

# THE Hillel Herald



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KIDS  KHDS



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Have a great summer!**

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Above left: Purim and Adar festivities brought big smiles (see pg. 25)  
Below: Teams faced off in epic competition during Color War (see pg. 15)



## 2 From the Administration



**Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski**  
*Head of School*

One of the most beautiful aspects of Jewish life is that gratitude is not reserved for extraordinary moments. We do not wait for miracles to say thank you. Gratitude is woven into our daily routines and embedded throughout our tefillot and mitzvot.

Judaism trains us to notice the blessings that can easily become invisible. From the moment we wake and say *Modeh Ani*, to the brachot we recite throughout the day, we are reminded that our blessings come from Hashem. *Birchot HaShachar* teaches us not to take even our most basic gifts for granted, while *Birkat Hamazon* asks us to pause and appreciate what we have received.

Throughout Tanach, we see the middah of *hakarat hatov* modeled again and again. From Leah expressing gratitude to Hashem at the birth of Yehuda, to Moshe Rabbeinu refusing to strike the water and sand that helped protect him, gratitude emerges as a defining Jewish value.

The phrase *hakarat hatov* literally means “recognizing the good.” Saying thank you is the easy part. Becoming someone who consistently sees the good is where the real work begins. As parents and educators, one of the most powerful tools we have is modeling. When we actively notice and verbalize the good in our lives, our children learn to do the same. Sharing moments of *hashgacha pratit* at the dinner table, keeping a family “Thank You Hashem” journal on your kitchen counter, or simply pausing to acknowledge everyday blessings are simple but powerful ways to cultivate this middah at home.



**Lev Stark, Executive Director**

By the time July arrives in South Florida, we all enter the same seasonal survival program. Step outside. Immediately regret it. Get into the car. Burn both hands on the steering wheel like you are auditioning for a cooking show. Repeat daily until further notice.

Summer is here. And with summer comes something rare during the school year: a chance to slow down long enough to think. During the year, life moves at a pace somewhere between “organized chaos” and “how is it already Purim again?” But summer gives us a moment to reflect and appreciate the people who quietly keep everything running.

That brings me to gratitude. Gratitude sounds simple. We teach it to children constantly. “Say thank you,” “Write the thank-you note,” “No, sending a thumbs-up emoji is not a thank-you note.”

But real gratitude requires noticing the things happening behind the scenes every day. Take the business office. Nobody wakes up excited for a tuition conversation. If the business office calls, most parents immediately begin mentally reviewing every form they forgot to submit since 2021.

And yet, behind the scenes, the business office helps hold the entire school together.

While teachers inspire students in classrooms, the business office makes sure the lights stay on, payroll happens on time, the buses run, and the air conditioning survives another Florida summer.

An added gift of *hakarat hatov* is that it feeds itself. The more we train ourselves to recognize the good around us, the more goodness we discover.

As I complete my first year as Head of School, I am filled with gratitude for our passionate educators, dedicated lay leaders, and deeply engaged parent community. Over the course of this year, I have witnessed countless acts of kindness, partnership, and support that have reminded me how fortunate I am to be part of the KHDS family.

May we continue to recognize the blessings that surround us, appreciate one another, and work together to accomplish great things for our children, our school, and our community.

Wishing everyone a wonderful summer.



Honestly, maintaining a functioning A/C in August may qualify as a modern miracle.

Schools rely on countless moving parts most families never see. Budgets, financial aid, contracts, tuition management, logistics, supplies, and approximately 41,409 emails. That number may sound exaggerated. Unfortunately, it is not.

But what makes a great business office special is not just efficiency. It is remembering that behind every account is a family. Behind every payment plan is a parent balancing camp, groceries, orthodontics, and somehow still paying for eggs.

That work requires patience, compassion, and the ability to answer the same question seventeen times while somehow still sounding cheerful.

Jewish tradition calls this *hakarat hatov*, recognizing the good around us. Before coffee, before phones, before the WhatsApp groups begin exploding at 6:14 a.m., we begin the day with gratitude. There is wisdom in that.

As another school year comes to a close, I feel deeply grateful to everyone who helps make our community feel like family: teachers, administrators, office staff, maintenance teams, security personnel, volunteers, parents, students, and yes, even the business office.

Especially the business office. And if you receive an email from them this summer, try not to panic immediately. That alone would demonstrate tremendous personal growth.



**Hadassah Smolarcik**  
*Judaic Studies Principal, Grades 1-8*

Each morning, we recite the bracha “*She’asah Li Kol Tzorki*”—thanking Hashem “who has provided for all of our needs.” Interestingly, this bracha is written in the past tense, while the rest of the morning brachot are phrased in the present tense.

The Vilna Gaon explains that this bracha alludes to the creation of the world itself—that the entire world was created for the benefit of mankind. We thank Hashem for allowing us to enjoy and benefit from everything He placed in this world.

Rav Wolbe, in his sefer *Alei Shor*, develops this idea even further. When Yaakov Avinu meets Eisav, he tells him, “*Yesh li kol*”—“I have everything.” Eisav responds, “*Yesh li rav*”—“I have a lot.” Yaakov viewed all of his possessions as kol; he felt complete and satisfied with what he had. He focused on appreciating all that Hashem had given him. Eisav, on the other hand, was never satisfied. Although he possessed much, he always desired more.

Reciting this bracha each morning allows us to reflect on the many blessings we have, to appreciate them, and to thank Hashem for them. It helps us offset the constant social pressures to want newer, more, better, and faster. We must teach our children to appreciate and value what they have instead of focusing on what others possess. This bracha does not thank Hashem for giving us everything we want, but rather for giving us everything we need. Hashem provides each of us with exactly what we need to fulfill our unique mission in life.

Imagine if we truly focused on this bracha every morning—how much heartache could be removed from our lives. How often during the day do we complain, wishing things were different, thinking that if only we had this or that, we would be happier? This bracha strengthens our emunah that Hashem is intimately involved in our lives every moment of every day and that He gives us precisely what we need in order to become the best version of ourselves.

Each morning, as we recite this bracha written in the singular form, we are reminded of our own unique relationship with Hashem. He cares for each and every one of us personally and allows us to benefit from so many amazing and wonderful things. When we focus on appreciation, we take important steps toward becoming the very best that we can be.

With this, I conclude by thanking Hashem for all that He provides for us here at KHDS—enabling us to teach Torah to our students, to instill within them a love of Torah and its beautiful messages each day, and to help guide them on their journey toward becoming Bnei and Bnot Torah who will carry the torch of Torah forward.



Middle school students participated in a *Bracha Bee* as part of our *Bracha of the Month* program. Kol Hakavod to first-place winner, **Gabriella Rosenberg** (8th grade).

# MAZAL TOV TO THE LOWER SCHOOL BRACHA BEE WINNERS

- 1ST GRADE: **LOLA KROLL**
- 2ND GRADE: **JESSE LANDSBERG**
- 3RD GRADE: **JULIA LERMAN**
- 4TH GRADE: **NOAH WAINTRAUB**
- 5TH GRADE: **ANNAELLE SCHLAGER**



Students who participated in the *Sunday Morning Learning Program* enjoyed a day at the ballpark to see the Marlins play.



3rd graders practiced matching nouns and verbs in Hebrew to write beautiful sentences.



Kol Hakavod to **Annaelle Schlager**, winner of the elementary school *Aluf Ivrit*.

## 4 From the Administration



**Shireen Butman**  
**General Studies Principal, Grades 1-5**

“הַכֶּרַת הַטּוֹב הֵיא יְסוּד גָּדוֹל בְּעִבּוּדַת ה'”  
“Recognizing and expressing gratitude (*Hakarat Hatov*) is a great foundation in serving Hashem.”  
- Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler

Gratitude is a powerful lens through which we can reflect, grow, and appreciate the people and experiences that shape our journey. In education, gratitude is especially meaningful because so much of our work is rooted not in immediate results, but in planting seeds that blossom over time.

Educator and philosopher John Dewey once said, “*Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.*” As educators, we have the privilege of living that truth each day through our interactions with students, families, and one another.

As this is my final *Hillel Herald*, and as I look back on five years of service and the tremendous privilege of working at KHDS, I am filled with gratitude.

I am most grateful for the exceptional team of teachers in the Lower School General Studies Department who worked alongside me to enrich and strengthen our curriculum in both literacy and STEM. Together, we embraced opportunities for growth while ensuring that innovation remained rooted in sound educational practice. Our teachers consistently demonstrated openness, not only to new ideas and curriculum initiatives, but also to the professional development necessary to support and sustain those changes.

They welcomed collaboration, engaged in inquiry, pushed one another thoughtfully, and continuously strived for excellence while respecting the foundation of what it means to be passionate, reflective, and well-informed educators. Their willingness to grow, innovate, and learn together created a culture that always kept students at the center of our work.

I am equally grateful for the opportunity to work with an incredible range of students over these years. Students who, at times, needed support, enrichment, encouragement, and someone to believe in them. Students who needed a hand to hold during moments of struggle, reassurance when learning felt difficult, and the confidence that they were capable of more than they imagined.

One of the greatest gifts in education is being able to look back and witness the impact of years of collective effort. It is truly heartwarming to see the culmination of support, passion, and dedication come together when teachers and administrators can reflect on the remarkable students we have helped shape, support, guide and enrich.

Education is built upon relationships. It is the daily moments, small conversations, extra support, shared celebrations, and unwavering belief in children that leave lasting impressions. The work of educators is often quiet and unseen in the moment, yet its impact reaches far beyond the classroom walls and across generations.

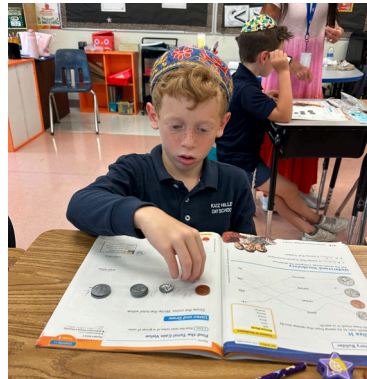
As Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks beautifully stated, “*Education is the conversation between generations.*” Through that conversation, teachers help shape tomorrow’s leaders, innovators, thinkers, and changemakers—one child at a time. The lessons taught today, the values instilled, and the relationships built become part of the foundation upon which our students will continue to grow and lead.

I leave this role with profound gratitude for the educators who dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to our students and for the opportunity to be part of a team committed to growth, excellence, and the belief that every child’s academic and emotional success matters.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and restful summer break.



We witnessed phenomenal sportsmanship as students raced to solve multiplication problems with both accuracy and precision at the 3rd grade Multiplication Bee.



Making “cents” of math! 2nd graders began their unit on money with lots of hands-on practice working with coins to identify their values and counting collections using skip counting (by 25s, 10s, 5s, and 1s). It was great to see such focus and engagement as they built these important real-world skills.



3rd and 4th graders applied real-world math skills through an exciting Winter Olympics unit. They created event schedules using elapsed time, analyzed weather forecasts with temperature data, calculated statistics from Olympic events, and managed budgets while “shopping” for souvenirs. From multi-step word problems to graphing and comparing data, math became meaningful, hands-on, and fun.



4th graders explored plant growth and life cycle through a hands-on experiment. They placed pinto beans in damp paper towels and observed them over the course of a week as they absorbed water and began to sprout. Once the seeds developed roots and shoots, students transferred their seedlings into soil, giving them the opportunity to continue growing in a new environment.



**Rina Lanner**  
*General Studies Principal, Middle School*

One of my favorite moments in the school day occurs not during a special program, a championship game, or a school-wide celebration, but in the final seconds of a class period. As students gather their books and head into the hallway, it is not uncommon to hear them call out, "Thank you!" to their teacher.

The words are brief, almost routine. Yet they reflect something significant. In a world that often moves quickly from one experience to the next, pausing to express appreciation is a powerful act. It acknowledges that someone has invested time, effort, and care on our behalf. More importantly, it reflects one of the most fundamental values we hope to instill in our students: *hakarat hatov*—the recognition and appreciation of the good that we receive from others and from Hashem.

In many ways, *hakarat hatov* is more than a character trait. It is a lens through which we view the world. It teaches us to notice what is often taken for granted, to recognize the contributions of others, and to understand that none of us achieves success alone.

Halacha teaches that gratitude should be among the first thoughts that greet us each day. We begin every morning with *Modeh Ani*, thanking Hashem for the gift of life before we ask for anything else. It is noteworthy that the tefillah begins with *Modeh*—"give thanks"—before *Ani*—"I." In a subtle but profound way, Chazal teach that gratitude comes before self. Before focusing on our own needs, accomplishments, or aspirations, we first acknowledge the gifts we have already received. This daily practice reminds us that appreciation should precede expectation and that recognizing the *brachot* in our lives is itself a form of *avodat Hashem*.

As I reflect on this school year, I am filled with gratitude. I am grateful to our students, whose energy, curiosity, and enthusiasm fill our hallways every day. Middle school is a time of tremendous growth and change, and our students continually inspire us with their willingness to learn, take risks, deepen their Jewish identities, and strive to become the best versions of themselves.

I am grateful to our faculty and staff, who bring wisdom, dedication, patience, and care to their work each day. They model not only academic excellence, but also the Torah values that we hope our students will carry with them long after they leave our classrooms.

And I am especially grateful to you, our parents. The partnership between home and school is one of the greatest strengths of our school. Together, we share the sacred responsibility of educating our children and helping them grow as knowledgeable, compassionate, and committed Jews. Thank you for sharing your children with us this year. Thank you for your partnership, your trust, and your commitment to our shared mission. It has been a privilege to learn and grow together as a school community.

As the summer begins, I hope we all find opportunities to cultivate that awareness. Amid family vacations, camp experiences, and well-deserved rest, may we notice the blessings that often go unspoken and be grateful for them!



The *Tzniut is Cute* fashion show hit the runway on May 13th. This fashion show was a fun and inspiring event celebrating the beauty of dressing with both style and *Tzniut* values. Our 8th grade students did an amazing job modeling a variety of fashionable and *tzniut* styles, while also taking the lead in organizing the event and selling clothing. Their hard work and enthusiasm helped create an exciting and empowering atmosphere!



Just before leaving for Shavuot break, 7.3 math students enjoyed an escape room activity filled with questions about the Chag and numbers related to it.



The annual 8th grade girls vs. staff dodgeball game was filled with laughter, teamwork, and friendly competition! From incredible catches to epic dodges, everyone had a blast making memories and celebrating the end of the year.



Ribbit! 7th graders dissect frogs in science class!

## 6 From the Administration



**Gwenn Baer**  
*Early Childhood Principal*

*Hakarat HaTov: Teaching Gratitude in Early Childhood*

One of the most beautiful values we nurture in our Rosalind Henwood Early Childhood Learning Center is *hakarat hatov*—recognizing and appreciating the good that others do for us. Gratitude is a cornerstone of Jewish life, helping children develop a positive outlook, stronger relationships, and a deeper awareness of all of the wonder that surrounds them each day.

Our classrooms are filled with opportunities to practice gratitude in meaningful and age-appropriate ways. Whether children are thanking a friend for sharing, expressing appreciation to a Morah who helped them, or acknowledging the many people who contribute to our school community, they are learning to notice and value the kindness and support they receive from others. Simple words like “thank you” become powerful lessons in recognizing goodness and showing appreciation.

Our Morahs intentionally model and encourage gratitude throughout the day. Through conversations, stories, songs, and classroom experiences, children learn to pause and reflect on the people and moments that bring joy to their lives. During tefillah, brachot, and lessons, children are reminded that gratitude is not only something we say—it is a way of seeing the world.

When we teach young children to focus on what they have rather than what they lack, we help cultivate happiness, resilience, and empathy. By fostering *hakarat hatov* in early childhood, we are guiding our students to become thoughtful individuals who recognize all of the goodness in their lives and appreciate the people who help them grow. These lessons create a foundation that will continue to enrich their relationships, their Jewish identity, and their connection to the world around them for years to come.



In science class, students learned that metamorphosis is a “magical” transformation where some animals completely change their body shape as they grow.



Inspired by Paul Klee, students explored the magic of lines in art, bringing creativity to life with the idea that “a line is a dot taking a walk.”



**Mr. Leo Terrell** made a special visit to KHDS as Board President **Daniel J. Katz**, Head of School **Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski**, and our EC students proudly greeted him prior to his appearance at this year's *Annual Tribute Evening* where he was the recipient of the KHDS ‘Defender of the Jewish People’ award.



**Ayala Baum**  
 Director of Student Support Services

*Nurturing Potential Through The Lens of Hakarat HaTov*

In the realm of diverse education, progress rarely follows a straight, predictable line. For students with learning disabilities and unique cognitive profiles, milestones are achieved through incremental steps, abundant patience, and sheer resilience.

As educators and administrators, our daily mission is rooted in the foundational Jewish concept of *Hakarat HaTov*. It is not just translated as saying “thank you” but literally as “recognizing the good” that already exists.

When we view a child with divergent needs through the lens of *Hakarat HaTov*, our educational paradigm shifts from a deficit-based model to one of “asset-based appreciation.” Instead of focusing heavily on what a student struggles to do, we train our eyes to consciously identify and celebrate the unique strengths and perspectives that child brings to our school community.

This educational philosophy is deeply anchored in our sacred tradition. King Solomon directs us in *Proverbs (22:6)*: “Educate a child according to his way” (*Chanoch l’na’ar al pi darko*). Every child possesses a distinct path of development, and true gratitude in education means honoring that individualized journey rather than forcing a standard mold.

For a student navigating a learning difference, a “small” victory of mastering a tricky phoneme, self-regulating during a stressful transition, or grasping a new math concept is a monumental triumph. By practicing *Hakarat HaTov*, we actively sanctify these breakthroughs. We embody the classic wisdom of Ben Zoma in *Pirkei Avot (4:1)*: “Who is rich? One who rejoices in their portion.” When we rejoice in each student’s unique portion, we foster a sacred, inclusive space where neurodivergent children feel seen, safe, and valued. As we reflect on the end of this school year, let us look upon our classrooms with grateful eyes, recognizing the divine spark and distinct goodness within every single learner.

**HERO’S WELCOME**



In honor of Jewish Disabilities Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM), KHDS was thrilled to welcome a real-life hero in February. **Jacob Esnard**, a Jewish firefighter for the city of Miami, and son of our very own **Ayala Baum**, shared how he has overcome his disability.

When he was a child, Jacob was diagnosed with both autism and ADHD, formerly known as Asperger’s. Now it is part of what is called Autism Spectrum Disorder and means that Jacob’s brain has a different way of processing the world.

Jacob shared with the students that autism looks different for each person, and he had a harder time with social signals. He explained that he may interpret sensory information, such as sight, sound, and touch, differently, so a sound or smell that doesn’t bother others may affect him more. He also shared how he is tuned in to sounds and details in his surroundings and can quickly spot potential dangers.

He told the students that his ADHD makes him incredibly fast at making decisions and noticing small changes in his environment. His ADHD speeds up his thinking, and that fast brain is exactly what makes Jacob so good at reacting quickly during an emergency.



The highlight was him sharing his love for firefighting, his journey to become a firefighter, and learning to embrace his disability. The students loved when he put on his bunker gear, and they were able to interact with him.

**KHDS WINS BIG AT CIJE VEX ROBOTICS TOURNAMENT**



On April 29th, the Middle School VEX Robotics Team, led by **Mr. Landreth** and **Mrs. Butman**, traveled to New York to compete in the *CIJE VEX Robotics Tournament* held at the Armory. The team earned its stripes after winning all three top spots at the South Florida tournament, held at BMA, in February (see page 15). The New York tournament brought together more than 150 teams from over 40 Jewish schools and yeshivot from New York, New Jersey, Florida, and beyond.

After two hours of grueling scrimmages, all five KHDS teams advanced to the playoffs, which were comprised of 32 teams. We are so proud of the entire team for their hard work, teamwork, and passion for robotics. KHDS won big, placing 1st, 3rd, and 4th! A huge thank you to the team’s advisor, **Mr. Spencer Landreth**, for his guidance throughout the year, and to the chaperones who accompanied the team. These achievements are a testament to the students’ collaboration, enthusiasm, determination, and strong work ethic. Kol HaKavod to the entire team!



## 8 HilleLites

### ANNUAL TRIBUTE EVENING IN REVIEW

On May 26, 2026, over 320 members of our 'KHDS Family' gathered at Congregation B'nai Torah for an incredible night of community and ruach at the *KHDS Annual Tribute Evening*. Proceeds of this major fundraiser support the school's scholarship fund and the half-million dollars KHDS has designated to assist families in need of a Jewish education.

This year the event celebrated the end of another amazing school year and paid tribute to our esteemed honorees, **Mr. Leo Terrell**, Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the US Department of Justice and the president's appointee to combat antisemitism, and *Faculty Dedication Award* recipients **Ofra Struogano** and **Rabbi Matan Wexler**.

Guests were amazed at the gorgeous transformation of the ballroom and enjoyed exquisite cuisine and cocktails while having a chance to socialize during the dinner, including mingling with **Mr. Terrell**. The *Inaugural Auction and Raffle* was also open for bidding and a beautiful visual display was created by the auction committee to encourage even more excitement, which ultimately raised close to \$30,000! Thank you to the committee, all of our raffle prize donors, and participants for making this such a tremendous success.

Guests then moved to the sanctuary for the tribute program, which began with the national anthems led by KHDS parent **Ahron Fraiman**, followed by Tehillim led by KHDS parent, alumnus, and Treasurer **Danny Krasna**. Board President and KHDS grandparent **Daniel J. Katz** gave his remarks and presented **Mr. Terrell** with the *Defender of the Jewish People* award in recognition of his unwavering support of Israel. **Mr. Terrell** then spoke about his commitment to fighting antisemitism.

The faculty dedication award video adorned the screens, spotlighting the achievements of our honorees, **Ofra Struogano** for 26 years of service and **Rabbi Matan Wexler** for 12 years of service as he and his family prepare to make Aliyah. Also recognized was **Mrs. Yaffi Wexler** for her support and years of volunteer work with KHDS PTA and the Development Office. The faculty honorees were then presented with their milestone awards.

Head of School, **Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski**, delivered a meaningful D'var Torah and highlighted some of his personal journey during his inaugural KHDS year before introducing the feature video, "*Growing up in KHDS*." Following the video, **Rabbi Schwersenski** announced the launch of the new matching campaign, *Together We Build, Together They Play*, to fund a brand-new, state-of-the-art playground and turf field that will elevate the KHDS play experience. Thanks to the generosity of the **Shapiro Family**, every dollar raised will be matched 2x doubling the impact of this fundraising effort and bringing us even closer to creating this extraordinary outdoor environment.

The closing act featured comedian **Dovi Neuburger**, as he entertained guests with his witty Jewish perspective. The evening concluded with hot chocolate, a coffee bar, and sinful sweets as well as a frisbee giveaway in honor of the new campaign.

We express Hakarat Hatov to dinner co-chairs **Rachel Fraiman** and **Caroline Goldstein**, the auction committee of **Sarah Kaplan**, **Elyssa Kirshner**, **Danielle Schantz**, and **Nina Schwartz**, as well as to those whose tireless efforts and countless hours were spent planning every detail of the evening. We are deeply appreciative of everyone who worked so hard to make this event and auction a success. And finally, sincere thanks to everyone who generously supported this fundraiser, KHDS, and Jewish education.



Scan the QR code to view the complete list of acknowledgments, event photos, videos, and donor scroll!



Photo credits:  
Shlomi Cohen, iPicture Magnet

**POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE: CLASS OF '26 GRADUATES**



On June 14th, 71 students participated in the 28th Annual Commencement Exercises for the 8th grade Class of 2026. Following the processional, Head of School **Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski** extended a warm welcome and introduced **Mr. Ahron Fraiman**, father of a graduate, who led the singing of the *Star-Spangled Banner* and *Hatikvah*. Next, **Rabbi Matan Wexler** led the audience in the recitation of a chapter from Tehillim, acknowledging the current tensions in Israel. **Rabbi Schwersenski** then acknowledged the administration, faculty, staff, parents, and those families graduating their youngest child and shared a moving message with the graduates. Board President **Daniel J. Katz** addressed the graduates with an inspirational message as he challenged them to live meaningful lives, with Torah, middot, and Israel at their center.

8th grade graduate **Joseph Tarlowe** represented his peers and delivered a beautiful D'var Torah. Yearbook editors **Eliana Fraiman**, **Sadie Klinger**, **Gabriella Rosenberg**, and **Yishai Steinberg** spoke about the meaning of this year's yearbook, "The KHDS Post," and thanked **Morah Hadassah** and those who assisted with its production. PTA President **Anna Jacobs** was introduced, offering well wishes and presenting siddurim as gifts to the graduates on behalf of the PTA. The graduation film, produced by **Zachary Cohen/Coco Productions**, graced the silver screen and was followed by the presentation of diplomas and siddurim by **Rabbi Schwersenski**, **Daniel J. Katz**, **Morah Hadassah**, and **Morah Lanner**.



A special shout-out was given to Assistant to the Head of School **Jill Kaminetzky** for her tireless efforts and behind-the-scenes planning of every detail of the graduation and to alumni parent **Caroline Katz** for photographing the 8th grade portraits (as well as many of their portraits when they were in kindergarten) and creating the photo boards that classmates were able to sign with special messages. A reception took place after the ceremony for the graduates and their families. Mazal Tov!

8th grade graduation photo credits: **Leonardo Moran**

- Ezra Abed
- Ella Abitbol
- Ariel Abittan
- David Abudraham
- David Averbook
- Judah Averbuch
- Rachel Avezbadalov\*
- Yonah Berkowitz
- Ariel Blanka\*
- Max Bornstein
- Aliya Cohen
- Noah Dahan
- Asher Daum
- Joshua Davidson
- Rafi Dwek
- Eva Einhorn
- Tzeira Ellis
- Ruth Epstein\*
- Avner Farbstein
- Nava Federman
- Hudson Fellman
- Eliana Fraiman\*
- Leora Fuzailov
- Naomi Gelman
- Amichai Goldberg
- Noa Goldman\*
- Yossi Goldman
- Manny Goldstein
- Shylie Gulko
- Karen Hanina
- Emma Hofman
- Yoni Iskowitz
- Ryan Jacobs
- Jonah Jacobs
- Tali Kanoff
- Esti Kantor

- Ari Katz
- Raphael Klein
- Sadie Klinger
- Leah Korkos
- Henry Listhaus
- Ori Makhluף
- Daniella Markovich
- Avigail Molayev
- Yael Nissim Geter
- Eli Pardau
- Ashley Reichenbach
- Eitan Reitblat
- Gabriella Rosenberg
- Atara Rosenberg
- Noah Rosenblat
- Zevi Rotenberg
- Mason Sanders
- Yosef Schwartz
- Levi Simakhov
- Leila Singer\*
- Joshua Stein
- Yishai Stein
- Yishai Steinberg
- Joseph Tarlowe\*
- Abigail Trauring
- Ari Turik
- Becca Weinstein
- Rebecca Weisfeld
- Safi Welner
- Eliana Wolgin
- Atara Wolk
- Ittai Yatzkan
- Kira Zangre
- Orly Zaretsky
- Sophie Zour

\* National Junior Honor Society

**KINDERGARTEN MILESTONE GRADUATION**



KHDS kindergarten graduation took place on June 10th as we celebrated 60 adorable students moving up to the next exciting chapter of their journey as first graders.

The graduation began with an inspiring D'var Torah from **Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski**, followed by a warm welcome from Principal **Mrs. Gwenn Baer**. The children delighted everyone with heartfelt English and Hebrew songs, and each graduate was proudly recognized individually. Families then enjoyed

a beautiful video presentation lovingly prepared by the parent graduation committee. After the ceremony, families gathered together for a joyful reception to celebrate this very special milestone.

We are so proud of our kindergarten students for all of their hard work, growth, and accomplishments throughout the year. A heartfelt thank you goes to the dedicated coordinators and teachers who helped make the program so meaningful: **Judith Reichenbach**, **Kelly Argoetti**, **Tami Gerlitz**, **Saray Atias**, **Karen Fromowitz**, **Yael Geller**, **Ofra Struogano**, **Judy Mazor**, **Ilana Stein**, **Cheryl Mirsky**, **Nechama Levin**, and **Lauren Glaun**.

Special thanks as well to **Caroline Katz** for beautifully photographing the event and creating the treasured yearbook and cap-and-gown portraits; **Lisa Pinkis** for her creative art contributions; and to the many individuals whose hard work behind the scenes made the graduation possible: **Lori Landa**, Assistant to the Principal of Early Childhood; **Rabbi Gershon Eisenberger**, Director of Technology; **Bridget Cohn**, **Esteban Mercedes**, **Marcos Hernandez**, and the KHDS maintenance team.

Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to all of the volunteers whose time, energy, and care helped create such a memorable graduation. Thank you to **Rachel Fraiman**—committee chair—along with **Danna Averbook**, **Jennifer Berkowitz**, **Caroline Goldstein**, **Marissa Goldschmidt**, and **Meira Weiss**.

Mazal tov to our graduates and their families on this wonderful achievement!

- Noa Abraham
- Yonatan Aharon
- Benjamin Averbook
- Emma Bar Gimdani
- William Berkowitz
- Liam Bonnardel
- Omer Cabessa
- Daisy Cohen
- Yehonatan Cohen
- Rafael Dahan
- Bella Feldman
- Levi Fellman
- Sarah Fox
- Amelia Fraiman
- Benjamin Galperin
- Charles Geller
- Noah Geller
- Aria Glickman
- Sylvie Goldschmidt
- Avi Goldstein

- Max Goldstein
- Brooke Goodman
- Emma Greenbaum
- Michael Gurfinkel
- Remy Hefter
- Nava Herman
- Rebecca Hofman
- James Hubert
- Lillian Jacobovits
- Rafi Kolodny
- Jacob Krasna
- Elon Lazoff
- Breindy Lempel
- Adam Loren
- Jonah Mandel
- Michal Marin
- Avital Menachem
- Serena Morris
- Jordan Neuman
- Rachel Oppenheimer

- Menachem Raksin
- Tova Rand
- Anaelle Raskas
- Yael Reitblat
- Alexander Ross
- Ariel Ruskin
- Lielle Scher
- Aspen Schwager
- Naomi Seelenfreund
- Ayala Seidenfeld
- Nili Shapiro
- Hannah Shulman
- Ella Strassman
- Ziva Tow
- Daniel Weisfeld
- Miles Weiss
- Leiv Weiss
- Yehuda Wexler
- Naia Yoshia
- Isaac Zisholtz



Kindergarten graduation photo credits: **Shlomi Cohen**, **iPictureMagnet**

# 10 HilleLites

## NATURE'S WONDERS ART GALLERY DEBUTS

On the evening of March 12th, students in Kindergarten through 5th grade proudly showcased their artwork in a beautifully curated *Nature's Wonders Art Gallery*. The event was nothing short of spectacular, enriched by nature-inspired art and highlighting the talents of students who enhanced the evening by playing musical instruments, making it a special experience for all who attended.

A huge thank you to **Lisa Pinkis, Yael Loren, and Sharon Lisker** for their hard work planning this event as well as to **Gwenn Baer, Lori Landa, Bridget Cohn** and the KHDS maintenance team for their additional assistance.

Photo Credits: *Shlomi Cohen, iPicture Magnet*



## CURTAIN CALL: KIDS TIME PROGRAM ANNUAL PERFORMANCE

The *Annual Kids' Time Program (KTP)* performance took place on May 27th at Olympic Heights High School. The show opened with a performance of ballerinas (under the direction of **Joy Deco**) and gymnasts (under the direction of **Coach Maia Shaffer, Dr. Penina Dorfman, and Analise Lopez-Merlot**). *Descendants* was this year's featured drama production, under the direction of show director **Jill Lustig**. An additional female-only performance took place on May 28th. Special thanks to KTP Directors **Julie Abrams** and **Maia Shaffer** for their work on this and to **Rabbi Gershon Eisenberger** for his assistance behind the scenes, including tickets and producing the *PLAYBILL*. Congratulations to student artists **Ella Aronovski, Maya Averbook, and Tobi Gately** on their winning banner design.



Winning banner design by 5th grade artists:

**Ella Aronovski  
Maya Averbook  
Tobi Gately**

View all of the photos on our website.

Photo Credits: *Leonardo Moran*



**PREMIERE OF NAMES, NOT NUMBERS®: A MOVIE IN THE MAKING**

KHDS gratefully acknowledges the Names, Not Numbers® program, which has taught our students about the Holocaust through the accounts of eyewitnesses and provided them with interviewing, filming, and editing skills. The program also enabled the survivors and our students to forge meaningful relationships.

On Tuesday, March 24th, the documentary premiered at Temple Beth Shalom in Century Village. **Rabbi Mordechai Schwersenski** welcomed everyone and opened the program with a chapter of Tehillim for Israel and Jews around the world and inspired us with a meaningful D'var Torah.

The film chronicled the lives of eight Holocaust survivors, as well as the personal experiences of the KHDS 8th grade students who worked on this project since the beginning of the school year under the direction of faculty coordinator **Rabbi Ari Mirzoeff**. We also acknowledge **Dov Rosenberg** (executive producer), **Garrett Geary** (film editor), and **Lou Aguilar** and **Carlos Sanfer** (videographers/instructors).

Special thanks to **Jill Kaminetzky, Rina Lanner, Hadassah Smolarcik, Rebbetzin Yocheved Goldberg, Amy Averbuch, Anna Jacobs, Naomi Katz,** and **Chava Weisstuch**, as well as to all of our parent volunteers who helped with transportation, and to **Congregation Torah Ohr,** and **Congregation Beth Shalom.**

Most of all, we thank **Tova-Fish Rosenberg** (producer and project creator) for creating this innovative curriculum and the survivors who shared their impactful stories: **Rudolph Benzsay, Mary Eckstein, Melvyn Grossman, Leo Kimmel, Elaine Lefkowitz, Eric Lipetz, Ben Milchman,** and **Mickey Warshawski.**

This program has transformed the traditional study of the Holocaust and KHDS has benefited tremendously through our participation in this project.



**WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS (\$500+)**

**~Am HaNetzach~  
ANONYMOUS**

*For families carrying generational trauma—your healing, remembrance, strength, and enduring legacy of survival should continually be supported through education.*

**KEVIN & ANNA JACOBS**

*In memory of Kevin's grandparents and Ryan's great-grandparents: Harold and Miriam Jacobs ~ Henry Bistricher who survived the horrors of the Holocaust and went on to build generations rooted in Torah and Mitzvot.*

**JASON & MAGGIE LISTHAUS**

*In memory of our grandparents, Joseph and Elsie Listhaus, who survived the atrocities of the Holocaust to build better lives for their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. May their memories be a blessing.*

**MICHAEL & AMY TARLOWE AND FAMILY**

*In memory of our dear friend, Henry Frankel, survivor and inspiration to our family and all who knew him.*

**~Nefesh Yehudi~**

**STUART & ELLEN PARDAU**

*In memory of Tova bat Meir, Ethel bat Dov, and Moshe ben Dov massacred at Babi Iyar.*

**THE WELNER FAMILY**

*In honor of Barbara Welner, z"l. Celebrate survival and live to thank Hashem.*

**~Zachor V'Shamor~**

**JOE & DANNA AVERBOOK AND FAMILY**

*In memory of Saba Avigdor.*

**AKIVA & MIRIAM DAUM**

*In honor of the brave survivors; may their stories live on.*

**JOSHUA & DANIELLE LAZOFF**

**Levi Marvin, Elon Solomon, and Kai Josef**

*In honor of Danielle's grandparents and Holocaust survivors, Safta Irene Balsam z"l, Zaydie Marvin Balsam z"l, Frances Flescher (Blau) z"l, Mosher Flescher (z"l), and Papa Zolton Saul Blau, Miami, FL.*

**DAVID & ALLY STEINBERG**

*In deep appreciation of the administration, faculty, and staff for ensuring that Holocaust education remains a foundational and enduring value within our children's Jewish education.*



Visit our online gallery to view more photos from this event on our website. Photo credits: Shlomi Cohen/iPictureMagnet



on the basis of a decision of the Bundestag

With Assistance from the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany Supported by the German Federal Ministry of Finance and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future.

**We shall never forget!**  
Names, Not Numbers® is generously supported by a prominent national foundation.

Names, Not Numbers®, INC:  
an interactive, multi-media Holocaust FILM DOCUMENTARY project created by educator, **Tova Fish-Rosenberg.**  
[www.namesnotnumbers.org](http://www.namesnotnumbers.org)

## 12 HilleLites

### KIDS HEART CHALLENGE

The Kids Heart Challenge is one of the favorite fundraising events for many students. This year we raised a total of \$1,864.67, but most importantly this program helped students learn about the benefits of regular physical activity and heart health while raising funds to fight heart disease and stroke. The event was filled with competition and rewards for outstanding performance. So far our KHDS lifetime donation is \$90,962.67!



#### Mazal Tov to this year's fundraising winners:

- 1st place: **Dalia Groveman (2nd grade) raised \$373.21**
- 2nd place: **Shiloh Ohayon (1st grade) raised \$305.93**
- 3rd place: **Zev Weiss (4th grade) raised \$200**

Based on the total that was raised this year, the American Heart Association rewarded us with a \$160 gift certificate, which will help purchase new equipment for our PE Department.



### 4TH GRADE INVENTORS

4th graders worked hard researching inventors, writing essays, and preparing presentations to showcase their learning at the May 13th inventor fair. Small groups also participated in special project components, including an engineering and art component. Students built a windmill inspired by *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* and created a life-size book cover display for the novel. Their creativity, collaboration, and dedication were evident throughout the entire process.



### 4TH GRADE EVERGLADES TRIP

Students took a class trip to the Everglades in May. It was such a fun experience getting to see animals in their natural habitat, especially as it connected to our past study in *Wonders* on "Animal Adaptations," as well as our work in the text-based *Top Score Writing* program! Students enjoyed the outdoors and bonding time together!



### 5TH GRADE LEGOLAND

5th graders had an exciting end-of-year field trip to LEGOLAND Florida Resort on May 7th! From the moment they boarded the bus, students enjoyed time together, sharing laughs, singing, and building memories. At the park, they made the most of the warm, sunny day, exploring rides, enjoying attractions, and spending quality time with their classmates. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to relax, celebrate the year, and connect with one another outside the classroom. A special thank you to our teachers and chaperones for helping make this trip both safe and enjoyable for all!



### MOVING UP DAY

Middle School hosted *Moving Up Day* for the incoming 6th graders. 5th grade students visited and were introduced to what middle school is all about while getting a taste of classes by rotating between a science activity, a Torah class, and a tour of the building. The students also had an opportunity to hear about all of the amazing programs that middle school offers and had an interactive Q&A with some of our 8th grade students. As they went back to their 5th grade classrooms, each were sent off with some fun snacks and a lot of exciting things to look forward to next year!



**6TH GRADE PIGEON KEY**

The 6th grade girls embarked on their class trip to **Pigeon Key** on May 11th, and the boys' trip followed on May 18th.



**7TH GRADE WASHINGTON, D.C.**

The 7th graders had an unforgettable experience visiting our nation's capital, Washington, D.C., during their class trip in March.



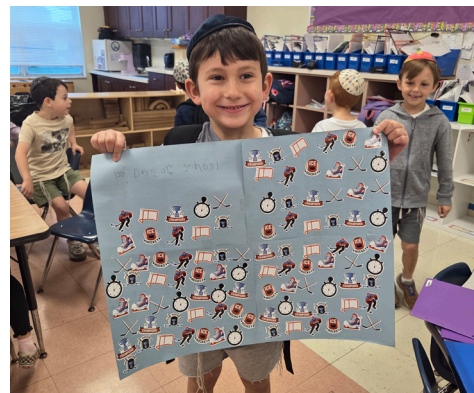
**8TH GRADE PANAMA**

The Class of '26 took their graduation trip to Panama May 4th-8th.



# 14 HilleLites

## 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL



In preparation for the 100th day of school, yeladim wrote in Ivrit about their favorite parts of Kitah Alef, so far!

Kindergarten students came up with so many creative ideas for their 100th day of school projects using 100 items and had the opportunity to showcase their project and present it to the class. Other festivities included decorating crowns, enjoying 100 snacks, doing 100 activities, and winning fun prizes.

## IDF SOLDIERS WELCOMED

Soldiers from the IDF came for a special visit to KHDS as our students welcomed them by singing songs led by **Rabbi Drang**.



## OUT OF THIS WORLD! 2ND GRADE SOLAR SYSTEM

Our 2nd grade students were so excited to share their learning at the *Solar System Showcase* on March 18th after working through the full research process. They began with a guided solar system packet to learn how to find key information, then chose a topic they were most interested in and did additional research online. They used the *Top Score Writing* approach to plan, draft, and write a full informational essay, and then brought their learning to life through creative projects. It was such a special way to celebrate both their hard work and everything they learned!



### COLOR WAR, PURIM STYLE

Color War broke out on February 17th as middle school students competed in a whopping 38 team-building activities over the following two days. This year's theme was Purim and teams were: **Megillah**, **Mishteh**, **Matanot L'Evyonim**, and **Mishloach Manot**. Events and competitions were largely focused on Purim-themed activities. Congratulations to the **GREEN/Mischloach Manot** team as well as to the recipients of the *Dannie Grajower, Z"l, Spirit Award*: **Yonah Berkowitz, Ariel Blanka, Eve Eisig, Avner Farbstein, Devorah Kolodny, Gabriella Rosenberg, Joshua Stein, and Rebecca Weisfeld**. These students exemplified the spirit of Color War through middot, sportsmanship, cheering each other on, and stepping up for their team. It was amazing to see the talents of our incredible middle school students shine through!



### VEX ROBOTICS TEAM TAKES THE TRIFECTA

Kol Hakavod our Vex Robotics teams for placing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd at the CIJE coed Vex IQ competition in February at BMA! Our students showed leadership, determination, perseverance, and most importantly, great Middot. Thank you to **Mr. Spencer** and **Mrs. Butman** for guiding, encouraging, and supporting the team. Thank you to all the parents who joined us at the competition to cheer on the teams! #khdsrobotics



## 16 HilleLites

### STEP RIGHT UP: 3RD GRADE STATE FAIR

Our 3rd graders proudly showcased their hard work at the *State Fair* on February 25th, presenting projects on their chosen states through research, creative visuals, and engaging fun facts. They also lifted our spirits with beautiful patriotic songs that reflected their growing understanding of our nation. This special experience helps our students learn about our country and develop pride in being Americans. Families had a great time walking around the fair and enjoying the fun atmosphere!



### 3RD GRADE BRACHOT FAIR

We were so proud to present the 3A and 3B Brachot projects at the *Brachot Fair* in February! This special event showcased our students' deep understanding of brachot and the meaning behind the mitzvot they represented. Each student carefully included an accurate Bracha Rishona and Bracha Achrona, the correct translation of each bracha, thoughtful and appropriate images connected to their bracha, a meaningful process picture, a creative and beautifully designed presentation board, and three sentences explaining why brachot are important in our daily lives. The students demonstrated not only knowledge, but creativity, effort, and pride in their avodat Hashem. Through this project, students learned that brachot help us recognize that everything comes from Hashem. They remind us to pause with gratitude before and after we enjoy the gifts in our lives. By saying brachot with understanding and kavana, we bring more kedusha into our everyday moments. It was an honor to have **Rabbi Schwersenski** and **Morah Hadassah** view our projects and thank you to **Mr. Shlomi Cohen** for capturing memories of this event.

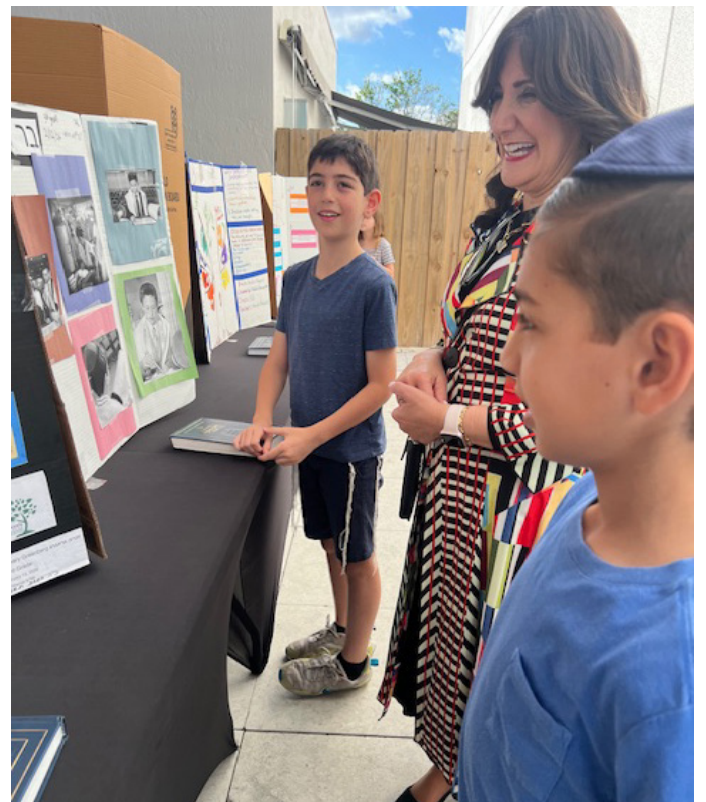


Photo credits: Shlomi Cohen/iPictureMagnet



Hooping it up and having a ball in PE!



Making a splash in the SATA-PTA Pool—swim time never felt this cool!



Rolling in the dough! Students used their sense of touch and made homemade playdough.



Sensory play in EC3 sparks creativity, curiosity, and hands-on learning every day!



Students learned Ivrit with **Morah Yifat**.



Students celebrated that special person in their lives by creating "Flowers for Ima" artwork.



Students are "all in" during PE!

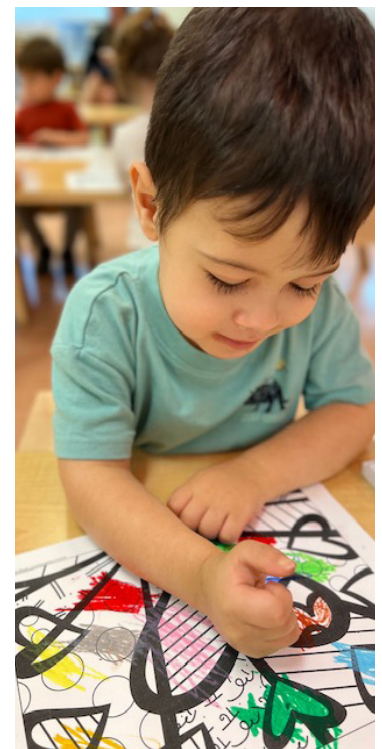
**Early Childhood**



EC Health & Wellness Week focused on various parts of what keeps a person healthy physically, socially, and mentally. Activities included lessons with **Mrs. Nili Davis**; learning about teamwork, digital citizenship, and mindfulness with **Ms. Lili**; learning about feelings through music with whole vibes; inclusion through baking with the Friendship Circle; physical fitness with Amazing Athletes; and lessons on germs during science class with **Miss Mali**. EC moms even got into the theme with their moms' night out featuring Yogalates with **Danielle Lazoff**.



EC4 students learned a new letter of the Alef Bet and associated vocabulary!



Learning about Romero Britto and the bright colors and shapes in his paintings was a fun and colorful experience for our young artists.

## 18 Spotlight by Grade



### Kindergarten

Each week, students explored a new letter and sight word, practicing letter formation, identifying words and pictures that start with that letter, writing three-letter C-V-C words, and using dictation to build proper sentence structure.

Students had an exciting time learning about caterpillars and butterflies! They read both fiction and nonfiction books to help better understand the butterfly life-cycle. They also welcomed caterpillars into the classroom and observed them closely as they grew and changed each day. The students were amazed to watch the caterpillars transform into butterflies right before their eyes! Releasing the butterflies was a special and memorable experience for everyone.



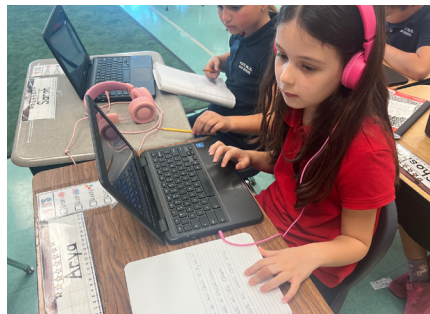
In celebration of Mother's Day, this special art project represented how a mother's love helps her child grow, just like flowers in a garden. Each flower showed the beauty, care, and love that moms give every day.



Artists created a bright and cheerful "Strawberry Summer" project using oil pastels and blending techniques.



During the cold snap, Yeladim in Kitah Alef warmed up drinking hot cocoa and writing in Ivrit about how much they love this special treat!



Students wrapped up their Wonders unit on animals with a fun research and writing activity!



We heard it through the grapevine! Students learned about density, buoyancy, and carbonation through the dancing raisin experiment.



Pesach Sheni was celebrated on May 1 ~ 14 Iyar.



### 1st GRADE

Students worked hard on their Haggadot.



After learning about ocean animals and reading the book, *A House for Hermit Crab* by Eric Carle, students made hermit crabs out of jumbo pasta shells and painted them to create an ocean scene



Students made a Siyum on Parshat Vayera!



Students worked hard on perfecting their Chumash skills.



2ND GRADE



2nd grade took an exciting field trip to the Museum of Discovery and Science in Fort Lauderdale in March where they explored a variety of hands-on exhibits in the Discovery Center and Keller Science Theater, enjoyed the thrilling Blue Angels IMAX film, and spent time in the outdoor Science Park engaging in interactive learning and play.

An experiment using sugar cubes, pipettes, and water taught students about erosion and weathering.



Students created origami masks and practiced geometric vocabulary such as line of symmetry, right triangle, and heptagon.



A first-time visit to the Makerspace welcomed creativity and projects made with Rig-a-Ma-Jig and snap circuits during STEM!



Students created a beautiful museum about Israeli cities and became tour guides, sharing special places to visit along with their own personal connections and stories about each city. They were very proud to present these lovely displays during a personal tour for Head of School, **Rabbi Schwersenski**.

3RD GRADE



Students brought their creativity to life by designing and building animals using fast-drying clay after exploring the incredible diversity of species and identifying the biomes where their animals live.



Thank you to **Rabbi Wexler** for sharing his time and deepening our students' learning of the Torah.



After learning how Henry Ford solved transportation problems with the Model T, students took on a fast-paced design challenge inspired by *Moving America Forward*.

## 20 Spotlight by Grade

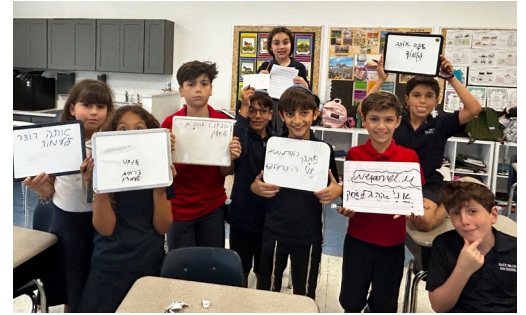


Strumming up smiles! Students performed "Hashem Melech" on the ukulele during an Esti Moskowitz Oneg.

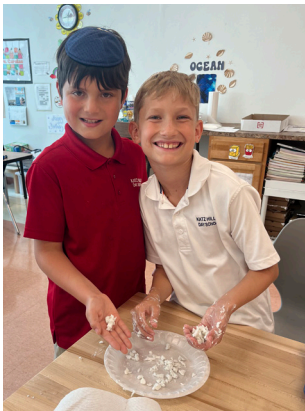


The science of capillary action was explored in science class.

### 4TH GRADE



4th graders had a great time learning about Hebrew infinitives and practiced by using them in sentences.



Students completed the second part of their slime experiment. In the first part, they made slime from scratch and learned about the ingredients and reactions that create it. In this follow-up activity, students experimented with ways to soften their slime by adding warm water and shaving cream, observing how different materials can change its texture, stretchiness, and flexibility.



Students were excited for their project-based learning unit on inventors and innovators!



Students took on the challenge of designing and analyzing their own probability games, working collaboratively during this hands-on activity that not only strengthened their math skills, but also encouraged teamwork, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving.



Students dove into *Scholastic News* articles to explore kid-friendly current events around the world. After reading the magazine cover to cover, they played a fun, interactive game to test their knowledge from the articles and enjoyed the challenge of remembering the facts and details from what they learned.



In Hebrew class, students engaged in short conversations about different types of schools, including art schools, nature schools, and more. The class enjoyed learning the material through this fun and interactive approach.



Kol Hakavod to all of the 5th grade participants in **Rabbi Drang's Rebbe's Daf HaChumash (RDHC)** program who were celebrated at a special lunch. We also extend our thanks to those parents who sponsored the lunch, t-shirts, magnets, and banners.

### 5TH GRADE



Students began reading *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert C. O'Brien and kicked off their study of character traits with a game of 'Character Trait Charades' that had students acting out traits like brave, curious, and lively.



Crispy, salty, golden—students proved that the best way to learn adjectives is by tasting them!



Students, together with **Rabbi Drang** and **Rabbi Hamer**, enjoyed a trip to Hooky Entertainment to enjoy bowling and free arcade games as a reward for completing the the RDHC and MBP programs!

Middle school students kicked off the spring semester of the elective program with meaningful opportunities to learn, create, and connect beyond the classroom. They explored a wide variety of engaging options, including lawn games, science, wilderness survival skills, various sports, ceramics, a chesed elective, and much more.



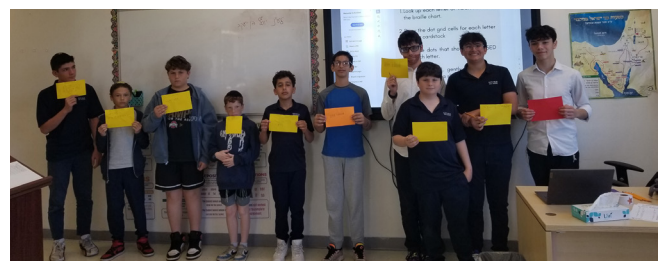
## Middle School



During advisory, students enjoyed a special live Zoom visit with **Rabbi Uri Pilichowski**, who joined them from Israel. He shared powerful stories of seven remarkable miracles that have taken place in Eretz Yisroel over the past two years, highlighting Hashem's constant protection and presence. Students walked away with meaningful lessons and a deeper appreciation that we are living in one of the most incredible periods in Jewish history.



Middle school students and parents were invited to the 7th grade's powerful display of dioramas about the Holocaust as part of their unit on Elie Wiesel's *Night*.



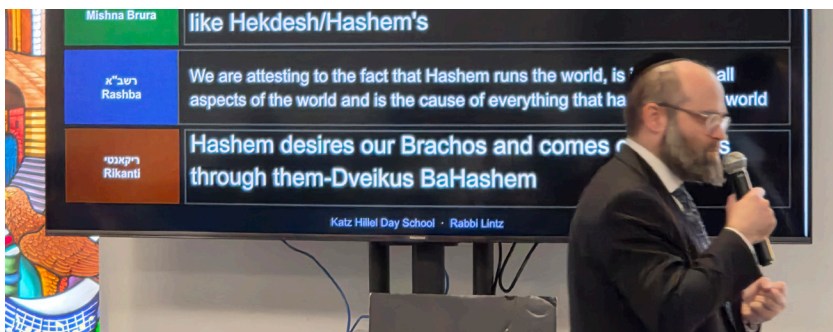
As part of Jewish Disabilities Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM), students explored the world of Braille, learning how this tactile writing system empowers individuals who are blind or visually impaired. They even created their own names in Braille — experiencing firsthand how meaningful communication can be felt as well as seen.



Students assembled and packed "Shabbos in a Box" packages to be delivered to a local hospital on behalf of Bikur Cholim of South Palm Beach County.



In theme with Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM), students participated in a project to help them understand different abilities while practicing teamwork and communication in creative ways.



During Advisory, **Rabbi Lintz** introduced our new *Bracha of the Month*, *Birchot Hanehenin*, the brachot we say before enjoying food, drinks, or even certain pleasant experiences—helping us pause, appreciate, and recognize the source of what we have.

## 22 Spotlight by Grade



After solving Purim algebra challenges, 8th graders used backward thinking to create their own puzzles with specific solutions, to strengthen their problem-solving and logical reasoning skills.



Middle school students made LED glow sticks in STEM class and discussed ways to improve the design and make their product more marketable.



6th grade Toshba students celebrated completing their first full daf of Gemara.



Our 7th graders' culminating activity, upon completing their study of the digestive system, was to dissect a frog. They studied the anatomy and physiology of the frog and were able to actually see the body systems as they opened the frog up for viewing. Many declared that they have a future in surgery.



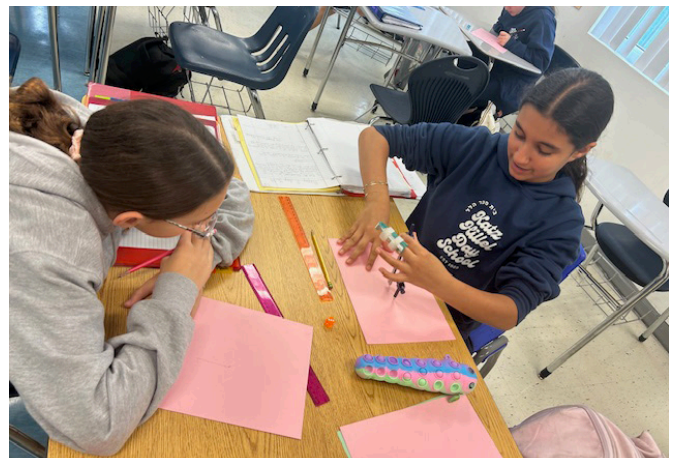
6th grade math students explored reflections on the coordinate plane through a fun, hands-on activity. They used nail polish to mark their original points and then practiced reflecting those points across both the x- and y-axes.



Wrapping up another exciting year, Mr. Spencer's middle school STEM classes learned principles of reflection, refraction, and diffusion using lasers. Students built a laser game on the table and then solved a maze using seven points of reflection to hit the final target.



Sixth graders dove into hands-on science with squid dissections!



In honor of Pi Day (3.14), the 6.4 students explored the special number pi and how it connects to our geometry curriculum.

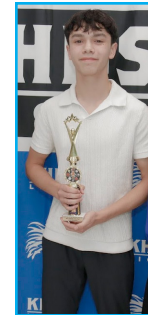


**Maia Shaffer, Athletic Director**  
**Julie Abrams, After School Sports Coordinator**

By the time you read this, another incredible school year will have come to a close. Mazal Tov to all of our Lions teams and coaches on an amazing season filled with hard work, growth, and achievement. Thank you to the many parents who came out to support KHDS athletics throughout the year, and to our administration for their continued guidance and leadership. We wish everyone a wonderful, relaxing summer and look forward to an even more successful year ahead.

**GO, LIONS!**

**2025-2026 ATHLETES OF THE YEAR**



**JOSH DAVIDSON ~ SADIE KLINGER**



**Boys Tennis**

The boys had a very successful year! They played hard with Coach **Karen Hausman's** guidance and finished in an exciting 2nd place!



**Girls Tennis**

The girls, coached by **Karen Hausman**, had a fun season making it to the first round of the playoffs. Although they did not advance further, they made great strides.



**Boys Volleyball**

This was **Coach Alan Krull's** second year coaching the boys volleyball team as he witnessed their improvements with each game and watched the team develop, compete, and achieve success throughout the season. We look forward to seeing all that these talented athletes accomplish next year!



**Girls Flag Football**

Congratulations to the Lady Lions for bringing home the championship for the second straight season! **Coached by Jessica Drolette ("Coach Dro")** and **Coach Isaac Reich**, the girls reached new heights and should feel so proud!

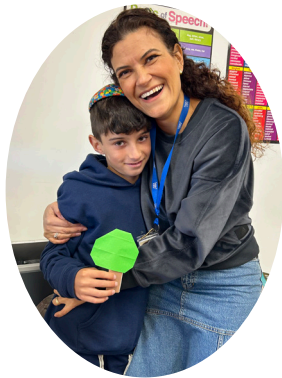


We are so proud of the girls for their hard work and dedication throughout the season as **Coach Sophie** and **Coach Kos** worked tirelessly to help the team develop their skills, build confidence, and achieve new goals. We look forward to seeing their continued success in the seasons ahead!



Congratulations to the boys on a fantastic 2nd place finish! Guided by **Coach Kos**, the boys excelled playing with spirit, sportsmanship and enthusiasm! Go Lions!!!

## 24 Holiday Happenings



To celebrate Tu B'Shevat, 4th grade students enjoyed a special visit from Akiva's mom, Mrs. Levy, who led a hands-on origami activity where students created trees while exploring math concepts like polygons, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, symmetry, and angles.

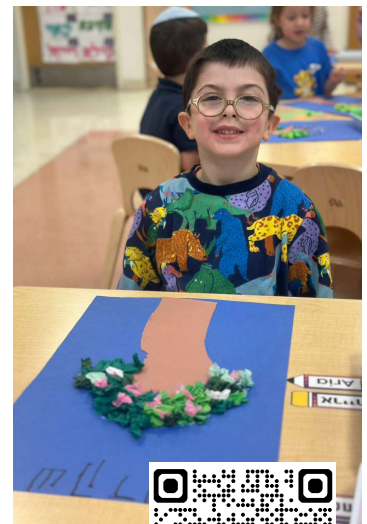
**Tu B'Shevat**

EC had a great time watering plants, strengthening their fine motor skills, and learning about the different brachot by bringing in a snack each day that corresponded to the bracha of the day.



4th graders celebrated Tu B'Shevat with a fun Kahoot activity in Hebrew class. The students enjoyed fun learning that combined nature, teamwork, and the values of the holiday.

EC students enjoyed a fruitful Tu B'Shevat seder.



From projects to planting, EC Tu B'Shevat learning was branching out.

You can always browse our online photo galleries for more pictures at:  
<https://www.hilleldayschool.org/about-our-school/photo-galleries/> or scan the QR code!



Adar activities included spirited themed dress-up days culminating with a carnival and parade of costumes.

**ADAR/PURIM**



Yeladim in Kitah Alef enjoyed welcoming Chodesh Adar by making crowns and creating their own graggers.



Shalvet and Bracha, our B'not Sherut, did an incredible job transforming the halls of the Teddy & Linda Struhl Elementary School into Shushan. We also thank Marcos and the maintenance team for assisting in hanging the beautiful murals!!!



Students in EC2-A painted castles inspired by Paul Klee in honor of Purim.

EC students filled their groggers with different items to explore and listen to the unique sounds they make and also used Play-Doh to practice making hamantaschen!



Students in Kitah Alef enjoyed writing and illustrating the story of Purim and played a true and false game in Hebrew to test their knowledge of the Megillah.



2nd graders made delicious hamentaschen for the holiday.

# 26 Holiday Happenings



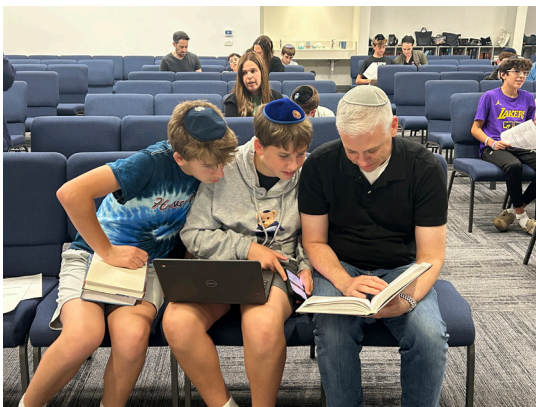
**PESACH**



EC Pesach programs took place as parents and grandparents joined together with their children for this meaningful event.



**Rabbi G's** Matzah Factory visited the Rosalind Henwood Early Childhood Learning Center.



Torah was in the air as students in grades 6-8 were encouraged to participate in a Pre-Pesach parent-child learning program in preparation for the Chag.

In preparation for Pesach, lower school students explored the science of leavening through a hands-on experiment.



In commemoration of Yom HaShoah, middle school and 5th grade students participated in a meaningful program and had the privilege of hearing

from **Judith Alter Kallman**, the great-grandmother of current KHDS students, who shared her powerful story of survival during the Holocaust. Through her firsthand account, students gained a deeper understanding of this important chapter in history. She left them with a lasting message of bitachon and emunah, inspiring them to carry strength, faith, and resilience in their own lives.



**Yom HaShoah**



## Yom Ha'atzmaut



KHDS celebrated Israel's 78th birthday with a school-wide jam-packed day of activities for students, including a Hallel Tzibburi, the annual 5th grade Daglanut performance, an exciting Chagigah, Kumsitz, Tekes, themed games, and more! Students also enjoyed an Israeli lunch on the soccer field, picnic-style.



Middle school students marked Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, during advisory with a meaningful project. Each student received a candle bearing the name of a Holocaust victim, taking time to reflect on their story. They then explored and discussed selected Tehillim, choosing the one that best captured the tone of the day and sharing their reasoning. Students brought home their chosen Tehillim along with the candle to light with their families, honoring and remembering as Yom HaShoah began.



# 28 Holiday Happenings

## Yom HaZikaron

This year, our middle school Yom HaZikaron ceremony was honored to welcome **Sergeant Major Yaron Porter** who shared his personal story with our students, speaking movingly about the friends and fellow soldiers he lost in various Israel wars. It was a meaningful and unforgettable experience.



Early Childhood students explored the beauty of the Torah, learned about Torah scribes, and welcomed a special visit from **Rabbi Schwersenski**.



## Shavuot

Kitah Alef prepared for Shavuot by making colorful vases after learning the story of Matan Torah.



EC enjoyed a magic and fire show in celebration of Lag Ba'Omer.

## Lag Ba'Omer



4th graders had the best time baking delicious cheesecakes together in honor of the Shavuot holiday! They practiced their Hebrew vocabulary in class while learning a recipe and following the steps. It was an incredibly fun, hands-on experience, and the delicious results were enjoyed by everyone.



2nd graders worked on a beautiful Lag Ba'Omer art project.

## Yom Yerushalayim



Students in grades 1-2 learned about the importance of remembering Yerushalayim every day and decorated key chains so they could keep this message close!



**F**inancial  
**R**esource  
**D**evelopment



**DONATE**

**Amy Tarlowe, Vice President/FRD Chair**  
**Suzanne Rice, Director of Development**

With another incredible school year behind us, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to every member of our KHDS family for your generosity, partnership, and support throughout the year.

Whether you participated through our Major Gifts Societies, Phase III of our Capital Campaign, the Mega Raffle, our Annual Tribute Evening, the Inaugural Auction & Raffle, through a general donation, or a designated gift, your support has had a direct and meaningful impact on our students, faculty, and school community each and every day.

Because of you, KHDS continues to provide an exceptional educational experience rooted in Torah values, academic excellence, and a warm, vibrant school environment. Every contribution, in every form, helps strengthen our school and ensures that our students continue to thrive.

We are also excited to share our newest campaign: *Together We Build, Together They Play* — an exciting initiative to create a new turf field and playground for our students to enjoy for years to come. We look forward to partnering with our community once again on this meaningful project that will enhance our students' daily experience and create even more opportunities for play, growth, and connection as part of the one-of-a-kind KHDS experience our amazing school provides.

No matter how you choose to participate, please know that you are making a difference. Thank you for being such an important part of the KHDS family and for helping us build a stronger future together.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful, relaxing, and safe summer! Mazal tov to the Class of 2026 and we look forward to an even more amazing school year of learning, growth, and achievement.



**Together We Build,**  
**Together They Play**

Support Our New Athletic Field and Playground



Help us transform our campus and elevate the outdoor play experience for every KHDS student. Our new turf athletic field and playground will provide a vibrant, safe, and engaging space where children can learn, grow, and thrive — a place that inspires teamwork, imagination, and joy every single day.

Today, your impact can go even further. Thanks to the generosity of the **Shapiro family**, every dollar raised will be matched 2x — tripling the power of your gift and bringing us even closer to creating this extraordinary outdoor environment.

Your support doesn't just build a field or a playground; it builds confidence, community, and countless moments of childhood wonder.

Join us in shaping a brighter, stronger future for our students. Your gift today will be felt for years to come.

**THE BIG LEAGUE** (payable over 5 years)

- Hall-of-Famer \$250,000
- Grand Slam \$180,000
- MVP \$150,000
- All-Pro \$100,000
- Lion Pride \$75,000
- Champion \$50,000
- Triple Play \$36,000
- All-Star \$25,000

**THE FUN ZONE**

- Pioneer \$15,000 (payable over 3 years)
- Adventurer \$10,000 (payable over 2 years)
- Explorer \$3,600
- Voyager \$2,500
- Trailblazer \$1,800
- Pathfinder \$1,000
- Scout \$500

Scan the QR code to be a part of this campaign!



## 30 PTA: Here to Help



### Message from Anna Jacobs, PTA President

As we close out another wonderful school year, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our entire PTA community. This year was filled with memorable events, meaningful connections, and countless moments that reflected the spirit of our school. None of it would have been possible without the support of our parents, teachers, staff, volunteers, and students.

Serving as PTA President has been a privilege, and I am so grateful for everyone who contributed their time, energy, and talents throughout the year. Whether you attended an event, volunteered behind the scenes, supported a fundraiser, or simply showed up for our school community, your involvement made a difference.

I would also like to offer a special thank you to our outgoing Secretary, **Chava Weisstuch**, for her dedication and service to the PTA. We appreciate all she has done to support our organization and help keep things running smoothly throughout the years. As she and her family prepare for an exciting move to Israel, we wish them much success, happiness, and bracha in this new chapter.

As summer begins, I hope everyone takes time to relax, recharge, and enjoy special moments with family and friends. While we are looking forward to a break, we are already excited about what lies ahead. Planning for next year is underway, and we cannot wait to bring new programs, events, and opportunities to our school community.

Thank you for helping make this year such a success. Wishing you a safe, happy, and restful summer. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the fall for another fantastic year together!

## With Praise, Thanks & Admiration

❖ To help students and staff stay warm during our “Florida winter,” the PTA sponsored a coffee cart for staff, hot chocolate for middle school students, and powdered donuts (“snow”) with chocolate milk (Florida’s hot cocoa) for lower school and early childhood students. Thank you to **Jaime Feld** for coordinating the coffee cart, **Rachel Fraiman** for organizing the treats, and to our wonderful PTA volunteers who helped with distribution!

❖ Thank you to Swag Shop co-chairs **Rachel Fraiman** and **Na’ama Rosenberg**.

❖ *Teacher Appreciation Breakfasts* were provided to our wonderful faculty and staff each month throughout the year. Kudos to program chair **Alissa Kroll**.

❖ Thank you to **Danna Averbook** for organizing and overseeing the Lost & Found, located on the west side of the Loewenstern Cafetorium in the breezeway.

❖ Thank you to the moms and dads who joined us for *Torah and Coffee* with **Rabbi Schwersenski** this year! A special thank you to **Jaime Feld** for organizing the coffee carts for everyone to enjoy.



## AVOS VS. BANIM LEGACY BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



The KHDS PTA and athletics department teamed up to host a special fundraiser featuring the 8th grade boys basketball team versus the KHDS dads. While the dads ultimately took home the win, the game was a fun and memorable way for our eighth graders to celebrate their final season as KHDS students. Surrounded

by family and friends cheering from the sidelines, players and spectators alike enjoyed an exciting evening of basketball and community spirit. Proceeds from ticket and swag sales will help support programs that enrich the KHDS experience for all students. Thank you to **Jaime and Dovid Feld** and **Na’ama Rosenberg** for planning an incredible evening!



END-OF-YEAR EVENT CELEBRATES CHAVA WEISSTUCH



On June 2nd, PTA celebrated with the *End-of-Year Dinner* honoring **Chava Weisstuch**, PTA Secretary, as she and her family prepare to make Aliyah. The evening, held at Carmela's, was filled with delicious food, meaningful conversation, and heartfelt appreciation. A special thank you to **Rachel Fraiman, Avital Rosenberg, and Na'ama Rosenberg** for curating such a beautiful event. We are grateful to everyone who joined us in celebrating **Chava** and marking the conclusion of another successful year.

MISHLOACH MANOT

A heartfelt thank you to **Stephanie Beneda, Abby Feferman, Jaime Feld, and Danielle Frija**, our wonderful *Staff Mishloach Manot Committee*, for organizing thoughtful and beautiful Purim gifts for our incredible faculty and staff. We are also grateful to the many volunteers who helped assemble the bags and spread the Purim spirit throughout our school.



PRE-PESACH POP-UP

Our *Pre-Chag Pop-Up* was a wonderful evening as families enjoyed shopping from an impressive selection of vendors featuring jewelry, clothing, Judaica, and more, while also sampling delicious food and treats. Parents also had the opportunity to visit the *Nature's Wonder Art Gallery* in the Bernard Rutman Beit Midrash, showcasing the creativity and talent of our K-5 students. A special thank you to **Deena Frist** and **Leorah Marcus** for their outstanding leadership and flawless execution, as well as the many volunteers who helped make the event such a success. We would also like to recognize **Bridget Cohn, Simone Jacobs**, and the entire maintenance staff for their invaluable support.

CHOPPED COMPETITION

Our *Chopped Competition* featuring **Naomi Nachman** was a fun-filled and entertaining evening. Teams showcased their creativity and culinary talents, preparing unique and delicious dishes for the judges. Thank you to our esteemed judges—**Rabbi Schwersenski, Morah Hadassah, Morah Lanner, and Eli Amsalem**—for sharing their expertise, and to our incredible committee—**Danna Averbook, Jennifer Berkowitz, Abby Feferman, Rachel Fraiman, and Leah Ravaee**—for ensuring the event ran seamlessly. Congratulations to the Green Team on their winning dish!



TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

*Teacher Appreciation Week* was once again a highlight of the year. Faculty and staff were welcomed with festive lawn displays and a coffee cart, and throughout the week enjoyed Playa Bowls, chair massages, a snack cart, raffle prizes, and Shabbat candy platters. A sincere thank you to the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to make the week so special. They truly went above and beyond to show our appreciation for the dedicated faculty and staff who do so much for our children every day.



Guardians of Learning

Thank you to **Caroline Katz** and **Yitty Garden** for co-chairing this year's *Guardians of Learning* campaign. The KHDS PTA has been hard at work to fund and support incredible initiatives to enhance the educational, extra-curricular and daily lives of our students and devoted staff.

The PTA works year-round to enhance student life through meaningful programs and major initiatives—from the Mac Lab, VR headsets, and sunshades to weekly Shabbat challot, holiday treats, Teacher Appreciation, and more. Throughout the years, and thanks to our generous supporters, PTA has been able to invest over \$500,000 to enrich our children's experience at KHDS.

We thank those who have made a commitment to support our most lucrative and essential fundraising program for 2026. The *Guardians of Learning* are the women around whom we rally and applaud for their annual contribution of \$360 — money that is put to work to benefit all of our students and staff at KHDS.

- Shelly Abramson
- Danna Averbook
- Gwenn Baer
- Ayala Baum
- Jennifer Berkowitz
- Orlie Cohen
- Stephanie Cohen
- Michele Dimont
- Julie Ehrlich
- Sandra Veszi Einhorn
- Dvora Eisen
- Chelsea Eitani
- Karen Elkayam
- Jaime Feld
- Nicole Feldman
- Traci Feldman
- Libby Fox
- Rachel Fraiman
- Lisa Freedman
- Deena Frist
- Amy Galperin
- Helen Garden
- Yitty Garden
- Lauren Glaun
- Jennifer Glickman
- Caroline Goldstein
- Lilly Gontownik
- Laura Greenbaum
- Eva Hamburger
- Sarah Hirth
- Frieda Itzkowitz
- Anna Jacobs
- Caroline Katz
- Hannah Katz
- Elyssa Kirshner

- Hudi Krasna
- Judi Krasna
- Rina Lanner
- Elisheva Lempel
- Sara Levine
- Linda Levy
- Melissa Lovy
- Leorah Marcus
- Brandy Meiteles
- Mindy Mitzner/Zisholtz
- Nicole Pancis
- Carol Peer
- Leah Ravaee
- Moriyah Rodrigues
- Leah Rosen
- Joanna Rumelt
- Sharon Schachar
- Deena Schwersenski
- Mor Shapiro
- Shira Siegel
- Hadassah Smolarcik
- Lysee Stein
- Ariella Strassman
- Linda Struhl
- Deena Sturm
- Amy Tarlowe
- Gaby Thompson
- Stephanie Ulmer
- Eva Waintraub
- Caren Waintraub
- Meira Weiss
- Rachel Weiss
- Chava Weisstuch
- Rachel Wolk
- Chanie Yetnikoff

KHDS extends a bittersweet farewell to those families graduating their last child (and a special shout out to those who have been a part of our KHDS family for 12 years +), as well as to our families who are making Aliyah:

Abitbol  
 Abittan  
 Abudarham  
 Aghion (as they make Aliyah)  
 Berkowitz-Cohen  
 Blanka (16 years)  
 Bornstein-Zilban  
 Cohen, Eric & Stephanie  
 Davidson  
 Dwek  
 Ellis

Gelman-Haratz  
 Goldberg, Ian & Suzanne (15 years)  
 Goldman, Shlomo & Chaya  
 Goldstein-Susman  
 Hagler (as they make Aliyah)  
 Hanina (12 years)  
 Iskowitz  
 Korkos-Davidov  
 Loren (as they make Aliyah)  
 Markovich  
 Nissim-Geter

Pardau  
 Rotenberg-Brodowicz  
 Sanders  
 Schwartz, Ory & Linda (as they make Aliyah)  
 Singer  
 Stein, Gil & Lysee (16 years/as they make Aliyah)  
 Weisstuch (12 years/as they make Aliyah)  
 Welner  
 Wexler (12 years/as they make Aliyah)  
 Wolgin-Hopkins



Thank you to our amazing  
**B'not Sherut,  
 Bracha and Shalhevet!**  
 WE ALREADY MISS YOU!

**KIDS**



**KHDS**



@KHDSCHOOLEXPERIENCE

*WITH GRATITUDE*

A very special thank you to **Caroline Katz**, who once again photographed Kindergarten and 8th grade students for their graduation portraits. Year after year, Caroline's beautiful photography is used for the Yearbook and milestone graduations. Thank you, **Mrs. Katz!**

We are deeply grateful to **Yaffi Wexler** for dedicating her time year after year compiling the 'PTA Pages' in each *Hillel Herald* and for her invaluable help with editing the *Hillel Herald*, the *Weekly Shavuon*, and other school communications. We will miss you, Yaffi, and the entire Wexler family!

**HAVE A GREAT SUMMER  
 & READ, READ, READ!**

Katz Hillel Day School is a "Makom Torah," a place where Torah is studied.  
 As such, dress should conform to what would be appropriate when visiting a synagogue.

The *Hillel Herald* is designed and produced by:  
 Suzanne Rice, Director of Development