

# CESJDS Kindergarten

/// CESJDS has turned out to be the greatest gift we could ever give our kids. And to us, it is worth everything. I could not imagine our kids anywhere else.

- Zach Messler, father to Shia (Class of 2027) and Ella (Class of 2021) ///

Kindergarten is an exciting time in your child's life as they embark on the next step of personal and academic growth. The CESJDS Kindergarten program establishes a balance between academics and social-emotional skill development to help achieve this growth. Our students develop a love of learning in a joyful and engaging environment.

Critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and dual-language communication skills are CESJDS's core objectives for each student. Students are inspired to make connections across the curriculum in fun and engaging ways through our unique approach of emphasizing inquiry, logical reasoning, and interpersonal relationships.

Our Kindergarten teachers meet children where they are, and provide an individualized experience to maximize each child's abilities. With two full-time teachers and no more than 18 students in each classroom, CESJDS Kindergarten is a warm and safe space to learn and grow.

Through teaching empathy, tapping into curiosity, and practicing respect for every person, young students find connections between themselves and each other, and lay the foundation to become citizens of the world.

/// **We felt embraced by the entire school community when we came in as a new family. Walking the halls you can really sense the spirit and warmth that surrounds you.**

– Gabrielle Annes, mother to Caroline (Class of 2027) and A.J. (Class of 2029) Salz



# Values-Based Education

In Kindergarten, and throughout the School, social-emotional teaching and learning is infused with Jewish values/*Middot*. Combined with the Responsive Classroom approach, these techniques are designed to build a nurturing classroom community. Jewish values are an ongoing, integrated element of the CESJDS curriculum. They are central to our identity and purpose as an educational institution.

*Middot* include values like gratitude, respect, and community. Students learn about one value each month, discuss it during morning meeting, and celebrate any students who acted in a way that demonstrates understanding of the value.

Through daily practice, students learn to care for one another, act as upstanders, respond to issues through a moral lens, and grow to be people of integrity.

/// **A successful school is built of many parts. At the core, are caring families. It is the families of CESJDS whose tireless dedication and commitment to the School form the backbone of this incredible place where our children learn the Jewish values that we all hold so dearly.**

– Stuart Bassin, father to Addie (Class of 2021),  
Jonah (Class of 2023), Brielle (Class of 2027)



# Highlights

Supporting all facets of a child's growth is at the forefront of CESJDS's Kindergarten.

**LITERACY:** Developing a love and confidence in reading and writing is an important part of a kindergartner's work at school. Our classrooms are language-rich environments brimming with stories. At CESJDS, we spend time everyday engaging in reading and writing activities individually, and in small and large groups. We understand that becoming proficient readers and writers takes time and that each child develops at their own pace. We, therefore, have a variety of activities to engage all learners in the reading and writing processes. Our curriculum is guided by Fountas and Pinnell resources.

**HEBREW:** Teachers design thematic units for daily Hebrew language lessons using the Proficiency Approach for second language acquisition. Using manipulatives, props, and authentic Israeli literature materials, students develop strong comprehension and basic conversational skills, thus building the foundation for Hebrew language experience and learning as they advance through the grade levels. Early language acquisition in Hebrew not only enhances overall cognitive development, but opens doors to cross cultural understanding, and global connectivity.

**MATHEMATICS:** Our youngest students experience an entirely problem-based math program, where rich, authentic contexts provide a meaningful backdrop for students to begin to mathematize their world. Through stories, puzzles, and games, students begin to use mathematical models as thinking tools, develop problem solving strategies, and read and write mathematical arguments. The program fosters reasoning, critical thinking, and communication skills, and ensures the development of a positive growth mindset.

“There is no shortage of that can provide an excellent education. But there is only one that can provide excellence with real education, history, tradition, and values. We are uniquely situated to help our children make sense of their world.”

– Jennifer and Ariel Lavie



### INTEGRATION SPOTLIGHT:

Our faculty infuses the arts into subject areas including science, literary arts, prayer, identity, and history. Art and design education value the transformative impact that art can have on learning. Faculty members build classrooms using modalities like collaboration and discussion-critique, and craft assignments to foster self-motivation, focus, leadership, preparedness, craftsmanship, and risk taking.



**STEM:** The STEM components of the Kindergarten program seek to nurture curiosity and build the identity of being a problem solver. Through a specialized science class taught by an early childhood science teacher, combined with integrated in-class components of Tinker Boxes and center activities designed by our resident STEM expert, students engage with challenges in innovative, developmentally appropriate, and creative ways using building, modeling, experimentation, engineering, design, and evidence-based decision making.

of schools in our area  
excellent education.  
that can pair academic  
exposure to Jewish  
values. CESJDS is  
help our children  
world.

inbuk, parents to Jacob (Class of 2029)



**JUDAIC STUDIES:** Going to a Jewish day school includes much more than learning about Jewish identity; it means experiencing Jewish life together. Students connect to community in the School and around the world through our shared calendar, holiday celebrations, lifecycle events, and traditions. *T'filah/Prayer*, *Parashat Hashavu-a/Weekly Torah Portion*, *Shabbat & Haggim/Jewish Festivals*, and *Middot/Jewish Values* are the building blocks of the Judaic Studies curriculum. Through experiential learning, students develop strong ties to their Jewish identities and age-appropriate familiarity with Jewish celebrations and the narrative of the Torah. Students will often be heard singing and dancing as they acquire their *T'filah* literacy, develop a love for Israel, and engage in social-emotional learning through the lens of Jewish values.



# Curricular Integration

The CESJDS curriculum is innovative, creative, and flexible so expert CESJDS faculty members can challenge each learner appropriately. Students learn best when skills and ideas are applied across multiple disciplines. For this reason, projects throughout the Lower School are interdisciplinary.

Grade	Project Examples	Disciplines
Kindergarten	Storybook STEM Challenges	Math, Literacy, Engineering, and Design
1st Grade	Patterns in Nature	Science, Math, and Writing, and a trip to the Brookside Gardens
2nd Grade	World Museum	Social Studies, Reading, Arts, and Music
3rd Grade	Cardboard Sukkah Challenge	Engineering and Judaic Studies
4th Grade	Model Seaplanes with Navy engineers	Science, Engineering, Math, and Social Studies
5th Grade	Wax Museum	Literacy, History, and Theater

Our students are growing up in a world that does not compartmentalize subject matters and skills; rather, they are preparing for future studies and careers that will force them to examine how subjects interact with one another, and to use information and apply skills from different disciplines to complete tasks.

– Rabbi Matthew Bellas, Lower School Principal



# A Day in the Life

The CESJDS school day starts at 8:15 am and concludes at 3:30 pm. Each day is balanced with large group, small group, and individual learning; indoor and outdoor time; active and reflective time; and student-directed and teacher-directed lessons.

- 8:00-8:15 am** . . . Arrival - Greeting and Teacher-Selected Activities
- 8:15-8:45 am** . . . Morning Meeting - Responsive Classroom routines and practices
- 8:45-9:45 am** . . . Reading - Shared, guided, and independent literacy opportunities
- 9:45-10:15 am** . . . Specials - Art, Science/STEM, Music, PE, Library
- 10:15-11:00 am** . . . Snack and Recess
- 11:00-11:30 am** . . . Word Work/Handwriting Without Tears/Math Minute
- 11:30-12:15 pm** . . . Hebrew
- 12:15-1:00 pm** . . . Lunch and Recess
- 1:00-1:15 pm** . . . . . Read Aloud
- 1:15-2:00 pm** . . . . . Math/Seasonal Judaic Studies
- 2:00-3:00 pm** . . . . . Literacy and Judaic Studies Groups
- 3:00-3:15 pm** . . . . . Centers
- 3:30 pm** . . . . . . . . . . Dismissal

The CESJDS schedule is a 6-day rotation. Kindergarten students participate in Music, Science/STEM and PE twice a rotation, and Art and Library once a rotation with faculty who are experts in their respective fields.

## AFTER SCHOOL

CESJDS partners with the Bender JCC to provide after-school programming until 6:00 pm. Walkover service is provided by the JCC at the conclusion of the school day, and students continuing home from the Lower School are escorted by a 5th grade patrol to carpool or the bus.



**When Zachary joined Kindergarten at CESJDS, he went from an observer to an active and engaged participant under the guidance of his incredible teachers. The Kindergarten has its own mini community and the kids work together, encourage each other, and exude so much joy for learning and Judaism every time you walk into the classroom.**

- Devorah Berman, mother to Zachary (Class of 2029), Caleb (Class of 2027), and Jonah (Class of 2025)

CESJDS saw what was within me before I did and did everything in their power to help me fully realize my potential as I grew up. It provided me with a space where I can always feel comfortable being myself, a space that has been crucial to the ways I've grown and changed. There are not enough words to describe how thankful I am to CESJDS for what it has done for me.

– Joey Shoyer (Class of 2018)



## About CESJDS

CESJDS is the largest JK-12 community Jewish day school in North America. Our mission is to engage students in an outstanding and inspiring general and Judaic education.

In grades JK-5, we foster an environment where children feel safe, loved and challenged. Our faculty works hard to instill feelings of joy and self-confidence in each child.

In Middle School (grades 6-8) and High School (grades 9-12), rigorous study in the classroom is infused with creativity and relevance, while activities outside the classroom are characterized by hands-on engagement.

Students pursue their passions through dozens of extra-curricular options, including visual and performing arts, athletics, and student leadership.

Our program culminates with the journey of a lifetime, the 13-week Senior Trip to Eastern Europe and Israel. Graduates then depart for college equipped with memorable experiences and abundant knowledge to help them succeed in college and beyond.

# Schedule a Tour!

Contact **301.692.4870**  
or [admission@cesjds.org](mailto:admission@cesjds.org).

[www.cesjds.org](http://www.cesjds.org)

