



From Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, Head of School

CESJDS' vision is to ensure a vibrant Jewish future by fostering the growth of confident and compassionate thinkers who engage the world through Jewish values. One of the ways we meet this part of our mission is through the many leadership opportunities that students have in all three of our school's divisions.

This issue of *The Lions' Roar* is dedicated to sharing just a few of the leadership opportunities students have at CESJDS. In the following pages, Rabbi Matthew Bellas, our Lower School Principal, writes about the 5th grade Safety Patrol and Reading Buddies programs that empower students to be leaders within the School as we cultivate leadership skills they will take with them outside of CESJDS. One of our fabulous faculty members, Sam Sullivan, Middle School English & Humanities Teacher, shares about the Middle School's *Knesset*, our refashioned student government program inspired by the government of Israel and classroom leadership as among the ways we amplify student voice and agency - important leadership dispositions. Last, you will read about our *Ozrim/Z'man Kodesh*/Student Leadership Fellows, STEM Fellows, Health and Wellness Fellows, and new Student-Athlete Leadership Committee and Social Entrepreneurship Fellows (part of the new Sharon and Jacob (z"l) Benus Social Entrepreneurship Program) as Dr. Lisa Vardi, High School Principal, highlights some of the ways our High School students learn to lead.



Studies indicate that a disproportionate number (40%) of young leaders in both volunteer and professional leadership roles in the Jewish community attended Jewish day schools. General educational research indicates that many of the traits associated with leadership are correlated with future success measures, such as work performance and success. Leaders, studies have shown, tend to have higher cognitive abilities, more self-confidence, and more motivation or drive to accomplish their goals. The many leadership programs at CESJDS help facilitate the development of these qualities while preparing students for a lifetime of success and meaning. Leadership programs at our school also help students determine their leadership style while imagining themselves in leadership roles outside of the classroom and school. These leadership programs also help prepare our students for future academic and personal success by teaching essential life skills such as resilience, resourcefulness, collaboration, and effective communication.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks wrote that leaders "[s]tudy more than others. They read more than others. Of the king, the Torah says that he must write his own Sefer Torah which 'must always be with him, and he shall read from it all the days of his life' (Deut. 17:19)." So we see that leaders need to be constant learners. At CESJDS, we teach our students how to learn, instill in them a lifelong passion for learning, and cultivate their leadership skills and habits through many different programs so they can become the future dynamic and ethical leaders we need to make a true difference in the world.



כל הכבוד Kol HaKavod/Accomplishments

SCHOOL

- The **Class of 2024** was accepted at 121 colleges and will be attending 51 different schools.
- **The Lion's Tale** (High School student magazine) and **Dimensions Yearbook** both won Crown Awards at the Columbia Scholastic Press Association spring convention. The publications also won 18 individual awards in various design and writing categories.
- **Varsity Girls Tennis** won the PVAC tournament.
- **Varsity Boys Volleyball** finished first in the PVAC.
- **Varsity Softball** finished first in the PVAC and won the PVAC tournament.
- **2nd Grade Students** collected 174 solar eclipse glasses to send to schools in Latin America, where students will experience a solar eclipse in October.

STUDENTS

- **Eliana Abrams** (Grade 10), **Ephraim Blair** (Grade 9), **Leora Blumenthal** (Grade 10), **Jordana Dauber** (Grade 10), **Rachel Fagin** (Grade 11), **Adin Kahan** (Grade 10), **Ezra Libbin** (Grade 9), **David Loeffler** (Grade 9), **Liat Netter** (Grade 9), **Selma Teichman** (Grade 9), and **Sadaf Zadeh** (Grade 11) were selected as STEM Fellows for the 2024-2025 school year.
- **Elie Arkin** (Grade 11) and **Isaac Janson** (Grade 9), both Life Scouts, were initiated into the Order of the Arrow.
- **Elisheva Babitz** (Grade 12), **Aliza Bellas** (Grade 12), **Abby Chesman** (Grade 12), **Soleil Eschenlauber** (Grade 12), **Gigi Gordon** (Grade 12), **Noa Grumet** (Grade 12), **Ari Kittrie** (Grade 12), **Noam Klein** (Grade 12), **Georgia Lindenaue** (Grade 12), **Stella Muzin** (Grade 12), **Jessica Rosenberg** (Grade 12), **Lily Rulnick** (Grade 12), **Nate Szubin** (Grade 12), **Alana Udell** (Grade 12), **Joseph Vaisman** (Grade 12), **Cati Werbin-Gradel** (Grade 12), and **Abby Zuckerman** (Grade 12) were inducted into Quill and Scroll, the High School Journalists International Honor Society.
- **Ori Ben Nun** (Grade 11), **Cyrus Blumenthal** (Grade 11), **Maiya Blumenthal** (Grade 11), **Genevieve Ducker** (Grade 11), **Maya Greenblum** (Grade 11), **Jacob Krantz** (Grade 11), **Aliza Lesser** (Grade 12), **Ian Liss** (Grade 11), **Talia Loeffler** (Grade 11), **Jacob Schlaectus** (Grade 11), **Ari Solomon** (Grade 11), and **Eliana Wolf** (Grade 11) were inducted into the Arabic Honor Society.
- **Jonah Berman** (Grade 12) and **Isaac Yourman** (Grade 11) both ran PRs of 2:08 and 2:08.5 respectively, in the 800m, placing them fifth and seventh JDS All-Time.
- **Mia Forseter** (Grade 11), was named tournament MVP and PVAC Player of the Year.
- **Ella Kane** (Grade 10), **Emily Osofsky** (Grade 10), **Anna Polon** (Grade 10), **Lilah Sacks** (Grade 10), **Lindsey Shapiro** (Grade 10) were inducted into the Hispanic Honor Society.
- **Eden Kotok** (Grade 9) was invited to speak at the national ADL press conference.

- **Ian Liss** (Grade 11) participated in the "Bringing the Lessons Home" program through the Holocaust Museum and was inducted as a Youth Leadership Ambassador.
- **Eve Sharp** (Grade 10) ran a 9 second PR of 1:04 in the 400m, placing her third JDS All-Time.
- **Ellie Strisik** (Grade 11) recently attended the HOBY MD Leadership Seminar. She was one of five speakers, out of the 250 student participants, selected to share about an important chapter in her life.
- **Nathan Szubin** (Grade 12) was named Co-MVP of the PVAC finals for Varsity Track and Field. He is the first JDS runner with a 3200m run under 10:00. He also received honorable mention in *The Washington Post* 2024 Spring All-Met Track & Field team.

FACULTY

- **Rabbi Janet Ozur Bass**, Middle School Assistant Principal, **Jennifer Newfeld**, Middle School Jewish Text Teacher, **Anat Kaufman**, High School Hebrew Teacher, and **Aileen Goldstein**, High School Assistant Principal attended the Yamim Project training in New York City led by M2 Institute for Experiential Jewish Education and the Jewish Education Project - where **Debbi Cooper '93**, M2's Senior Director for Values Education, was one of the educators.
- **Elanit Jakabovics**, Chief Financial and Operating Officer was selected to serve a two-year term on the Net Assets Editorial Advisory Committee for the NBOA: Business Leadership for Independent Schools.
- **The Upper School Jewish Text Department** participated in a learning session with the Jerusalem-based Pardes Institute's Rabbi Levi Cooper. Together with other community rabbis, they studied Hasidic texts about *piston shivuyim*/ransoming hostages.
- In commemoration of Memorial Day and the 500,000 Jewish Americans that fought in World War II, Head of School, **Rabbi Mitchel Malkus** joined the Jewish War Veterans Post 692 for the 9th Memorial Day program to give the opening and closing prayers at the Bender JCC.

ALUMNI

- **Sam Berns '23**, **Adam Goldfarb '23**, and **Aiden Melkin '23** won first place in the Shark Tank competition at the Nitzavim Impact Project Showcase as a group, Terrapin Tisch.
- **Shiri Cohen '24** is a final-five Brandon Victor Dixon Award finalist for the second year in a row. The Brandon Victor Dixon Awards recognizes top musical theater talent in the DMV area amongst high school students.
- **Dore Feith '14** wrote an opinion piece in *The National Review*, "Columbia's War Is about America."
- **Shira Gould '16**, Associate Director of Campus Strategy for StandWithUs, was interviewed by Michael Dickson on the current situation on college campuses.
- **Micah Gritz '20** was awarded the Sharon Greene Award for Campus Advocacy on behalf of Jewish on Campus (JOC) at the AJC Global Forum 2024.

- **Ellie Hasenberg '22** co-founded a Students Supporting Israel club on the College of Charleston campus and was elected co-president.
- **Rabbi Rebecca Keren (Eisenstadt) Jablonski '03** published her book *Confessions of a Female Rabbi: Relevant Religion in an On-Demand World*.
- **Max Levitt '07** appeared on the Kelly Clarkson Show to share about his organization Leveling the Playing Field, Inc.
- **Shani Schwartz '24**, broke records by scoring over 1,500 points for the Varsity Girls Basketball team and was named PVAC Player of the Year for the second year in a row.
- **Gabriella Simon '24** and **Jordyn White '24** received merit scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.
- **Zack Singerman '23**, a current freshman at the joint Columbia University and Jewish Theological Seminary, wrote an opinion piece for *The Forward* about the impact of protests and riots on campus, and how it has affected his college experience and the lives of the Jewish students today.
- **Amy Bannaroch '07** and Aquiba Bannaroch, welcomed a son, Solomon.
- **Rebecca (Rosenberg) Cutler '07** and Chad Cutler welcomed a son, Corey Preston.
- **Jon Galitzer '13** and Rebecca Galitzer, welcomed a daughter, Adira Bayla.
- **Rachel Lieber Hofmann '06** and Keith Hofmann welcomed a daughter, Lila Miri.
- **Jordan Kovalsky Nathan '10** and Casey Nathan welcomed a son, Asher Brody.
- **Aliza Silver '07** and Alex Silver welcomed a daughter, Noa Batya.
- **Danny Solomon '07** and Amber Solomon welcomed a daughter, Zella Shai.
- **Hilary Druckman '14** and Gene Maslink were married.
- **Rabbi Rebecca Keren Eisenstadt '03** and Ben Jablonski were married.
- **Maya Goldstein '14** and Andrew Nathin were married.
- **Adina Heckelman '11** and **Noah Joseph '09** were married.
- **Rachel Kalusin '14** and Hershel Alterman were married.
- **Tali Raphael '08** and Ilana Rice were married.
- **Sahara Reiz '13** and Dusty Shaw were married.
- **Adam Benaim '15** and Sarah Akiba were engaged.
- **Scott Levensgard '12** and Danielle Weinberger were engaged.
- **Alex Missner '17** and Lauren Clore were engaged.
- **Gaby Pilarski '16** and Isabella Czernia were engaged.
- **Andy Siegel '11** and Noa Havivi were engaged.
- **Hannah Wandersman '18** and Sammy Turk Tolub were engaged.
- **Alexandra Wolff '16** and Ryan Molini were engaged.

Lower School Log:

Cultivating Leadership Through Service: 5th Grade Safety Patrols & Reading Buddies

◆ By Rabbi Matthew Bellas, Lower School Principal



At CESJDS, we are committed to nurturing leadership qualities in our students from a young age. We believe that leadership is not merely a skill, but a mindset that empowers individuals to make a positive difference in their community and the world - in the language of CESJDS' mission, values, and our Jewish tradition, to make *tikkun olam*/repairing the world a priority and regular practice. While our school is committed to this core value throughout the grades, 5th grade offers a unique opportunity for us to cultivate it with our Lower School "seniors" and two impactful programs that embody this philosophy are Safety Patrols and Reading Buddies.

Safety Patrols:

Our Safety Patrols are true guardians of our youngest students. Every day, rain or shine, these dedicated 5th graders ensure that our gurim, kindergarten, and 1st grade students safely navigate the arrival and dismissal processes. They meet students at the entry doors in the mornings or their classrooms in the afternoons, and escort them to their destinations, classrooms, or dismissal locations, ensuring both their physical and emotional safety. In addition to the essential logistical support role that the Safety Patrol program plays in the school, Safety Patrols often offer a listening ear, warm words, and a comforting presence to our youngest students as they navigate hectic, and sometimes overwhelming parts of the school day. Our Safety Patrols are an essential element of Lower School mornings and afternoons. As Safety Patrols, our 5th graders learn empathy, reliability, responsibility, and caring for others. Through their commitment, they learn firsthand what it means to be leaders both in our school community and beyond.

◆◆ ...in the language of CESJDS' mission, values, and our Jewish tradition, to make *tikkun olam*/repairing the world a priority and regular practice. ◆◆

Reading Buddies:

The Reading Buddies program is a heartwarming example of leadership through mentorship. 5th grade students partner with our youngest learners in gurim and kindergarten throughout the school year. On those very special Fridays, together, they embark on a journey of reading and discovery, with our older students serving as mentors and role models. This program not only fosters a love of reading, but also cultivates empathy, patience, and communication skills in our 5th graders. They learn to inspire and support their younger peers, creating bonds that transcend age and grade levels. Many times over the years, when it was "finally" their time to be a Reading Buddy, I have heard 5th graders tell stories about when they were in gurim or kindergarten and how much their 5th grade buddy meant to them. In some cases, the buddies have even kept in touch for many additional years, beyond their time at our school.

Both Reading Buddies and Safety Patrols offer valuable opportunities for our students to develop essential leadership qualities:

- **Responsibility:** Taking on duties that impact the safety and well-being of others.
- **Empathy:** Understanding the needs and perspectives of younger students.
- **Mentorship:** Guiding and supporting others in their learning and growth.
- **Commitment:** Demonstrating dedication and reliability in their roles.

These experiences are not just extracurricular activities, they are foundational to our mission of fostering well-rounded individuals who lead with compassion and integrity. As educators, we celebrate these initiatives that empower our students to become leaders both within our school and in their future endeavors.

Middle School Musings: A Vision of Student Leadership in Middle School

◆ By **Samuel Sullivan**, Middle School English & Humanities Teacher



After three years of teaching in the CESJDS Middle School and eight years of teaching experience, I look forward to a new opportunity and challenge next year. Along with fellow English Teacher David Carrington, I will be leading the Middle School's *Knesset*, a version of student government inspired by the government of Israel.

The 6th, 7th, and 8th grades will include about four or five advisory classes that meet a couple of times weekly. Each class will elect one member to represent them in the *Knesset*. All students can bring ideas to their *Knesset* members and hear from their representatives about what the *Knesset* is working on. This format aligns with the original vision of Principal Batson and Assistant Principal Rabbi Ozur Bass, who created *Knesset* last year to give students more leadership opportunities and allow for more organized student voice and feedback. This year, students will identify areas to improve the student experience and work to propose solutions to those challenges—solutions that work for all stakeholders, especially the peers they represent.

In line with the “Portrait of a CESJDS Graduate,” we plan to teach *Knesset* members to be effective communicators and thoughtful and reflective collaborators. We want them to enhance their strategic thinking, resourcefulness, and, most importantly, their sense of responsibility for their community. By participating in the *Knesset*, students will gain leadership skills and develop a strong sense of empowerment and responsibility, which will be invaluable for their personal growth.

Knesset will form committees and collaborate with other student organizations that are already fostering leadership in middle school. For example, the Jewish Life Club, which already provides students with leadership opportunities, is a logical partner for *Knesset*. With the guidance of Jewish Life Chair Dr. Jennifer Newfeld, students have successfully collaborated with staff to coordinate School events surrounding weekly Kab Shabs, Hanukkah, Purim, Lag Ba-omer, and Zimriyah, among others.

Leadership in middle school also thrives in the classroom. For instance, during the CESJDS Proposal Project in English class, 7th graders conduct research and interview decision-makers in the CESJDS community. Then, they develop ideas to improve the School and present them to the Lion's Den, the CESJDS version of “Shark Tank.” Students answer tough questions and defend their proposals with the ultimate goal of getting their proposals implemented.

Many students at our school have demonstrated their readiness to embrace leadership roles inside and outside the classroom. Their potential is inspiring, but for this vision to succeed, teachers must continue to empower students to lead themselves, moving away from a model where adults make all decisions and do all the work to improve the School. By reframing our approach to student leadership, we can equip our students with skills that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

This vision of student leadership will amplify student voice and agency, strengthening our already vibrant middle school community. Through student empowerment, students will actively participate in decision-making, learn valuable leadership skills, and have a fulfilling middle school experience. In turn, teachers and administrators will benefit from their fresh perspectives and engagement in the School community.

◆◆ ...we plan to teach *Knesset* members to be effective communicators and thoughtful and reflective collaborators. ◆◆



7th grade students present their CESJDS Proposal projects in June 2024.

High School Highlights:

Student Leadership Development in the High School

◆ By Dr. Lisa Vardi, High School Principal



Each morning our students begin their day with *Zman Kodesh (ZK)*/Sacred Time. In accordance with our core value of pluralism, we offer twelve *ZK* options for our High School (HS) students - four daily *Minyanim* and eight *Drisha/Exploration Zmanei Kodesh* which approach Jewish identity through a variety of mediums. While most students participate in one of these offerings, a small cohort, approximately 15 students, serve as *Ozrim/Zman Kodesh/Student Leadership Fellows* and work alongside Middle School *Zmanei Kodesh* teachers to assist MS students in developing their Jewish identities. This is only one of several long standing leadership development programs offered in the HS.

The purpose of a CESJDS education is to develop confident, compassionate thinkers who engage, and hopefully change the world through Jewish values in order to ensure a vibrant Jewish future. To achieve this goal, we must provide adult role models and direct mentoring so our students learn how to lead and facilitate change. Leading is about influencing, inspiring, and bringing out the best in others to achieve a collective goal, aspects found in all our leadership development programs.

Another example of a longstanding program is our STEM Fellows Program made up of approximately 35 students who are mentored by the Director of Upper School STEM. These students play an active role in planning, organizing, and facilitating STEM clubs, competitions, and events in all three divisions. This includes helping to plan our annual HS STEM Conference held in the fall. Fellows also have unique opportunities to interact with STEM professionals to expose them to different aspects of STEM learning. This past year, the Fellows explored the biodiversity of the Chesapeake Bay by participating in labs at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC). Later in the year, they traveled to the Luminis Health SAIL Center to learn about surgery as a career from current residents where they had the chance to use interactive training tools, like human patient simulators and robotic surgery simulators.

The success of these two programs, both of which have a competitive application process, has led to the creation of two new leadership development programs this past year - Health and Wellness Fellows and the Student-Athlete Leadership Committee.

The Health and Wellness Fellows program launched this past year with a cohort of ten students who met weekly with the Health and Wellness Co-Directors and advised them on topics of interest and potential speakers. The Fellows acted as ambassadors in the student community and created workshops each month that encouraged their peers to practice skills, personalize content, and set goals. They were a visible presence in our school community as they regularly introduced Health and Wellness speakers during HS assemblies. Next year, the cohort will grow to include a total of 16 Fellows.

Noticing the need to empower students to create and promote a positive culture around CESJDS Athletics and to enhance school spirit, the Student-Athlete Leadership Committee was created and will begin their work in the fall. The inaugural cohort of 10 students will work closely with our Athletic Department and the Booster Club, adults who will mentor and serve as role models. During the interview process, applicants were asked what qualities they believe made up a good leader and their vision for increasing school spirit among a host of other questions. Applicants displayed a collective care for the community and a seriousness of purpose.

This fall we will unveil an additional formal leadership program to align with our value of *Tikkun Olam/Repairing the World* - the Social Entrepreneurship Fellows program. The goal of this program is to provide students the tools and knowledge to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset and take initiative to make the world a better place.

Beyond these formal leadership programs, we provide other opportunities for students to lead - publication editors, athletic team captains, set directors, student government officers, club presidents, and Kabbalat Shabbat emcees to name a few. We encourage all students to find their interest and passions and learn to lead so that our school and the world can become a better place.

◆◆ Leading is about influencing, inspiring, and bringing out the best in others to achieve a collective goal, aspects found in all our leadership development programs. ◆◆

Now more than ever, our school thanks you for your support of *Ma'ayan* 2024!



David Topol '84 (z"l) Memorial Endowment for Leadership

David Topol '84 (z"l) was a champion for CESJDS, and a great leader. He was an alumnus and a school parent, with all three children attending CESJDS, and Ben graduating in 2020. He devoted much of his volunteer leadership to making CESJDS a strong and enduring institution in our community. He served on the CESJDS Board of Directors in many capacities including Development Chair, Facilities Chair, and as Board President from 2010 to 2014. David was a thoughtful, strategic thinker, and he was effective in making positive change. He devoted countless hours to advancing our school. David was also a community leader beyond CESJDS. He served as President of Congregation Beth El and Commonwealth Academy and was on the Board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and Treehouse CAC of Montgomery County. Most important, David was a good friend to all. One of the things that people have repeated about David time and again is that he always had a kind word for everyone, and never spoke ill of another person. David is sorely missed by CESJDS and the greater community.

David embodied leadership qualities that all who knew him attempted to emulate – he was smart, kind, strategic, communicative, and a wonderful mentor. One of the hallmarks of a CESJDS education is that our students develop the skills, character, disposition, and strong Jewish identities to become leaders in both our secular and Jewish communities.

To memorialize David and his leadership, CESJDS will establish the David Topol '84 Memorial Leadership Award which will be given yearly to an alumnus or several alumni at a special event. The David Topol '84 Memorial Leadership Award recipient(s) will address students on the topic of leadership each year. CESJDS will also establish the David Topol '84 (z"l) Memorial Endowment for Leadership to sustain programs such as Lower School Student Council, Middle School *Knesset*, High School Student Government, Model UN, and Junior State of America (JSA), which all help our students become thoughtful and effective leaders, like David Topol '84 (z"l). This new endowment will preserve David's memory and leadership in perpetuity.



To donate to the David Topol '84 (z"l) Memorial Endowment for Leadership, please visit: CESJDS.ORG/TOPOL or scan the QR code below.



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Administrative Offices & Lower School Campus
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Annette M. & Theodore N. Lerner
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **AUGUST 27:** First Day of School
- **AUGUST 29:** Middle School Back to School Night
- **SEPTEMBER 2:** SCHOOL CLOSED Labor Day
- **SEPTEMBER 5:** High School Back to School Night
- **SEPTEMBER 10:** Lower School Back to School Night
- **OCTOBER 2:** SCHOOL CLOSED Erev Rosh Hashanah
- **OCTOBER 3-4:** SCHOOL CLOSED Rosh Hashanah
- **OCTOBER 11:** EARLY DISMISSAL Erev Yom Kippur
- **OCTOBER 16:** EARLY DISMISSAL Erev Sukkot
- **OCTOBER 17-18:** SCHOOL CLOSED Sukkot



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