspects of modern day life in Israel, ranging from Jerusalem to the Army, from the map of Israel to the joy of Israel's existence. So too, the children periodically learn about the political conflicts confronting present-day Israel. Finally, the children regularly engage in projects fostering their connection to the State of Israel and our responsibility to Israeli Jews. These projects range from letter writing to tzedakah projects.

## Language Arts

### Reading—Reading Habits

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Choose reading as a way to enjoy free time at school and home.
- Begin choosing books to read, re-read, and have read to them.
- Hear one or two books a day read to them in school and two more outside of school.
- Hold books right side up and turn pages in the right direction.
- Distinguish between print and pictures in literature and be able to follow along with the text.
- Locate parts of a book such as beginning and end.
- Read a range of materials, including picture books, songs, and informational texts such as ABC books.
- Discuss books daily with the teacher, a classmate, or in a group.
- Learn new words daily.

### Reading—Getting the Meaning

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Show that they understand books read to them by retelling a story in their own words.
- Re-read favorite books that have been read to them, imitating the reading behaviors of the teacher.
- Recognize and interpret familiar signs and symbols from the environment, such as stop signs.
- Join with the class in creating charts and diagrams to record important details about characters and events in stories.

### Reading—Print/Sound Code

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Understand the idea that letters stand for sounds that make up words.
- Recognize and say the sounds of most letters of the alphabet.
- Begin to recognize the way different sounds go together to make a word.
- Hear and identify rhyming words.
- Recognize their own first name in writing.
- Read some common words on their own.
- Begin to read common labels in the classroom and at home.

### Writing—Habits

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Enjoy writing daily on topics that they choose themselves.
- Use letters, drawings, scribbles, and gestures to tell a story.
- Use words and phrases from classroom charts and labels to add to writing.
- Begin to listen to others' writing and re-read their own.
- Begin to keep a collection of their writing.
- Have opportunities to share finished work with an audience.

### Writing—Purposes

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Write in order to:
  - Share an experience or event.
  - Communicate information to others.
  - Tell a made-up story.
  - Tell what they think about a book.
  - Tell how to do something.
- Retell and act out stories as an activity before writing.
- Tell about events in the order that they happened.
- Begin to use "storybook" language, such as "...and they lived happily after."

### Writing—Language Use and Conventions

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Write freely, using drawings, signs, symbols, and invented spelling to express themselves or tell a story.
- Create writing that sounds like talk, choosing words carefully to express what they want to say.
- Begin to use one or two letters, especially initial consonant sounds, to represent whole words.
- Be able to re-read their writing immediately after they have written it.
- Leave spaces between words.
- Write left to right and top to bottom.
- Begin to use classroom resources such as alphabet charts and word list to help with writing.

## Listening and Speaking

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Listen and speak daily in whole class and small group discussions, and in one-to-one conversations with the teacher, in order to:
  - Show understanding of stories read to them.
  - Learn and practice using new vocabulary.
  - Share ideas and facts with classmates and teachers.
  - Ask questions to make things clearer.
  - Hear and follow directions.
  - Listen respectfully and learn to take turns speaking.

# Mathematics

## Arithmetic and Number Concepts

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Count objects up to 10.
- Identify number names orally through 15.
- Practice the skills of counting on from a particular number (for example, starting from the number 7).
- Use a number line to count forward and backward.
- Use ordinal number names from first to tenth.
- Share sets of objects with others.
- Compare two groups and determine which is more, less, or the same, and use appropriate vocabulary (for example, more/bigger, less/smaller, equal/same).
- Explore fraction concepts using the words whole and half.
- Practice estimating and counting the actual number to check estimates.
- Use real money to learn the names of coins and bills.

## Geometry and Measurement Concepts

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Create geometric pictures and designs.
- Introduce names of shapes.
- Explore non-standard units of measure (e.g., use strings to measure circumference).
- Practice estimating (guessing) sizes.
- Use comparisons such as bigger than, lighter than, less than, equal to, etc.
- Compare size and capacity.

## Function and Algebra Concepts

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Observe and describe patterns.
- Follow directions to copy a pattern.
- Attempt to extend patterns.
- Look for patterns in graphs.
- Look at quilt patterns for different geometric shapes.

## Statistics and Probability Concepts

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Sort and classify objects by one characteristic (color, shape, size).
- Gather data (information) relating to experiences by counting and using pictures.
- Talk about graphs using words like most, least, the same, etc.
- Use spinners for making decisions while playing games.
- Discuss the certainty and uncertainty of events.

## Mathematical Process

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Talk about mathematics in their everyday life.
- Play games that involve sorting and classifying with blocks, buttons, seashells, cookies, and other sorting toys.
- Put objects in order or sequence.
- Solve problems in ways that make sense.
- Draw pictures to show mathematical situations.

# Science

## Physical Sciences

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Observe, investigate, describe, and sort objects based on how they look, feel, taste, smell, or sound.

- Observe and describe the position, direction, and motion of objects such as: top of, next to, under, over, slide, and roll.

## **Life Sciences**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Begin to distinguish between living and non-living things.
- Begin to observe and explain differences between specific animals and plants.
- Begin to explain how certain animal and plant parts enable animals and plants to survive in their different environments.

## **Earth and Space Sciences**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Examine and describe Earth materials such as water, rocks, and soil.
- Begin to observe objects in the day and night skies (Sun, Moon, and Stars).
- Begin to observe daily and seasonal changes in the weather.

## **Scientific Thinking**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Begin to work individually and in groups to collect and share information and ideas.
- Begin to ask questions based on observations of objects and events.

## **Scientific Tools and Technology**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Use magnifiers and measuring devices (measuring cups and pan scale).
- Uses non-standard units of measurement for length, width, weight, and volume; such as cubes, paper clips, and counters.

# **Social Studies**

## **Self and Others**

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. In addition, children's relationships with others in the classroom and the school become sources of learning. Social interaction skills are integral to the Kindergarten program. Emphasis is placed on using content that is relevant and personally meaningful. A wide range of interdisciplinary activities can help children grow and develop and gain knowledge and skills. Children also begin to learn about their role as citizens by accepting rights and responsibilities in the classroom and by learning about rules and laws.

## **History**

*By the end of the school year, students should understand that:*

- Their physical self includes gender, ethnicity, and languages.
- Each person has needs, wants, talents, and abilities.
- Each person has likes and dislikes.
- Each person is unique and important.
- People are alike and different in many ways.
- All people need others.
- People change over time (aging, for example).
- People use folktales, legends, music, and oral histories to teach values, ideas, and traditions.
- Their family and other families are alike and different.
- What a school is.

## **Geography**

*By the end of the school year, students should understand that:*

- Their neighborhood can be located on a map.
- Different people live in their neighborhood.
- Land and water masses can be located on maps and a globe.
- The United States can be located on a map and a globe.

## **Economics**

*By the end of the school year, students should understand that:*

- Families have needs and wants.
- People help one another to meet needs and wants (e.g., recycling and conservation projects).
- People make economic decisions and choices.

## **Political**

*By the end of the school year, students should understand that:*

- Citizenship includes an awareness of the symbols of our nation.
- Citizenship includes an understanding of the holidays and celebrations of our nation.
- Citizenship includes knowledge about and a respect for the flag of the United States of America.
- All children and adults have responsibilities at home, in school, in the classroom, and in the community.
- People have responsibilities as members of different groups at different times in their lives.
- Rules affect children and adults.
- People make and change rules for many reasons.
- Families develop rules to govern and protect family members.
- People in school groups develop rules to govern and protect themselves.

## **Specials**

In addition to classroom learning, all children are offered an enriching "Specials" program. Children have Music, Library, Computer, and Art, for 40 minutes each week. The children have Physical Education twice a week. Each of the special areas is taught by a full-time teacher who specializes in the given area.

### **MUSIC**

The Music program combines singing, clapping, and body movement with the playing of both pitched and unpitched instruments to teach beat competence, vocal development, music notation, form, rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, dynamics, and conducting. In addition, separate educational units are presented in the areas of the science of sound, musical instruments and their respective families, unconventional musical instruments, recorder, and famous composers. The vocal repertoire, approximately 80% of which is Judaic, is often used as a tool in teaching the elements of music.

In addition to the weekly music period, the school sponsors a Fourth and Fifth Grade Choir. The Choir performs during special school functions and for a variety of events in our community. Students in Third through Fifth Grades may also participate in the after-school instrumental music program.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The primary goal in Physical Education is to teach students individual and team games that stress the importance of physical activity and fitness. Instructional emphasis in Grades K-3 is based on motor skill theme development, movement concepts, and improvement in muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, and agility. In Grades 4-5, emphasis is on refinement of motor skill themes, and development of a high level of physical fitness. Student will improve skills, knowledge, and attitudes to help them lead active, healthy, and productive lives as adults.

The Physical Education program is based on Project Adventure, which encourages children to engage in non-competitive games and group problem-solving initiatives. The program seeks to help individuals reach their goals, to improve self-esteem, to develop strategies that enhance decision-making, and to respect differences within a group.

In addition to the two weekly Physical Education classes, there is a very active after-school sports program. We belong to a private school league, composed of different private schools in our area. There are separate boys' and girls' teams, with three sports seasons during year.

### **LIBRARY**

Loving to read is one of the most important goals of the Library program. The children are exposed to a wide range of quality children's literature. Children in the younger grades learn about different kinds of books and authors. Children in the middle and upper grades also learn the different parts of a library and are introduced to elements of library research. Students learn and use basic library skills through the use of games.

Various types of books are shared with the children throughout the year, especially at Jewish holidays. Responsibility in taking care of the book at home and returning the book on time is stressed. Every day starts with a poem read to the whole school. In the fall, the Read-a-thon is used as a reading incentive. At Purim time, we "Search for Haman" with a school-wide geography game. Together with the Parents Association, we offer birthday books to the children. The library has approximately 8,000 volumes. We also have a range of encyclopedias and other research materials.

### **COMPUTER**

The Computer program is fully integrated with the classroom curriculum.

Kindergarten classes work on early learning programs, including early literacy and math. Children also work on "All About Me" projects that integrate sounds and digital photos. To coordinate with the First

Grade curriculum, the children are introduced to their first writing program, entitled *Paint, Write, and Play*. First Graders are introduced to a range of phonic awareness, reading, and math programs.

Second Graders begin to use desktop publishing programs, using *The Writing Center* and *Storybook Weaver*. They learn basic editing skills and graphics programs. Second Graders also use *Inspiration*, a program that helps organize ideas. Third Graders are given their own disks to learn data management. They also use the computer as a research tool for their Solar system and Rainforest units. They also make a multimedia presentation using *Kid Pix*.

Fourth and Fifth Graders use the Internet to supplement their class learning and research projects. The Fourth graders use *ClarisWorks* to learn about databases. They also use *Inspiration* to brainstorm ideas and thoughts as they write their Cinderella stories. Students in Fifth Grade learn the fundamentals of spreadsheets. They also use the Internet to obtain information for the State reports.

## **ART**

Each week, every child in SSDS comes to the Art Room for approximately 40 minutes. The children have assigned seats, participate in a Great Behavior program, create artwork in a variety of media on a variety of themes, assist in reading directions, and help give out and clean up supplies. When they finish their projects, Mrs. Fields encourages them to create free drawings, read about an artist, fold an Origami project, or learn and practice drawing using assorted art books. The children read a color poem and learn about a new artist each month and receive notes and phone calls from Mrs. Fields to compliment their great work. Class often ends with a 2 or 3 minute game such as Hang the Colors, Finish the Picture, Observation (what is different), and verbal vocabulary games.



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