



2nd Grade Judaic Studies Purpose Statement Jeffrey Stombaugh, 2nd Grade Teacher

In Alim we work around the concept that at this age children don't grow up, but out and into themselves. The Judaic curriculum is designed to aid in that process: to give students the tools they require to develop their own opinion of the world and to articulate it through a Jewish lens; to harness independent work skills and a work ethic that will help to carry them throughout their education. In Second Grade Judaics our goal is to build the students' relationship with Torah, prayer, and Jewish identity through *mitzvot*. We develop critical thinking skills through our Torah learning, applying its lessons and *mitzvot* to our everyday life experiences. Second Graders also become familiar with the structure of the Jewish prayer service and the significance of each prayer, adding layers to their Jewish souls to develop a sturdy foundation for their Jewish identity. Throughout all of our learning it is also essential that the work be challenging and fun, to generate excitement and joy for being Jewish.

Modern Hebrew emphasizes comprehension of oral and written Hebrew. Students build and reinforce what they covered last year including classroom vocabulary, food, colors, and relevant holiday words. Essential texts will be: *Shalom Ivrit* – Welcome to Modern Hebrew, and *Shiri, Ha-Lama* (Shiri, the Lama). In addition to reading, speaking, and comprehension, the students will also begin learning Hebrew cursive.

Torah Study is an integral part of second grade. It is a *mitzvah*, a holy act, and a prominent part of the weekly curriculum. Students study the *parshat ha'shavuah* (the weekly Torah portion), and engage in understanding the "plot" of the *sidrah*; critical Hebrew vocabulary and reading fluency; one primary moral or ethical focus; recognizing the Torah portion's message in daily life and practice; and the five "W's" (who, what, where, when, why) as key questions for thinking critically about and analyzing Torah. A central goal of Torah Study is to build a relationship to the Torah that will be with the students for the rest of their lives.

Mitzvot are an integral part of the SJCS environment. *Mitzvot bein adam l'havero* (Mitzvot between people) and Jewish values are incorporated into the daily classroom. We study the *mitzvot* relevant to the holidays as well as the *mitzvot* between people and G-d. As part of a school-wide effort to deepen our connection to *g'milut hasadim* (acts of kindness), Alim students will participate in the school's monthly *tz'dakah* projects.

For T'fillah, Alim students work on mastering specific prayers and blessings. We focus on the structures and formulas of particular prayers and services around the concept of the Energy Curve, a concept that illustrates the flow of every service. We study holiday-specific prayers as they arise, Shabbat prayers, *Shaharit*, and the Torah service.

Each holiday is studied as it comes up throughout the year. We have a variety of activities and projects to lead to our understanding of each holiday including: acting, art, and storytelling. Many of these holidays are also celebrated at SJCS by combining grades in community celebrations.