



Sept. 11, 2017

Dear Zayin Parents,

It is my pleasure to welcome you and your children to the new year for my Zayin Class. I know most of the Zayin students from when they were in 5th grade and I look forward to being their teacher once again.

We have some very ambitious goals for this year as we study mitzvot, prayer, and American Jewish history.

As part of our study of mitzvot we will practice the mitzvot of respecting the elderly and visiting the sick, as we visit Sholom Home on 6 occasions during the year. Most times we will celebrate upcoming holidays with the residents.

Here is a brief recap of what we will be doing in the next month:

Mitzvot

We will discuss what it means to live as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and the importance of our choices and actions.

T'fillah

In preparation for the Yamim Noraim we will examine selected prayers from the High Holiday Liturgy: Avinu Malkenu, Ashamnu, Al Chet and Kol Nidre.

We will also begin our unit entitled: "Why Pray?" This unit begins with our study of the Kaddish and how prayer can reinforce Jewish values.

History

Our study of American Jewish History will begin with a unit about the first Jews in America? Why did they come? Where were they from? How did they express and maintain their Jewishness?

Sholom Home

We will also prepare for our first visit to Sholom Home. What can we expect to see and do there? What are the concerns about going there? Why do we visit there?

I look forward to a wonderful year with your child.

Wishing you a Shanah Tovah U'metuka,
Mary

Sept. 13, 2017



Dear Zayin Parents,

I am very excited to have your child in my Zayin Class. Even after just the first week, I can tell this will be an engaging and intellectual group. I know most of the Zayin students from SMP at Adath last year, Camp TEKO, Herzl, or other Talmud Torah classes.

My class will be hitting on some heavy topics, allowing students to form their Jewish identity and begin to have their own perspectives on some of the biggest questions of all time (Where is G-d? What is Judaism?) as well as topical issues - Anxiety, GMOs, Israeli Settlements - through a Jewish lens and using famous and modern Jewish philosophers to help form our own opinions.

Pirkei Avot, The Teachings of the Sages, will be woven throughout the year, it is the main text that will be referenced for this class as it contains many different viewpoints ripe for interpretation, many of which conflict with neighboring passages in the same chapter of *pirkei avot*.

Occasionally with the introduction of new topics, students will leave class with a short car ride discussion question. If you are able, it would be a great benefit if you (or whoever is driving carpool) would engage in answering the question or discussing the prompt with your student.

I know this will be a wonderful year! Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions,

B'Shalom,
Avi Baron