



## From Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, Head of School



What do we mean at CESJDS when we speak of our core value of *Ahavat Yisra-el*/Love of Israel? This edition of *The Lions' Roar* is dedicated to exploring how *Ahavat Yisra-el* is manifested in our school's curriculum and programs.

According to the *Sefer Ha-Hinukh*, the Book of Commandments, *Ahavat Yisra-el* is rooted in the Torah's exhortation that we should love our neighbor as we love ourselves. There, the Rabbinic Sage Rabbi Akiva proclaimed this value to be "a major principle of the Torah." Traditionally, it meant protecting another's property, preventing one from being harmed, speaking only well of another person, and respecting them.

At CESJDS, we define *Ahavat Yisra-el* as "[a]n inextricable bond with the Jewish people – past, present, and future. A strong personal and ongoing relationship with Israel, its history, people, and culture. An appreciation for and mastery of Hebrew as the language and voice of the Jewish people."

The notion here is that today *Ahavat Yisra-el* has three different dimensions for our school and how we teach it to our students. First, there is a special connection we share with Jews around the world because of our shared history and common destiny – we are responsible to and for each other.

Second, since the establishment of the modern State of Israel, we believe that a significant aspect of Jewish identity is about developing a personal relationship with Israel, its history, people, and culture. Israel in its varied aspects figures centrally in the experience of being a Jew in the twenty-first century.

Last, we have elevated the study of Hebrew as a value, because it is the essential connective thread to Jewish civilization, Jewish peoplehood, Israel and its people, and to most Jewish literature. Hebrew provides a sense of belonging and familial connection, and offers access to the historical references and meanings conveyed in classical Jewish ideas, texts, constructs, and memories.

In the pages ahead you will have a glimpse into how CESJDS teaches, engages in, conveys, and embraces *Ahavat Yisra-el*. As I have the privilege of doing every day, I hope you too will gain an appreciation of how we live our School's value of Love of Israel.

# Kol Hakavod כל הכבוד (Accomplishments)

## SCHOOL:

- The **Varsity Boys Cross Country team** won the Maryland Small School State Championship for the second time in five years.
- The **Varsity Girls Swim team** won the first ever PVAC championship meet.
- The **Varsity Boys Swim team** placed second in the first ever PVAC championship meet.
- The **Varsity Girls Basketball team** finished first in the conference and played in the PVAC championship game.
- The **Varsity Boys Basketball team** played in the PVAC championship game.
- The **Middle School Girls Basketball team** finished first in the conference and won the PVAC championship game.
- **Shir Madness** performed at Har Shalom and Adas Israel.
- The **Lower School Israeli Dance Program, Horah Arayot** performed in the annual Israeli Dance Festival DC.
- **Ruben D. Silverman Mock Trial team** competed in the MD Annual High School Mock Trial playoffs.
- **The Melting Pot**, CESJDS's World Languages Magazine, earned First Place in ASPA's 2021 Magazine Awards.
- **The Lion's Tale & JDS Dimensions yearbook** won Best of Show awards at the National High School Journalism Convention, received the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Crown Award for the first time ever.
- The **JDS Dimensions yearbook** received honorable mention for Design of the Year in the informational graphics category, for a full page infographic called Quarantine Questionnaire.
- **CESJDS** won a First Amendment Press Freedom Award from the Journalism Education Association, National Scholastic Press Association and Quill and Scroll International Honorary Society.
- A new **Charles E. Smith Library** was dedicated at the Annette M. and Theodore N. Lerner Family Upper School Campus.

## STUDENTS:

- **18 CESJDS seniors** were named as National Merit Commended Students in this year's National Merit competition.
- **65 CESJDS students** have qualified for the Global Seal of Bilingualism in Hebrew.
- **Daniela Abrams** (Grade 11), **Ella Kotok** (Grade 11), **Kaylah Goldrich** (Grade 10), **Ella Waldman** (Grade 10), **Noah Sher** (Grade 10), & **Alec Silberg** (Grade 10) competed in the County Debate Playoff Tournament.
- **Ellie Fischman** (Grade 10) & **Yaeli Greenblum** (Grade 10) were selected to attend the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference.
- **Josef Kay** (Grade 11) & **William Cashon** (Grade 11) placed first and second place respectively in a statewide school chess tournament.

- **Yael Rosenberg** (Grade 10) & her hockey team, the St. James U16 Girls, went undefeated at the Southeastern District Championships and qualified to play in the 2022 USA Hockey Girls Tier II National Championship.
- **Evie Sharp** (Grade 7) & **Obi Schneider** (Grade 7) were selected to represent their middle school peers at the Parent Council of Washington's annual Middle School Student Leader Breakfast.
- **Sam Sharp** (Grade 10) finished in the top 25 during the annual Stevens Institute of Technology Trading Day contest, a national stock trading competition.
- **Alec Silberg** (Grade 10), **Matthew Steindecker** (Grade 10), **Stella Muzin** (Grade 9), **Evan Pearlman** (Grade 10), **Nava Feldman** (Grade 10), **Reut Skromne** (Grade 10), & **Kaylah Goldrich** (Grade 10) raised over \$96,000 for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society during a 7 week campaign and finished top 10 in the DC area.
- **Sam Winkler** (Grade 11) competed in the Maryland State Private School Wrestling Championship.

## FACULTY:

- **Matt Cohen**, High School History Teacher, recently led a session at the Illinois Educators & Tech Conference.
- **Daniella Friedman**, Judaic Studies and Hebrew Language Coordinator & **Rabbi Mitchel Malkus**, Head of School, spoke at the first annual Hitkadmud: The Annual Hebrew Educators Conference.
- **Deby Kijak**, Upper School Spanish Teacher & US Diversity Coordinator & **Beth Poston**, Instructional Technology Specialist, were chosen to speak at the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) Annual Conference.
- **Brett Kugler**, High School Learning Specialist and **Zman Kodesh** leader, penned an article for The Lookstein Center's *Jewish Educational Leadership Journal* on genuinely engaging teens and tweens in Judaic learning and connection.
- **Dr. Silvia Kulat-Ares**, World Languages Department Chair, published a two-volume compendium *Historia de la ciencia ficción latinoamericana I & II*.
- **Rabbi Mitchel Malkus**, Head of School, spoke at the Jewish National Fund - USA in Israel Showcase Brunch: Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Alexander Muss High School in Israel.
- **Jessica Nassau**, Director of Publications, presented two sessions during the Jewish Scholastic Press Association Conference.
- **Sue Rexford**, Director of College Guidance, was invited to join the High School Counselor Advisory Board at Franklin and Marshall College and received the John A. "Jack" Blackburn Award for Ethics in College Admission.

## ALUMNI:

- **Zach Abrams '22** & **Nathan Gershengorn '22** were selected to enter the competition for the United States Presidential Scholars Program.
- **Lincoln Aftergood '22** & **Iara Rattner '22** were recognized by The College Board as part of the National Hispanic Recognition Program.

- **Kerry Brodie '08** was honored at the JWJ 2022 Women to Watch event.
- **Rabbi Ariana Capptauber '08** spoke to PennLive.com about her work in supporting and housing Afghan refugees.
- **Nathan Gershengorn '22** & **Ari Rabinovitz '22** advanced in the National Merit Scholarship Corporation Program from Semifinalists to Finalists.
- **Bryan Knapp '17** represented the alumni community at the Class of 2022 Graduation as the alumni speaker.
- **Danielle Jeweler '97** spoke at the JWJ 2022 Women to Watch event.
- **Xander Orenstein '10** was sworn in as the first openly non-binary judge in US history. He also received the first Anat Kimchi Award for Excellence in *Tikkun Olam*.
- **Noam Weinblatt '08** released his first song on world-renowned DJ Nora En Pure's label.
- **Kerry Brodie '08** & **Tomer Yavetz** welcomed a daughter, Ayalah Katharine.
- **Abby Dugan '05** & **Gabi Weisel '05** welcomed a son, Levi Milton.
- **Ben Hamburger '04** & **Diana Braham** welcomed a daughter, Julia Alice.
- **Stephen '00** & **Clare Krupin** welcomed a son, William Michael.
- **Gideon Reiz '09** & **Shana Sprung-Reiz** welcomed a son, Barak Legend.
- **Zach '06** & **Carrie Rosenberg** welcomed a daughter, Lainey Ryan.
- **Keryn (Bernstein) Wittenberg '09** & **Gabe Wittenberg** welcomed a son, Bram.
- **Ben Berman '08** & **Brittany Linn** were married.
- **Briana Felsen '12** & **Jerry Rubin** were married.
- **Emily Hamburger '09** & **Peter Fishkind** were engaged.
- **Josh Heckelman '09** & **Jamie Kahn** were married.
- **Samantha Kevy '14** & **Scott Slutsky** were engaged.
- **Jordan Kovalsky '10** & **Casey Nathan** were engaged.
- **Sam Krosnick '10** & **Rachel Glick** were engaged.
- **Elisheva Layman '08** & **Scott Salant** were engaged.
- **Dana Levit '08** & **Lawrence Weibman** were married.
- **Yael Green '14** & **Noah Green '17** both made Aliyah in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

## COMMUNITY

- **Robin London**, **Rae Ringel**, & **Michelle Stravitz** were honored at the JWJ 2022 Women to Watch event.
- **Heidi Brodsky**, **Jeanne Ellinport**, & **Meredith Jacobs** spoke at the JWJ 2022 Women to Watch event.
- **Doug Feith** penned an article for *Mosaic Magazine* on historical geography as it relates to Palestine.
- **Amos Hochstein** spoke at the Doha Forum in Qatar.
- **Aliza Lewin**, President of the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, was discussed in an article about Battling Antisemitism on Campus in *Hadassah Magazine*.



# Lower School Log: Israeli Dance as an Expression of *Ahavat Yisra-el*/Love of Israel

◆ By Rabbi Matthew Bellas, Lower School Principal



How time flies...It's remarkable to think that it has been six years since the Lower School reintroduced Israeli Dance into the school program. It was in the spring of 2015 that I attended my first Israeli Dance Festival DC and asked myself, "Why doesn't JDS have a dance group participating in this amazing community event?" I learned that at some point in the past we had had one, but that it faded away many years before. As a school in which Israel education

plays a crucial role and for which *Ahavat Yisra-el* is one of our Core Values, I was committed to bringing an essential element of modern Israeli culture and history back into our program for our students and community and we were back at the festival the very next year!

Israeli dance is an art form that embodies the spirit, vibrancy, and diversity of *Am Yisra-el*/the People of Israel in so many ways. It offers our students an experience of Israel that is unique from all others, disconnected from the conflicts and disagreements that arise when politics and foreign policy are at the center of the conversation about Israel. When our students learn about dance from our Israeli Dance Specialist, Hamorah Lisah Bernstein, they hear about the contributions and influences that the many ethnic groups within the Jewish people have had on it: from traditional Eastern European, *Mizrahi*, and Yemenite moves and music to more modern ones from within Israel and North America. Students practice and learn

dances that have been danced by generations of Jews at times of familial and communal celebration as well as contemporary ones choreographed and danced by the new generations of Israeli dance enthusiasts. Through circle dances, line dances, and even partner dances, our students become connected to each other, to the Jewish community past and present, and to the State of Israel in a joyous and exciting way. Dancing to music sung in Hebrew and receiving dance instruction in Hebrew, our students are immersed in an authentic Hebrew-rich environment that enhances our students' Hebrew learning and further connects them to the People and State of Israel. It is always a great pleasure for me to hear our students singing and dancing with smiles on their faces, using their Hebrew, and finding love and joy in their connection to Israel and its culture. Israeli dance is a true embodiment of *Ahavat Yisra-el*.

Last March, the Israeli Dance Festival DC returned after two years away and our incredible Horah Arayot performance group of over 20 4th and 5th grade students danced their hearts out and made our school (and their families) proud! The Horah Arayot group also performs annually on Yom Ha-atzma-ut in school and occasionally also has the opportunity to perform in the greater Rockville or DC community. We hope all of our students, but especially this year's 3rd and additional 4th graders, will be inspired by this year's troupe and want to join next year to bring their own and our school's *Ahavat Yisra-el*/Love of Israel to life for themselves and for all to see. When Theodore Herzl (z"l) dreamed of a State of Israel, he envisioned a country rich in culture, which would develop a distinctive Jewish/Israeli culture all its own. I have confidence that Israeli dance is a true example of the fulfillment of his dream and that he would have such pride in its evolution and in the children who are carrying its tradition and development forward.



# Middle School Musings: My Time at CESJDS Has Made Me Feel Closer to the State of Israel and Its People

◆ By **Mia Forseter** (Grade 8)



My father graduated from CESJDS in 1993. Using the Hebrew he learned at JDS, he has spoken with me in Hebrew since I was born. Due to that and the Hebrew classes I take at JDS, I am able to talk, read, and write in Hebrew fluently. Knowing Hebrew encourages me to become closer to Israel and the people that live there. When I go to Israel, I'm able to speak with and understand the people around me. It helps me love the country even more. A lot of my friends at JDS are Israeli. Without JDS I wouldn't have met them and forged these relationships, but I also wouldn't be able to communicate as well with them. I know that when some of these friends return to Israel, we'll remain close.

In sixth grade I remember learning about Shvil Israel, a hiking trail that runs throughout all of Israel. I remember

being excited about it, and wanting to walk it myself; not just for the experience of hiking that far, but also so I could experience more of the Israeli culture as I walked. JDS has

◆◆ Knowing Hebrew encourages me to become closer to Israel and the people that live there. ◆◆

made Israel seem not just a country, but also a place where we are all welcome. Despite having been to Israel a few times before, as I learn more and more about Israel, it makes me want to keep going back.

At school, we also learn about the history of Israel alongside the history of the United States. This year in Hebrew class I've learned about the 1940s in Israel. To start, we split into groups. Each group learned a small piece of the history. Then, everyone presented and we got a larger picture of what was happening in Israel at that time. After this, my class heard stories about the Palmach, a commando group in the Haganah. Once a week, we have been reading a book about a teenager that joins the Palmach almost accidentally. Also once a week, we watch a Hebrew TV show about two illegal immigrants who immigrated to Israel from Holland after World War II. Watching this show in Hebrew has inspired me to find more shows in Hebrew to start watching. My Israeli friends have so far supplied me with a few shows to watch and a promise of more if I want them.

I can't wait until I become a senior so that I will be able to go to Israel with my grade to further my relationship with Israel.

◆◆ JDS has made Israel seem not just a country, but also a place where we are all welcome. ◆◆

# High School Highlights: A Recent Graduate's Perspective on *Ahavat Yisra-el*/Love of Israel

◆ By Dr. Lisa Vardi, High School Principal, and Rochelle Berman '22

Strolling through the school hallways in April, one inevitably hears the sound of high school voices raised in festive Hebrew songs. Israel celebrated its 74th birthday on May 4, 2022, which meant preparation for Zimriyah, part of the Upper School's Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel's independence day) programming, was underway. Zimriyah is only one of the ways for high school students to develop *Ahavat Yisra-el*, a personal and ongoing relationship with Israel, its people, language and culture.

We asked Rochelle Berman '22, recipient of the Edith Chidakel and Charles M. Pascal *Ahad Ha'am* Award for a deep love and commitment for the State of Israel, to share her perspective on *Ahavat Yisra-el*. Rochelle and 74 of her fellow graduates are on their three-month Irene and Daniel Simpkins Senior Capstone Israel Trip adventure at Alexander Muss High School in Hod HaSharon.



Dr. Lisa Vardi, High School Principal



Rochelle Berman '22

In the years before COVID-19, I had the opportunity to experience the pure joy of Upper School students celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut with the staple school-wide competition: Zimriyah. My fondest memories of Zimriyah come from the grade finally coming together in a unified voice and dance to showcase to the rest of the school that we could thrive and succeed by acting as one.

Although Zimriyah always fostered the most spirited

competition of the year, it would be wrong to say that a celebration of Israel's independence encompasses the way that JDS teaches about and fosters a love for Israel. Due to JDS' proximity to Washington D.C., it is a given that part of the student body is made up of students who move to the US from abroad, many from Israel, either for a period of time, or permanently. A deep connection forms between the American and Israeli students. The American International Ambassador Club (AIA) is one entity that helps connect these students. Through fun events and occasional joint Hebrew classes, American and Israeli students find ways to cross cultural and language barriers to become one community.

While events such as Zimriyah and friendships among students contribute to making the student body's connection with Israel

deep, it is the Israeli history and modern history classes that give students the tools to invent and defend their opinions on what *Ahavat Yisra-el* means and how they will choose to be connected to Israel throughout the rest of their lives.

In 10th grade, students connect their ancient Jewish history knowledge to the more modern lens of antisemitism. This new understanding of how the Jewish people are treated in the modern world paves a path to the 11th grade curriculum about Israel; from the early European Zionists and anti-Zionists to the contemporary Zionists and anti-Zionists around the world.

The class that influenced me the most was no doubt Arab-Israeli Conflict, an elective available to second semester juniors. This class is different from what one might usually find at a Jewish day school because JDS strives to teach the class from an unbiased perspective in which many voices and opinions are heard, regardless of where they fall on the political spectrum. The end goal of the class is not to simply give students an opinion they can walk away with, but rather to provide students with enough information that they can create an informed opinion for themselves.

It is this freedom in classes that truly shines a light unto JDS' approach to teaching and understanding *Ahavat Yisra-el*; the love for the people and land of Israel can be fostered while simultaneously allowing students to decide what their personal connection to the state of Israel looks like. Plus, spending three months in Israel gives students the opportunity to develop a connection with the people and culture. After spending so much time learning about Israeli history and contemporary Israeli society, it is refreshing and inspiring to individually solidify each of our perspectives on what the phrase *Ahavat Yisra-el* means to us.



# Why We Give: The Himmelfarb Family



We chose to send our son, Jake, to CESJDS when he started third grade. We now know that was a very wise decision!

The exceptional teachers and administrators are caring and dedicated to knowing Jake as a learner and as a person. Jake's teachers inspire and fuel his passion for learning. We especially value the School's approach to facilitating peer learning groups that provide extra support where needed and stimulate advanced thinking and creative collaboration.

We have found that the educational experience and community at CESJDS reinforces our family's core values and Jewish identity. The written and unwritten curriculum encourage a strong moral compass— we are all focused on raising mensches. As a family, we have found our community at CESJDS.

**We give to the *Ma'ayan* Annual Campaign because we believe in investing in our community!**

Cheryl & Paul Himmelfarb, Proud parents of Jake (Grade 5)  
*Ma'ayan* Annual Campaign Co-Chairs

## Ma'ayan 2022: Happy Together

At Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, we believe in *K'hillah* – Community. We provide the space and tools to foster relationships and build long lasting connections for each of our students. We see the extraordinary goals our children reach for and achieve while learning to become thoughtful and reflective collaborators. We know our children are **Happy Together**.

Help the opportunities and traditions that bring so much joy for our children and families.



**MA'AYAN**  
מעין



**Give Today!**

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

# An Alumnus Reflects on His JDS Education and Inextricable Bond to Israel

◆ By Zach Subar '04

As a lifer, CESJDS was my entire world from kindergarten through twelfth grade. What I didn't realize is that it would remain a significant part of my world 18 years after graduation.

The Hebrew I learned in school, and in particular the early Hebrew education I received in the Lower School, has changed my experience in Israel, where I now have lived for the past year and a half. I haven't been to *Ulpan*, but I can still get around the country well, handle the notorious bureaucracy, and even engage in the occasional fast-moving political debate in Hebrew. My third grade *ivrit b'ivrit* class with Mrs. Kedem was a life-changing experience. My soul was pulled to Israel — there is no other way to explain it — and I have no doubt the Israel-related education I received at JDS was a big reason why.

I can also say that my writing skills would not be what they are if it were not for the rigorous English essays I was encouraged to write throughout high school. It was terrifying at times to write at what was certainly a college level as a 15-year old, but I am forever grateful to my teachers, in particular Dr. Worden, who instilled in me a much deeper love for literature and analysis. These are analytical skills I continue to use in my day-to-day life (both professionally and personally) and which I very much value.

The friendships I formed at JDS also remain incredibly strong. My friends from the Class of 2004 are people who understand me on a deep level. I will always know that my high school compatriots will have my back and love me to no end. I love them too. And that love was able to develop in the warm, caring environment that JDS provides. There is something special about the School — it simply produces good people, with solid values, and caring hearts. I give to the *Ma'ayan* Annual Campaign to allow other students to become the best versions of those types of people they can be. It's the only way I can give back to the school after all it gave me.

JDS set me on a path for success in life, and I have no doubt it continues to do the same for its current students.



Zach Subar '04



From left to right: Zach Subar '04, Ben Hamburger '04, Danny Feuer '04, and Eric Goldberg '04



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## Table of Contents

Letter from Rabbi Mitchel Malkus .....	1
<i>Kol HaKavod</i> (Accomplishments) .....	2
Lower School Log: Israeli Dance as an Expression of <i>Ahavat Yisra-el</i> /Love of Israel .....	3
Middle School Musings: My Time at CESJDS Has Made Me Feel Closer to the State of Israel and Its People ...	4
High School Highlights: A Recent Graduate's Perspective on <i>Ahavat Yisra-el</i> /Love of Israel .....	5
Why We Give: The Himmelfarb Family .....	6
<i>Ma'ayan</i> 2022: Happy Together .....	6
An Alumnus Reflects on His JDS Education and Inextricable Bond to Israel .....	7

## Upcoming Events

May 25 .....Arts Chai-Lights  
May 30 .....Memorial Day (School Closed)  
June 6 .....*Shavu-ot* (School Closed)  
June 15 .....Aba Marcus and Sara Marcus 5th Grade Siddur Ceremony & Siyyum  
June 15 .....8th Grade Siyyum  
June 17 .....Last Day of School