



THE UHI BULLETIN

The Weekly Newsletter of United Hebrew Institute, Kingston, PA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Parents,

I want to thank all the parents who attended the Back to School Night this past Wednesday evening. I had the opportunity to describe some of the new programs and initiatives that will be implemented during the course of the year. I will discuss those topics over the course of the year to apprise all you of the progress we are making.

In this bulletin, I want to elaborate on one of the concepts I spoke of on Wednesday. The parents of students in grade two and higher now have the option of eliminating tests and grades in Judaic studies. In place of letter grades, parents can choose for their children to receive a pass/fail grade accompanied with a narrative of each child's progress. With this initiative, the UHI is proceeding along a path taken by few schools. (Political note: This year being a maverick is fashionable.)

Does eliminating grades from Judaic studies diminish their importance or prominence? More importantly, will this new approach reduce the quality and quantity of the material taught in the Judaic classes? Finally, if this idea is so good, why not apply it to the general studies as well and eliminate tests and grades in those subjects?

To answer the above questions, I need to step back and explain the fundamental difference between Judaic and general studies. They are not just different subjects. It's not even that one is holy and the other is not. There is even a more basic difference between them. When a child learns something, there are at least two elements that comprise his learning. There is the cognitive (intellectual) component, and the affective (emotional) component. General studies is primarily geared to acquisition of knowledge and skills. Judaic studies is primarily focused on the acquisition of an emotional bond to Judaism and its practice.

Put another way, if a child loves math conceptually but can't add or subtract, we have failed in our primary mission to prepare the child academically. On the other hand, if we teach a child to pray and learn Chumash, but the child is turned off to Judaism, we have failed that child in providing him with the eternal legacy and heritage of our faith. Of course, we teach all subjects for mastery and we do so in a manner that fosters a life-long love of learning. However, the primary focus is different between the two departments.

When teaching Torah and Judaic subjects, the ideal is to study altruistically. In Hebrew the expression is *Torah Lishmah*, for its own sake. It is so important that even if the quantity of actual learning were to decrease, it would still be worth it. However, I feel that in our school, we will suffer no such effect. The classes

are small, the teachers are in constant contact with the parents, and the general demeanor towards Judaic studies is quite positive. It will lessen the tension prior to tests (especially as many parents do not have the background to help their children) and free up more time for actual instruction.

Would I endorse the same plan for General studies? Certainly not. The school must assure the parents in absolute terms that every child is progressing according the school's curriculum and that each child's advancement can be measured by direct assessment as well as standardized tests with national norms.

I am anticipating that this change will usher in a more focused program and build even more enthusiasm for all things Jewish. I look forward to your input and reaction to this new initiative.

TODAH RABBAH

A Special Thank You to Drs. Barbara & Mark Bell for their funding of additional Smartboards for UHI and six computers for use in our computer lab and classrooms. The UHI staff and students will long appreciate their kindness and generosity.



NEW UHI JEWELS

A few of our new UHI 3Y students enjoying a sunny day with their teacher, Mrs. Sara Eneboe. L to R: Molly Romanowski, Chloe Levi, Mrs. Eneboe, Simmi Hershkop and Cole Kranson (Cool shades, Cole!)

WELCOME TO OUR UHI FAMILY

- ◆ **3Y - Ita Leah Brownstein, Juliana Good, Simmi Hershkop, Cole Kranson, Chloe Levi, Yechezkel (Chezky) Rizel, Molly Romanowski, Chaya Seewald and Lia Stone.**
- ◆ **4Y - Joseph Schwartz, David and Jonathan Tillman**
- ◆ **K - Daniel Tillman**
- ◆ **First Grade- Jacob Sarnevit, Samuel Schwartz and Natalie Zarad**
- ◆ **Second Grade- Samson Tillman**
- ◆ **Fifth Grade- Andrew Sarnevit**

Mazel tov to:

Happy 50th Anniversary Cooky & Jesse Savitz

Get Well to:

The following members of our community were ill over the summer months and wanted them to know that they were in our thoughts and prayers for a speedy and full recovery.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Mark Himmelstein | Irene Cibik |
| Leah Goldberg | Jeanne Schoenholtz |
| Stephen Alinikoff | Gloria Weiss |
| Ed Lidz | Rena Schoenfeld |
| Sally Sagenkahn | Maxwell Marcus |
| Sammy Zatcoff | David Simmoss |
| Stephen Seeherman | Eileen Trompetter |
| Alana Ufberg | |

Condolences to:

Patty Miller & Family on the death of Harvey Miller

CALENDAR OF SCHOOL EVENTS

- ◆ September 29, 11:45 Dismissal, Rosh Hashanah
- ◆ September 30 & October 1, Rosh Hashanah, School Closed

JCC COMMUNITY NOTES

- ◆ The JCC, JFS & Osterhout Free Library invite you to a Klezmer Concert Celebrating Israel's 60th Year at the JCC on Sunday, September 14, at 11:30 a.m. in Weiss Auditorium. The concert is free and open to the public light refreshment will be served. Call JCC at 824-4646 to register for concert.

UHI NOTES & REMINDERS

- ◆ Please use Price Chopper scrip regularly. They are available at the UHI office and the JCC in denominations of \$5, \$10 and \$20.
- ◆ We are now using traffic cones to keep cars away from the curb to ensure safety of children and easy access to cars. Otherwise, all procedures are same as last year. Once dismissal begins, please stay in your car and move forward when possible. Please do not call your child to come to your car. If feasible, we will walk students to cars even if you are in back of line. Please park in the center section should you have to leave your car.
- ◆ Until further notice, we will not provide lunch for the children. Please send them to school with a nourishing lunch and drink. We will provide them with necessary cutlery.

PUBLIC SERVICE LECTURE SERIES

This announcement is being included in the weekly bulletin as a public service to make parents aware of parenting and/or educational opportunities available in our community.

“As part of the Issues in Education Series, Drs. Robert and Judith Gardner of the Education Department have invited J.J. Rasimas, M.D., Ph.D, a leading authority on the phenomenology of suicide, to speak to the Wilkes University community. Dr. Rasimas’ lecture, Suicide: Public Health Challenges and Opportunities will be held in the Henry Student Center Ballroom on September 11, 2008 from 4:00 until 5:00 PM. A brief biography of Dr. Rasimas is attached 082808_rasimas.doc .”

Source: Today@Wilkes, August 28, 2008

Note: This lecture is free and open to the public. Dr. Rasimas is Barbara Welch’s nephew.



3Y's Chaya Seewald, Lia Stone, Chezky Rizel and Chloe Levi enjoying the day in their summer home!

UHI COMMUNITY PICNIC SUPPORTERS

A Special Thank You to the following sponsors and volunteers for their gifts and services in support of the UHI Annual Community Picnic.

- ◆ UHI Family and Friends for their donation of precious time.
- ◆ Gorilla Media, Inc. for the design of our outstanding Picnic Posters.
- ◆ Temple Israel for their assistance in the ticket printing and mailers.
- ◆ The Quick Printers for printing services.
- ◆ Gallery of Sound, HM/High Maintenance Beauty Salon, Lowes, Maffei Auto Repair, Ollies Restaurant, Target and Walmart for their gift donations.