



# WINDOWS INTO TORAH PREP SCHOOL

Gateway to Jewish Education  
Year-in-Review Newsletter

1st Edition - July 2023/Av 5783  
www.torahprep.com



**It** is with great pleasure that we introduce “*Windows into Torah Prep*”, our new biannual newsletter. There’s so much we’ve accomplished this past year, and we have some great initiatives planned for the upcoming school year as well. We’re excited to give you an insider’s view of the amazing things happening at Torah Prep School.

### Administrative Goal Setting

We’ve been setting goals, both as an organization and as individual administrators, with regular follow-ups to keep us on track. Our primary goal for the coming year is to provide greater teacher mentorship and support in all three divisions of Torah Prep School. In addition, we’re working to create differentiated learning opportunities for our students. We have been reaching out to other schools to research best practices in these areas.

### Security

This funding cycle, Torah Prep applied for \$300,000 worth of FEMA grant funding, and for another \$150K in conjunction with the Esther Miller Bais Yaakov. \$150K will be allocated for fencing and \$300K for security guards if we can secure this funding.

We’re happy to share that new cameras, cloaking, an evacuation gate, and traffic gates are up and running at the boys’ campus. At the girls’ campus, emergency

plans for lock-in, evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown were posted in the classrooms. Rally points were established at each campus for evacuation. Our plan for next year is to implement regular drills to familiarize both students and staff with emergency procedures.

### State-Certified Preschool

Torah Prep’s application to become certified as a preschool that can receive state grants and funding was accepted, and we passed the certification inspection earlier this spring. We are currently working to complete the certification process.

### Parent Focus Group

Open communication between parents and the school administration is our priority. The parent focus group was established to allow parents to share their feedback and input with our administration. The purpose is to gain a full understanding of all perspectives as we shape school policies. Of course direct communication with the school administration is always welcome.

### Public Relations and Marketing

We’re excited to share that **Mrs. Stacy Kass** was brought onto our staff to support our marketing. As part of that effort, she will provide branding support for Torah Prep fundraising events, do overall digital upgrades, and create a new concept for the Torah Prep logo, among other PR projects. This newsletter is one of the many outgrowths of her work.

We hope to keep sharing our successes with you and invite you to share in our vision for Torah Prep School’s growth!



**Rabbi Tzvi Freedman**  
Executive Director



**Rabbi Binyamin Travis**  
CEO



**Dr. Dov Zeffren**  
Board President

Page 02

### Boys’ School Update

What a year it has been at the Torah Prep Boys’ School!

Page 03

### Girls’ School Update

A year replete with engaging learning, significant growth, and meaningful programming!

Page 04

### General Studies Update

Many exciting successes at the Torah Prep General Studies Program!

Page 05

### Early Childhood Update

What an incredible year of growth for Torah Prep Early Childhood!



# Boys' School Success Stories



A young student who began the school year very challenged with reading is now often leading the "Anim Zemioros" prayer on Shabbos (Sabbath) at his shul!

Another young student was so excited with his newfound reading skills, that he began practicing the "Aleinu" prayer on his own without it being assigned!

## EMAIL INBOX

To: Rabbi Golombeck  
From: Torah Prep Parent

Good morning Rabbi Golombeck.

My mother in law was visiting us from Chicago for Shabbos and walked over to pick up my son from school on Friday afternoon. As she was waiting near the Boys' School building one of the boys (she was not sure who) was just coming down the steps and noticed her standing there. Without missing a beat, he asked her who she was waiting for and immediately went to go find my son from inside, and let him know his Bubby was waiting for him. My mother-in-law was SO impressed with his middos and told me, "you could tell he is being raised right!".

# WINDOWS INTO THE BOYS' SCHOOL

## Rabbi Yossi Golombeck - Menahel

**What a year it has been at the Torah Prep Boys' School! Our Judaic Studies program once again provided our students with a rich curriculum, teaching academic skills as well as character development.**

### Educational Efforts

- An all-new resource room was established by our learning specialist Rabbi Aharon Moshe Granick to support our struggling readers. Our goal is that every boy should master Hebrew reading both accurately and fluently. The results have been remarkable. More than 20% of our students benefited from the resource room, and every child in the program showed considerable improvement. **Many have doubled their speed and improved their accuracy by over 80%!**
- Our all-new "Yedios Klaliyos" curriculum was designed to provide students with important general Jewish knowledge in a clear and organized format. This 18-lesson program is in addition to the shorashim (Hebrew root words) and Talmud vocabulary program designed to strengthen our students' textual skills.

### A Torah Way of Life

Torah Prep School prepares our students for life with an emphasis on character development and leadership skills. Our middle school students had the opportunity to serve as mentors to younger students, while studying and implementing Torah values.

- The "Kiddush Hashem Initiative" was an 8-week program teaching students all about kiddush Hashem (sanctifying G-d's name). Students of all grades gathered to learn and practice self-improvement strategies. Topics of discussion included expressing gratitude, greeting others, displaying honesty and integrity, staying neat, clean, and organized, and being kind to others.
- Another 6-week program, introduced at a later point, focused on refining and elevating our speech as well as being sensitive to others' feelings.
- The Sabol-Serlin Beis Medrash is the nuclear hub of Torah Prep Boys School.

*Continued on p. 6*



# WINDOWS INTO THE GIRLS' SCHOOL

## Mrs. Racheli Staum - Menaheles

**It has been a year replete with engaging learning, significant growth, and meaningful programming at the Torah Prep Girls' School.**

### Kriability and P.A.R.K.

We continued to strengthen our Kriah (Hebrew reading) instruction with remarkable results.

Our curriculum, **Kriability**, is systematic and multi-sensory. Student progress is consistently monitored to obtain data, which drives our teaching. At the end of this past year, **more than 75 percent of our students were meeting or exceeding Torah Umesorah Kriah norms** for their grade level!

**P.A.R.K. – Pause and Review Kriah**, is our reading program to advance fluency. Students stop at a designated time daily to read Hebrew text. The results speak for themselves. **Our students' fluency increased by more than 40 percent** this year!

### Social-Emotional Initiatives

The social and emotional health of our students is our top priority. Thanks to the generosity of **Ms. Sheara Fredman**, the **Barbara Fox Wellness Initiative** was founded. Through this initiative, Torah Prep launched a search for a social worker

who will provide social and emotional programming, guide and support our teachers and students with emotional needs, and serve as the liaison between the school and outside therapists.

In addition, **Darcheinu**, a social emotional curriculum, was started in the fifth grade. It is an evidenced-based social-emotional learning curriculum established with the guidance of HaRav Brudny. It will be expanded to more classes this coming year.

### Professional Development and Programming

The focus of our professional development will be on **differentiated learning**. Our teachers will be empowered to meet the needs of students with varied learning styles and skill levels.

In addition, we are looking forward to expanding our extra-curricular activities. We plan to establish a student council, launch a big-sister program between the middle school and elementary school students, and organize a middle school Shabbaton. Stay tuned for details.



## Hashem Loves Me



**I misplaced my poster for the project I worked really hard on. I looked for it everywhere and then gave up. Just before I told my teacher what happened, a friend came in with my poster. Hashem loves me!"**

*-From our "Hashem Loves Me" bulletin board*

We strive to instill in our students a lifelong commitment to Yiddishkeit. Cultivating a relationship with Hashem (G-d) is paramount and makes learning Torah, doing mitzvos, and davening (praying) meaningful. Students focused on noticing Hashem in their lives, and shared stories of Divine Providence on our bulletin boards for all to be inspired.





## General Studies Update



**To the Torah Prep Staff and Families,**

My name is Macy Hahn, and this

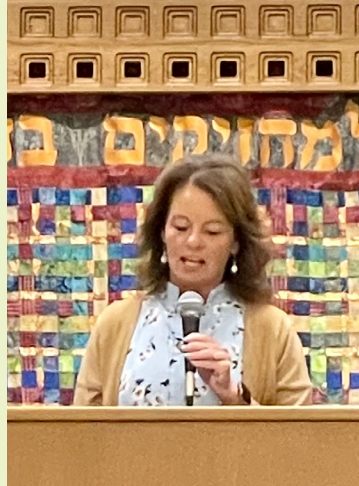
year will be my sixth year at the Torah Prep Girls' School. For the past five years, I have taught 4th grade and middle school language arts. In my new role as General Studies Coordinator, I am pleased to say, I will be able to continue to teach middle school language arts.

To continue to strive for excellence in academics, this year we will be implementing a new reading and math curriculum for the elementary grades. **Ready Mathematics** helps students actively engage in their learning and become real-world problem solvers. **Benchmark Phonics** is based on the Science of Reading, with an emphasis on reading and writing applications for students of all levels and abilities. The staff and administration at Torah Prep have spent significant time and effort researching these programs. Part of my new role will be assisting with the integration of these new programs. We are excited to improve our school even more by the addition of the new reading and math curriculum.

Prior to my arrival at Torah Prep, I received my Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Eastern Illinois University. Additionally, in May of 2023, I received my Master's in Education with a focus on Curriculum & Instruction from my alma mater. I am very much looking forward to continued growth and progress as I step into this new position. Thank you all in advance for your support and encouragement. Let's make this upcoming school year the best yet!

With tremendous excitement and gratitude,

**Macy Hahn**  
General Studies Coordinator



Mrs. Brooke Speaking at 8th Grade Graduation.



## WINDOWS INTO GENERAL STUDIES

### Mrs. Erin Brooke - General Studies Principal

**The 2022-2023 school year has brought many exciting successes to the Torah Prep School General Studies program!**

The General Studies staff implemented the “Critical 6” approach in their classrooms to ensure that the six crucial elements of classroom management are present for optimal learning and student success. Observations, walk-throughs, and monthly conversations with teachers helped us apply these high-impact strategies in real time.

We collaborated with the Special School District (SSD) to identify and support students who may qualify for special education services. We continue to be in frequent contact with SSD service providers to ensure a ‘team approach’ for student success.

**Highlights by Grade**  
**The Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics,**

**and Sight Words (SIPPS) Program** is a research-based reading program used for interventions for students needing additional reading support.

5 Torah Prep staff members were trained to facilitate the program. 14 students in K – 3 participated in the SIPPS program for a half hour 2-4 times per week. All participating students showed tremendous progress with many students completing the full program!

**According to the Terra Nova results, students in grades 3 – 8 consistently exceeded national performance expectations!**

Torah Prep is strengthening our **STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) curriculum** to provide students with every advantage for their future! A new computer coding program through

*Continued on p. 6*

## “In Good Hands

*Thank you again to Torah Prep and the amazing community for the opportunity to serve as your general studies principal for the past school year. So many great things happened this school year, and wonderful things are planned for the future. I'm excited that Mrs. Hahn has accepted an additional position of General Studies Coordinator for the 2023-2024 school year. I have had the pleasure*

*of working with Mrs. Hahn this school year and have been impressed with her instructional practices, the relationships she has with students and parents and her ability to share educational ideas and strategies with others for student success. I look forward to working with her and the rest of the administrative team to create a smooth transition for Torah Prep School. - Mrs. Erin Brooke*

## WINDOWS INTO EARLY CHILDHOOD

### Mrs. Chanie Wasser

#### Director of Early Childhood

### Settling in our New Wing



**“Mommy, my classroom is so beautiful.”**

**We are so pleased that Torah Prep’s Early Childhood physical structure finally matches the exceptional educational experience happening within our new wing.**

Our beautiful new space is outfitted with state-of-the-art facilities including large classrooms, a calming room, and therapy rooms. In our new space, children are encouraged to learn and explore in an environment that exudes joy, comfort, safety, and belonging.



*Our young students are so proud and appreciative of their new space. We've helped our children channel their exuberant reactions into sentiments of "hakaras hatov" (appreciation), as they greeted Torah Prep Executive Director Rabbi Freedman and presented him with a hand-crafted gift.*

When you walk down our hallways, you'll be delighted to see the hand-crafted art created by our young students. Our hallways tell a story; We appreciate your work and celebrate the process of creating this work.

### Celebrating Children and Childhood

It is here, in Torah Prep Early Childhood's new wing, that we celebrate children and childhood. Our stellar team of Morahs

can do their best work in our new facility. By observing our young students “at work” — whether at the crafts table, on the playground, or in the reading center — our teachers can glean volumes about the child's skill level across many developmental areas. Using this information, our teachers create tailor-made, multi-sensory projects and activities to help the children explore, experiment, make connections, and build foundational skills.

### Looking Ahead

We're aiming to meet state qualifications for child care subsidy grants. These grants will help us fund new programs to enhance our curriculum, upgrade our classrooms, and expand our staff. We will keep you posted!

According to the National Library of Medicine, enhancing children's motor skills has the potential to boost their play skills, learning skills, and cognitive outcomes.

## Moving those Muscles

To counter a national decline in physical movement, Torah Prep School is meeting the need head-on. **Our Muscle Room was designed with a variety of equipment to encourage children to climb, swing, jump, and MOVE!**

More than just muscle is being built in this area, too. Confidence, focus, self-control, and problem-solving skills are being strengthened right along with gross and fine motor muscles as children scale our mountain wall or walk across a wobbly rope bridge.

Additionally, we created our own “Mentch in the Making” curriculum that puts an emphasis on motor development.



*“Morah, look what I can do! And Morah, look at me!” are constant refrains as children swing from a trapeze or climb to the top of a tall ladder for the first time.*



**Windows Into the Boys' School continued from p.2**

Here's where our students pray, study in pairs, and hold assemblies and extra-curricular activities. In memory of Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky zt"l, the leader of Torah Jewry, we committed to maintaining proper decorum in our study hall to show respect for the spiritual activities performed therein.

All initiatives were designed to impart Torah values and life skills to our students in a framework that nurtures unity, camaraderie, and leadership.

**Goals for 2023-2024**

At Torah Prep, we strive to meet every child where they are and provide them with the support they need to learn and grow. For the upcoming year, we plan to focus on differentiated instruction. We look forward to training our teachers to teach and reach children at every level.



**Windows Into General Studies continued from p.4**

**TYNKER** was started for grades 7 – 8. Students were given opportunities to build a foundation of computer science skills that will put them ahead not only for their future educational endeavors but also for possible future careers.

**Plans for 2023-2024**

Firstly, we plan to continue the amazing programs detailed above. In addition, we hope to expand our reading series. Finally, we'll be incorporating **Ready Math** by Curriculum Associates, a new math program starting in kindergarten through

4th Grade with an approach of scaffolding skills for advanced math instruction.

Regretfully, I will not remain with Torah Prep School next year. I will be working closely with the students, parents, staff, and administrators to make this transition as smooth as possible. It has been my honor and pleasure to work with all of you and I have so many wonderful memories of my time here. I will continue to be an ambassador for Torah Prep and hope to cross paths with many of you in the future.



**PHOTOS FROM THE PAST SCHOOL YEAR**





# SAVE THE DATE

# SEPTEMBER 19-20, 2023

# SCALE UP

## FOR TORAH PREP SCHOOL

### Help Support our 36 Hour Crowdfunding Campaign this Aseres Yemei Teshuvah.





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# Torah Prep School of St. Louis

GATEWAY TO JEWISH EDUCATION

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Mrs. Racheli Staum - *Menahelas*  
Mrs. Chanie Wasser - *Early Childhood Director*  
Mrs. Macy Hahn - *General Studies Coordinator*

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