INVEST IN YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE.
Mazel Day School is a vibrant independent, community school filled with joy, rooted in core Jewish values, and devoted to academic excellence. Serving the South Brooklyn Jewish community, our families are diverse in their beliefs, affiliations and observances; we share a common vision to instill in our children the Joys of Judaism and a Love for Learning.
CURRICULUM

Aware of the growing demands that High School will place on our students, our Middle School is a dynamic, interactive community of enthusiastic learners. Rigorous academic and interactive experiences stimulate each student’s intellectual, social and emotional growth, preparing them for life in High School, College and beyond.

Building on Mazel’s curriculum of excellence, students learn cooperatively through research, discovery, and experience, as they develop an increasingly broad base of knowledge, as well as deeper critical and creative thinking skills.

Combining the best practices in education within a dual curriculum program of general and Judaic/Hebrew studies, MDS Middle School provides courses in:

- Mathematics
- Literature and Writing
- Sciences
- Social Studies / History
- Hebrew Language
- Computer Science
- Jewish Literacy
- Visual Arts
- Club Electives
- Public Speaking and Debate
- Physical Education
MDS Curriculum

MATHEMATICS

Using the Singapore Math approach, students study mathematics in leveled tracks grouped by ability to ensure that all students are challenged effectively. The TIMSS, a research study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics analyzing trends in international mathematics and science study, has consistently shown the strongest math achievement among Singapore’s students compared to other countries around the world, making the Singapore Math curricula an excellent choice for our students.

The mathematics coursework at Mazel cultivates a deep understanding of numeracy and complex, multi-step problem solving which prepares students for high school level Algebra 1. Through real world applications students see the value of their learning for life.

LITERATURE AND WRITING

The English language arts program challenges students’ analytical abilities and communication skills. Literature units focus on reading comprehension and thematic analysis using classic and contemporary novels, short stories and poetry.

Writing instruction develops both creative and formal writing skills, structure and content. Peer and educator feedback drive the editing process. Grammar and vocabulary units help students polish their language skills. Students are challenged to engage in research papers, opinion pieces, public speaking exercises, and debates on real-world issues.
SCIENCES

The middle school science curriculum engages students in year-long in-depth study of life, earth and physical sciences, focusing on a different domain each year. Students build a solid foundation of fundamental science knowledge.

Inquiry labs and hands-on experiments enable students to explore scientific theories and principles for themselves. Students regularly conduct research reports and projects. As content and lab work become increasingly complex, students gain fluency with the scientific method in preparation for a successful transition to the rigors of high school science.

SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY

Our social studies coursework prepares students for global citizenship. Students study units that revolve around essential questions and themes about governments and societies throughout history. Students are challenged to examine the past as a way to better understand the present, and imagine possibilities that can shape society’s future.

Students dive deep into social studies topics and periods of history through role playing and re-enactments, examination of primary sources, debates and long-term research assignments. In addition, students round out their learning with study of current events and geography.
HEBREW LANGUAGE

In leveled language tracks, middle school students build their comprehension of oral and written Modern Hebrew, while also gaining fluency in verbal and written expression. Through interactive units focused on Israeli life, culture and history, students build vocabulary aligned with real-world themes. Fundamentals of grammar (dikduk) are incorporated throughout each year’s course.

JEWISH LITERACY

Judaic studies classes provide students with strong knowledge of their Jewish identity, heritage and history. The study of Torah texts, from Tanach to Mishnah and Talmud, provides students with fundamental understanding of Judaism. Students are challenged to use their analytical and reasoning skills to find questions within text, to think critically about problems before them and most importantly to ask the “Big Questions”.

In exploring Jewish theology, philosophy and the purpose of life, middle schoolers begin to think of themselves as empowered members of the Jewish people and the world. Students study Jewish history, examining the personas and stories of Jewish leaders from biblical to modern day times. Exploration of Jewish values are infused throughout all lessons, inspiring students to grow in their personal character and development.
COMPUTER SCIENCE
Throughout their middle school years, students learn keyboarding, as well as Google Apps including Google Docs, Sheets and Slides. These skills help them prepare polished presentations in all of their other subjects. In addition, students study coding using Scratch, developed by MIT Media Lab, and additional platforms on Khan Academy.

VISUAL ARTS
In visual arts class, students explore a wide variety of mediums, including clay to mixed media sculpture, drawing, painting, printmaking and collage. Students learn to combine technique, imagination and personal expression in their work. They gain confidence in expressing their ideas while learning to offer positive constructive feedback to each others.

Middle Schoolers are also introduced to art history, discussing works of art, using elements of arts and principles of design to evaluate the choices that classical and modern artists have made so that they in turn can make conscious decisions regarding their own creative expression. Students are exposed to the art world in and out of the classroom with field trips to art museums and exhibitions, research assignments and regular exploration of new materials and techniques.
Club Electives provide students with the opportunity to select a class of interest each term. Classes offered range from Martial Arts and Yoga, Music Production and Drama, or Robotics and Tech club, and vary from year to year. These experiences enable students to find new passions and skills, building their confidence and resilience within healthy and creative outlets.
In addition to these electives, there are after-school clubs available for students as per their interests. Newspaper Club allows students to take part in the power of the press, writing, editing and publishing student newsletters throughout the school year. This collaborative, empowering club allows students to develop writing and communication skills, as well as an understanding of the responsibility and power that comes with having ‘the voice” of the school, and have a great time while they are at it!

The Math Club allows students to be part of the MDS math competition team that competes in two different competitions; the Noetic Learning Math Contest and the Math League. The goal of the club to encourage students’ interest in math, to develop their problem solving skills, and to inspire them to excel in math. We are proud that several of our students achieved national recognition in the latest round of competitions.
Our teachers are the heart of our middle school. We carefully select enthusiastic and dedicated subject experts who have a solid grasp of students’ educational and developmental needs during this age.

Our faculty brings passion, experience and expertise to the departmentalized classrooms of middle school, providing engaging instruction in their content area. They do not merely teach skills; they convey to students directly and constantly their enduring commitment and passion for learning, personal growth and moral character.

In classes with low teacher-student ratios, they are able to subtly modify their teaching to each child’s learning style and needs, so that every child is challenged to his or her potential. They are able to cultivate close mentor relationships with the students.

Beyond the classroom, our teachers actively pursue professional growth opportunities to stay current and attuned to the best methodologies of the educational field.
Middle Schoolers are at a critical stage of their development as they enter adolescence. Character and pro-social education are essential as children formulate their personalities and self-identity.

Personal growth and building one’s strength of character are values that are integral to the MDS Middle School culture. Open discussions with teachers and mentors become a greater focus so that students can explore and confront evermore complex social, emotional and moral issues. Our students are able to flourish in a positive and healthy social environment, finding their inner voice, confidence and core values. To further address and expand their developing global awareness, students begin to initiate and lead their own diverse service projects, cultivating their leadership skills and sense of responsibility for their community and world. This foundation prepares them to enter the world as strong young Jewish adults, proud of who they are and what they stand for.
Students are empowered to take ownership of the learning process. Google Classroom acts as a platform for ongoing communication between teachers and students regarding assignments. Student-teacher conferences throughout the year provide students with crucial feedback and enables them to set goals for each school term.

In the tradition of Ivy League schools, from Cambridge to Harvard, students across all middle school grades are divided into four “houses”. By working together over the year, students learn to build team spirit and camaraderie.

During weekly advisory, advisors and middle school students meet to engage in activities that generate dialogue around typical adolescent challenges. By dividing students into small groups by age and gender, students are able to connect in a more meaningful way with peers and advisors. Advisory helps students learn to seek counsel from an adult who they have a connection with.

“Education that is merely concerned with the transmission of information is doomed to failure. It must serve the greater and more noble purpose of cultivating the student’s moral character.”

- The Rebbe, Menachem M. Shneerson
MDS’s enrichment program is an intense program constructed around problem-based learning. Students who earned outstanding scores on the Test of Cognitive Abilities and demonstrate consistent mastery of concepts and skills in the classroom participate in long-term science, engineering projects, and investigations, focusing on real world problems. Students are constantly immersed in activities that enhance and develop critical thinking skills, independent as well as cooperative learning. The STEM enrichment teacher guides students as they navigate their way through strategically designed units.
MDS administers the Stanford 10 Academic Achievement Test to students in Grades 4-8 in the spring of each school year. The Stanford is a norm-referenced, national standardized exam administered in public and private schools across the country.
**READING**

- **At or Above Grade Level**
  - 2015: 97%
  - 2016: 93%
  - 2017: 98%
  - 2018: 98%
  - 2019: 98%

- **Above Grade Level**
  - 2015: 45%
  - 2016: 43%
  - 2017: 43%
  - 2018: 57%
  - 2019: 60%

**MATH**

- **At or Above Grade Level**
  - 2015: 98%
  - 2016: 98%
  - 2017: 98%
  - 2018: 98%
  - 2019: 98%

- **Above Grade Level**
  - 2015: 60%
  - 2016: 63%
  - 2017: 62%
  - 2018: 76%
  - 2019: 73%