

OTTAWA  
MODERN  
JEWISH  
SCHOOL



2008 – 2009

# PARENT HANDBOOK

5769

*Table of Contents*

PRESIDENTS' WELCOME .....	4
PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME .....	5
BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	7
ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING STAFF .....	7
POLICIES.....	8
Attendance.....	8
Early dismissal.....	8
Parking and pick up .....	8
Grades .....	8
Teachers .....	8
Homework.....	8
School Property/Lost Books.....	8
Snow closing and emergencies .....	9
Recess .....	9
Bar/Bat Mitzvah .....	9
Remedial.....	9
Payment of Tuition Fees.....	9
COURSE OUTLINES.....	10
Kindergarten .....	10
Grade One .....	10
Grade Two .....	10
Grade Three .....	11
Grade Four .....	11
Grade Five.....	12
Grade Six.....	12
Grade Seven.....	13
Graduation requirement – research paper.....	14
Academic Calendar 2008-2009.....	15

## **PRESIDENTS' WELCOME**

A warm welcome to all new and returning families!

As we begin our 55th year, Ottawa Modern Jewish School (OMJS) will continue its tradition of proudly working to meet the educational needs of Ottawa's Jewish community. The vision of our founders remains as relevant today as it did more than 50 years ago – to foster an understanding of Jewish history, traditions and culture and their relevance in the modern world.

While the vision remains current, and our commitment to inclusiveness, egalitarianism and non-affiliation remains strong, OMJS has evolved over the years. We have introduced new curricula and teaching methods and continually look for ways to improve content and delivery. Our Principal, Miriam Lerson-Hameiri, and current and new teaching staff bring a wealth of experience and dedication to OMJS. They all work tirelessly to give our children a quality Jewish education and to make Sunday mornings meaningful and hopefully a lot of fun!

In addition to class room time spent on Hebrew, Yiddish, history, and traditions, the students will learn about the High Holidays, celebrate Channukah, put on a Purim shpiel and experience a model Seder. We use an experiential approach to teaching since learning is better celebrated than read about. So our children will sing, dance and play as well. We will build on our theme of Tikkum Olam- "repairing the world" by focusing on our responsibility to others globally, individually, and within our families and school community. We value continuity with the Jewish community where we have always had a strong presence as OMJS at the community-wide Mitzvah Day, and marching together at the Walkathon in June in our OMJS T Shirts and holding our amazing OMJS banner. We are a small school, but it's amazing how much learning and "living Jewishly" can be packed into a few hours. This is what Sunday mornings at OMJS are all about.

OMJS has always been fortunate to have a dedicated group of parent volunteers, and we continue to encourage parents to become actively involved in the school community. Helping out with special activities, working to attract new families, offering your suggestions on ways to improve any aspect of the school – these are just some of the ways you can contribute. You might also consider serving on our Board of Directors which plays an essential role in ensuring that the school runs smoothly. We still have some vacancies on our Board and are seeking new, enthusiastic members for our monthly meetings. By working to strengthen the school you will also be working to strengthen our linkages to the broader Jewish community. We invite you to get involved!

OMJS is grateful to be a beneficiary agency of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, which helps bridge the gap between tuition fees and the full cost of our children's education. Please keep this in mind during the Federation's annual fundraising campaign. Our own fundraising efforts will be focused on the Spring 2008 campaign, but your donation to the school at any time will help ensure its financial viability and be most appreciated.

Best wishes for a Shanah Tovah. We look forward to meeting you and your children on Sunday mornings.

*Shelley Rivier*, President

## PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Shalom and welcome to Ottawa Modern Jewish School!

This Handbook describes OMJS policies and guidelines as well the courses offered in our Sunday program for this 2008-2009 (5769) school year. We are proud to present innovative programs which provide students with a well-rounded exposure to our rich culture and heritage. Our teachers are dedicated to providing a sensitive, progressive and high-quality Jewish education as part of a **positive and enriching Jewish experience** within a warm and friendly environment. The vision of the founders of OMJS and their successors has served each generation of young Jewish children by setting standards of excellence. The entire staff at OMJS promises to continue this tradition while tailoring the program to meet the needs of our families.

We are always looking for different ways to create vibrant and engaging curricula that build on our experience while making the core material new and interesting. Our history courses, in chronological order, connect each historical period with the present-day context. I am very pleased to announce **Mrs. Shirley Deiner** as our new History Teacher. **Morah Shirley** comes to us as a certified teacher with a wealth of background in History and Judaica. She has many ideas and innovative techniques that we will incorporate; and look forward to a great year of her teaching the older grades (Grades 5, 6 & 7). Welcome Morah Shirley!!

We also wish to welcome another new staff member. **Ms. Ruthie Raz Prince**, originally from Israel, has joined us to teach **Hebrew and History** to Grades 2, 3 & 4. She will pair these grades with **Morah Yehudis** who wonderfully teaches our **Culture and Traditions** part of the program. These two teachers bring a great deal of enthusiasm, knowledge, and heart to the introduction and teaching of these foundational subjects. *Bruchim Haba'im* and **welcome** Morah Ruthie!

**Mrs. Ilona Mauskopf** has returned this year to continue teaching our youngest students (Kindergarten and Grade 1). Morah Ilona, with excellent credentials, experience, and, a gentle approach to this tender age, is looking forward to meeting her new students! Welcome back Morah Ilona!

In addition, senior grades (Grades 5, 6 & 7) will continue to be taught by our Yiddishkeit teacher, **Mrs. Judith Weinman. Lererin Judy** has many years of experience teaching Yiddish. She will dedicate herself to the topics of Yiddishkeit and the Yiddish Language in the senior grades and is sure to provide a stimulating atmosphere for this rich and colourful facet of our culture. As well, she participates in the local Yiddish theatre with our own **Morah Miriam Litman** and **Mrs. Flo Morgan**. During the year, *Lererin Judy* will infuse our Yiddishkeit classes with language, song and stories that are sure to be pleasers! **Mrs. Morgan** who had been with OMJS for 30+ years teaching Yiddish will once again "tag teach" during the months of January and February whilst *Lererin Judy* is on holiday. I am sure the transitions will be seamless as they will be in contact throughout the year. As a **pilot project**, this year we are attempting to co-ordinate with **our children and the Yiddish Theatre** to have the children involved in their theatre production in the spring! As time goes on, parents of the older grades will receive information in this regard! It may be an amazing experience for all!

**Morah Miriam Litman**, with many years of language teaching experience, will provide an engaging look at the Hebrew language and its changes, influences and its central importance to our heritage.

I look forward to working with you in a spirit of support and co-operation. Feedback and suggestions to help make this a fabulous year are welcome! Talk to me, call me at the school office (722-6657), or email me at principal@omjs.ca. Let's Make Sundays **Super Sundays!**

**Grade 7 students:** read the section on Graduation requirement – research paper on page 14.

Wishing each of you health, happiness and good fortune in our New Year 5769!!!

**Sincerely,**

**Principal Miri ☺**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>President</b>	Shelley Rivier
<b>Vice-President</b>	Lionel Moser
<b>Past President</b>	Morrie Paul
<b>Treasurer</b>	Alan Diener
<b>Registrar</b>	Janice Singer
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Faren Hodgson
<b>Director</b>	Stuart Boonov
<b>Director</b>	Jonathan Hollinger
<b>Director</b>	Brenda Schwartz
<b>Director</b>	Jean R Shifman

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING STAFF**

<b>Principal</b>	Miriam Lerson-Hameiri
<b>Teacher</b>	Miriam Litman
<b>Teacher</b>	Ilona Mauskopf
<b>Teacher</b>	Shirley Diener
<b>Teacher</b>	Yehudis Stokes
<b>Teacher</b>	Judith Weinman
<b>Teacher</b>	Ruthie Raz Stokes
<b>Teachers' Assistant</b>	
<b>Teachers' Assistant</b>	Jodi Hameiri
<b>Teachers' Assistant</b>	Miriam Nightingale
<b>Teachers' Assistant</b>	Gillian Reid-Schachter

# POLICIES

## Attendance

Normal school hours are on Sundays from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for proper crediting of a course. In the event of a planned absence, please inform the office and the teachers.

## Early dismissal

In order to maintain proper safety and security conditions at the school, no student will be allowed to leave class early without permission. Families are requested to pick up students leaving early in person and sign out with the teacher/principal. The students **cannot** meet you in the parking lot or in front of the school.

## Parking and pick up

When picking up or dropping off your children, please park your car at the south side of the building in the school parking lot. Parents are requested to meet their children in the security of the school either outside the classroom or at the lobby entrance. Please remember to inform the teacher of the pick-up arrangements with your child.

## Grades

There are two progress report cards sent home, one in January and one in June. Students will be evaluated in each course class participation, projects, and homework. Please note that if assignments are not completed, teachers may not be able to properly evaluate the student. Passing at all grade levels is subject to review by the teachers and Principal. In order to graduate with full honours, a student must pass all grade 7 courses to the teachers' satisfaction and produce a written research project.

## Teachers

Teachers are available for consultation about your child; please make arrangements through the office. Parent-Teacher interviews can be arranged any time a parent or teacher deems it necessary.

## Homework

Teachers will explain their individual homework expectation at the beginning of the school year.

**It is essential that children bring all necessary books, notes, pencils and supplies to every class. A separate book bag for Jewish school with all supplies would be a great help.**

## School Property/Lost Books

Please remind your children to respect school property and that we share the space with other schools.

Parents will be charged the replacement cost for any school books or property not returned by the end of the school year.

## **Snow closing and emergencies**

A recorded message will be left on the school telephone answering machine when the school will be closed or if some unexpected change has occurred. In addition every effort will be made to notify the parents by e-mail and by posting a bulletin on our website – [www.omjs.ca](http://www.omjs.ca). School closures will be posted by 8:30 AM.

## **Recess**

There is one main recess, with some in-class breaks. (10:45 – 10:55 am)

Recess is to be used for snacking (peanut free & kosher please!) and washroom visits. Eating and drinking is not permitted during class times. If there are specific concerns, please address them to the teacher or principal.

The gym or the cafeteria and a quiet room will be designated places of games and recess activity. Teachers' Assistants and members of the teaching staff will supervise the students. Since safety and security are our prime concerns, improper behaviour will not be tolerated.

## **Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

As part of our curriculum, this topic is introduced at Grade 6 and continues at Grade 7 in the Synagogue Skills sessions of our Traditions curriculum. Please note that we do not prepare students for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We can, however assist in arranging instruction outside of class time by providing you with a list of qualified specialists. Those planning a Bar/Bat Mitzvah are advised to consult with their synagogues well in advance to assure that the program we provide meets their needs.

## **Remedial**

Although we will provide Teachers' Assistants to help children in class who experience challenges with the curriculum, particularly Hebrew language, more intensive tutoring may be arranged within school hours. Please consult with the teacher and Principal if you are concerned about your child's progress.

## **Payment of Tuition Fees**

Tuition fees must be paid either in full at the time of registration, or with post-dated cheques. Post-dated cheques must be dated the 1st of each month, with the final cheque issued no later than June 1. A non-refundable deposit is included. A charge will apply for any NSF cheque.

Financial assistance is available based on a determination of need and can be applied for, at, or prior to, registration by approaching the President, Registrar or Treasurer. Any information collected will be kept in the strictest of confidence.

# COURSE OUTLINES

## Kindergarten

Kindergarten children, K4 and/or K5 at varying levels of expectation, will be introduced to Hebrew Aleph-Bet letters, and early stages of recognition of colour, numbers, and days of the week in Hebrew. They will learn about Jewish Holiday traditions in a rudimentary way, will learn basic prayers, and History as presented through Bible stories. They will be involved in lots of singing, dancing, story readings and arts and crafts of Jewish symbols pertinent to the calendar.

## Grade One

### *Hebrew*

Grade one students will broaden their knowledge of the Hebrew language and will begin to decode the Aleph-Bet letters and the vowels. The goal, by the end of the year, will be to familiarize themselves, print and recite the Hebrew letters. They will develop and master early reading of a wide range of new Hebrew words. Texts: The Hebrew Primer, Printed Script workbook, Derech Ha Bina and other resources.

### *Traditions*

In addition to appreciating the major Jewish holiday customs and practices, the children will also be introduced to early history and culture through Biblical stories, Hebrew songs, art and crafts of Jewish symbols pertinent to the Calendar. Texts: My Synagogue, Tzedakah, Modern Hebrew # 1.

## Grade Two

### *Hebrew*

The students will review the Aleph-Bet letters and vowel sounds. Emphasis will be on reading words and short phrases, building vocabulary, grammar and early comprehension. Cursive writing script will be introduced. Some of the concepts also introduced will be: possessive pronouns; question words; prepositions; adjectives; masculine/feminine gender specific language; numbers 1-10; colours; seasons; weather; and the months of the year - to name a few Texts and Resources: I can read Hebrew, Cursive Writing workbook, Derech Binah –Bet, Ma Tov Text and workbook and Yesodot Ha Lashon. Modern Hebrew #1 & # 2.

### *Traditions*

The children will learn and explore the traditions of the major Jewish holidays, the customs and their practices through vocabulary, games, songs, crafts, projects and stories. They will celebrate all the holidays – Shabbat inclusive; and will learn the myriad of symbols/icons that are attached.

### *History*

The early history and cultural development of Jewish ancestry are introduced to the children with the main stories and characters as revealed during the Biblical period. They will use a workbook that will help them understand the text and the associated values to be considered. Text: Torah and YOU #1; The First Book of Bible Heroes.

## **Grade Three**

### *Hebrew*

The students will review the Aleph-Bet letters and vowel sounds, and the Hebrew cursive writings, learned the previous year. Emphasis will be on stories, role/game playing to increase vocabulary and fluency with respect to reading and comprehension. Other concepts to be introduced include masculine/feminine gender specific language, numbers 1-20 +; numbers by the 10's, colours, weather, climates, seasons, and common questions. Text and Resources: I can read Hebrew; Derech Binah – Bet, Shalom Evrete #1; Yesh Lanu Lamma #1/#2; Yesodot Halashon #1/#2.

### *Traditions*

The children will learn the traditions of the major Jewish holidays, songs and engage in crafts and special activities. Prayers over wine, bread, Shabbat, and selected holidays. Text: Hebrew through Prayer # 1.

### *History*

Continuation of the early history and cultural development of Jewish ancestry and belief system are explored via stories, characters as revealed during the Biblical period. The students will use a workbook that will assist further understanding of the text and its associated value system. Texts: Torah and You #1/#2, The Second Book of Bible Heroes.

## **Grade Four**

### *Hebrew*

The students will continue to enhance their Hebrew vocabulary, reading and conversation skills by exploring and the usage of general language rules and skills including proper use of infinitives, adjectives, opposites, question words, simple phrases, and fundamental conversational Hebrew to facilitate fluency and comprehension. Text: Darkonim; Shalom Evrete; Yesodot Ha Lashon#1.

### *Traditions*

The students will study the major holiday traditions and special events in greater depth and explore the meaning of Judaism as was practiced and described by different Jewish communities around the world. The cultural customs will be compared when studying Jewish life-cycle events. A unit of study of Synagogue Skills will be introduced and will include the Shabbat Service and important blessings and prayers. Texts: Be a Mench Campaign; Hebrew through Prayer #1/#2.

### *History*

The students will continue the adventure of discovery of Jewish history from the biblical period to the post-biblical periods using two approaches which include the value systems developed and the complex nationhoodbuilding and the impact of forced migrations and displacements from their homeland-Israel of old-on through their Jewish experiences and influences in the secular world. Texts: Prophets, Writings and You, Introduction to Jewish History-unit 1 (from Abraham to the Sages) and other resources.

## **Grade Five**

### *Hebrew*

Progress in reading conversation and grammar will be encouraged/monitored as well as improving Hebrew writing skills. Students will be engaged to review and comprehend the materials presented at their level. Texts: Shalom Evrete – #1/#2, Yesodot Ha Lashon #1/#2, and other resources.

### *History & Traditions*

More in-depth examination of Jewish history, traditions and ritual practices will be studied. The survey course will cover the Jewish historic periods from early Diaspora to the later part of the 18th century. Also, comparisons of different global customs will be surveyed and reviewed and life cycle milestones will be explored from current perspectives. The Synagogue skills unit will be learned with the introduction of the notions of prayer and its meanings via a comprehensive workbook with emphasis placed on Shabbat services. Texts: Introduction to Jewish History – Part Two; Hebrew through Prayer #2; The Book of Jewish Life.

### *Yiddish & Yiddishkeit*

This course will introduce the Yiddish language and rich culture with the use of stories, poems and songs. The Yiddish alphabet and vowels will be taught and compared with the Hebrew alphabet. Skills in early and basic translations of common expressions, days of the week, colours, and numbers will be encouraged via oral/tactile/experiential activities.

## **Grade Six**

### *Hebrew*

Greater appreciation and reinforcement of the Modern Hebrew language will continue with emphasis on: verbal game playing (jeopardy/ bingo); role-play; songs, and building conversational phrases/skills. More advanced learning skills re: reading; writing, decoding/ grammar/etc. will be taught based on individual levels. "One on one" will be emphasized (other resource teacher's/teachers' aides involvement). Richer vocabulary, as well as biblical sources (prayers, bible readings, etc) will be used. Texts: Yesodot HaLashon A/ B; Siddurim; Darkonim Units; Shalom Evrete #2.

### *Traditions*

In-depth studies of the calendar, languages and festivals of Jews around the world, as well as origins and present day meanings of Jewish customs will continue. Key elements will include: Jewish education, life cycles; history of conversion; marriages; and, family life/choices as they developed over time. In the synagogue skills segment, the required skills for Bar/Bat Mitzvah services are introduced with a comprehensive review of its historical and cultural roots to current practices. The students will also be introduced to Torah Scriptures, selected blessings and possibly the cantillation principles of Torah or Haftarah nigunim. Introduction and reference to the various Judaic/Chalachic texts will occur throughout the year.

### *Yiddish & Yiddishkeit*

A conversational/ historical approach will be implemented throughout this course. Review of the alphabet and language rules in contrast to the Hebrew will be discussed;

as well as the languages' impact on the culture of the Jewish peoples in the eastern part of Europe. Questions such as why was this language utilized in such an extensive way will be answered. In addition, its impact on Holiday traditions, etc. with teaching of songs, stories and poems from a "Yiddish Perspective" will be woven throughout the course of the year and discussion of the "Life Cycle." There is the possibility of guest speakers.

### *Biblical History*

The students will continue with the history material started in the previous year and will proceed from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Focus will be placed on understanding events in Jewish history in the context of the history of western civilisation. The survey will also include the perspectives of the different streams of Judaism and the many biblical characters that have affected the world at large. Role-play, discussions, as well as keeping a "travel brochure" of chronological emigrations will be used as learning tools. Text: Introduction to Jewish History – Part 2; Israel; and various other Jewish history and activity books.

## **Grade Seven**

### *Hebrew*

The Hebrew language skills that have been learned/introduced will be reinforced through the continuation of building conversational phrases/skills; reading from various texts and resources in Hebrew, short stories, songs, etc.. More advanced learning skills re: reading; writing, decoding/ grammar/etc. will be taught based on individual levels. "One on one" will be emphasized (other resource teachers/teachers' aides involvement). Richer - more complex- vocabulary will be utilized throughout the year. Writing skills and other aspects of Hebrew language acquisition will be monitored (songs, prayers, bible readings, etc). Texts: Yesodot HaLashon A/ B; Siddurim; Darkonim Units; Shalom Evrete #2 other resource materials.

### *History*

A survey course from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to Modern day. The students will be introduced to "Israel" from the Birth of Zionism to the Present. Discussions will include the early Zionists; the pioneers in Israel and the Jewish population of that time; the Holocaust; Aliyah "Bet"; Life and the continual struggle of the Israeli Nation; and Life in the "Diaspora" (Canadian Jewry). Questions will be explored and studied to reveal the strong connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel; By exploring the recent past and current events (sometimes from current headlines) students will be sensitised to the legacy of the past, and to the current connection to world Jewry. Discussions, debates and out-sourced reading materials will be employed. Texts: Israel, the Holocaust, Jewish History and other resources.

### *Yiddish & Yiddishkeit*

A conversational/ historical approach will be implemented throughout this course. Review of the alphabet and language rules in contrast to the Hebrew will be discussed; as well as the language's impact on the culture of the Jewish peoples in the eastern part of Europe. Questions such as why was this language utilized in such an extensive way will be answered. In addition, its impact on Holiday traditions, etc. with teaching of songs, stories and poems from a "Yiddish Perspective" will be woven throughout the course of the year and discussion of the "Life Cycle." There is a possibility of guest speakers.

**Graduation requirement – research paper**

As a graduation requirement, grade seven students must write a research paper on a topic of Jewish interest (to be approved by the principal).

Each paper will be considered for the **Dr. Norman Barwin Award**.

## Academic Calendar 2008-2009

2008-2009	Academic calendar	2008-2009	Academic calendar
September 7	1st Day of school 1st Day of Registration	February 1	classes
September 14	classes	February 8	classes
September 21	classes	February 15	no school
September 28	classes	February 22	classes
Notes	Registrar will be available both September 7th and 14th. 29 – Erev Rosh Hashana 30, 31 – Rosh Hashana	Notes	9 – Tu B'Shevat 16 – Family day
October 5	classes	March 1	classes
October 12	no school	March 8	Purim party
October 19	classes	March 15	no school
October 26	classes	March 22	classes
Notes	8 – Erev Yom Kippur 9 – Yom Kippur 12 - No School (Thanksgiving Weekend) 13 – Erev Succot 21 – Shmeni Atzeret 22 – Simchat Torah	Notes	15 – March Break
November 2	classes	April 5	Model Seder
November 9	classes	April 12	No school
November 16	classes	April 19	classes
November 23	classes	April 26	classes
November 30	classes	Notes	8 - Erev Pesach 8th – First Seder 21 – Yom Ha Shoah 28 – Yom Ha Zicharon 29 – Yom HaAztnaut
Notes	Oct. 28-Nov 11 Holocaust Education weeks (Jewish Federation of Ottawa)	May 3	classes
December 7	Mitzvah Day	May 10	classes
December 14	Chanukah party	May 17	no school
December 21	No school	May 24	classes
December 28	No school	May 31	classes
Notes	21 – First Candle Of Chanukah	Notes	18 – Victoria Day 22 – Yom Yerushalyim
January 4	classes	June 7	classes
January 11	classes	June 14	End-of-year/Graduation ceremony
January 18	classes	Notes	8 – Erev Shavout
January 25	classes		
Notes			