



Politz Reflections

Parshas Vayechi

Dear Parents and Friends,

It sometimes takes a five-year-old to actually make you “see” what you have been seeing every day of every week, month, and year. Today, a bright young man made me see my office with a fresh new perspective and appreciation.

This is the time of year when prospective students for the new school year come to visit. In the course of their visit, we basically interview each other. I got to know them, and they became acquainted with me and the school. It is a most enjoyable experience... at least for me. There is nothing more intriguing than discovering the innate abilities and talents of a child.

On this particular Sunday, I found myself speaking with a potential kindergarten student. Suddenly, he stopped identifying “Alef-Bais” letters and began to look around my office. I gave him some time to satisfy his curiosity and then asked him if he was ready to get back to the task at hand. He looked at me wide-eyed and asked, “Is this a museum?” After I chuckled and saw his parents looked a little embarrassed, I asked him why he thought my office was a museum. His reply was curt and to the point, “Because it has so much stuff!”

Indeed, it does!

We completed the interview, and with a lollipop and a huge smile, we said goodbye and “See you in September.”

After he and his family left, I took a long look around my office. My little friend was right. My office is a repository of a cross-section of artifacts that tell a story – a story of the heart that beats at our school.

I looked around and it was as if I saw my office for the first time. Come, I’ll take you on a tour.

See the long shelf that is to the right of my desk? On that shelf are pictures of Gedolim- past and present. While their portraits are encased in frames, they are very much alive to me. When I find myself feeling a bit lost or find myself at a low point, I look at the sagacious faces of these venerated Rebbeim, and I can almost hear them talking to me, telling me that Hashem is right next to me. I am reminded that I am not the one in power, I don’t have to have all the answers. These photographs give me the encouragement to trust in Hashem and ask for His guidance. Of course,

the Tehillim that sits on my desk is always waiting for me.

Now, turn, and look at my bookshelves. Yes, you will see a variety of books and sefarim on many topics. Interspersed among the plethora of “How To” books and Divrei Torah, there are photographs of students. Their smiles and sparkling eyes speak of the happy experiences they had. Looking at their faces makes you want to smile and laugh along. I know I feel that way every time my eye catches a glimpse of their jubilant faces.

Look over there... in the corner. There is an artistic rendering of the Holocaust. It is three-dimensional and sits in my office, as we try to come up with a befitting place to hang it. Every time I look at it, I am reminded of the Kedoshim who martyred their lives “Al Kiddush Hashem.” Every time I look at that piece, I have revitalized energy to avenge the heinous acts of the Nazis ימיה. I recommit myself to giving our children the best Torah education possible. For it is the Torah-based continuity of our nation which allows us to vanquish our enemies.

Turn around and look up at the cabinets behind my desk. Primitively hung by scotch tape are pictures drawn by students. Although the young artist has since graduated, there is an exquisite drawing of R' Chaim Kamevsky רצי"ל that he drew free hand. Every time I look at this portrait, I picture my student shining with excitement as he uses his remarkable talent for artistry. I am reminded that **every** child is gifted. We just have to unwrap the gift so that we can see inside it. Some of our “gifts” are academically inclined; some are talented in the creative arts, and some are talented in leadership positions. Hashem gave everyone a talent, and it is our job to discover that talent and cultivate it. What can be more fulfilling than finding hidden treasures!

There are many more items in my office that have either a sentimental significance or their mere presence drives me to be a better person and educator. I would like to invite you to come and visit and view my office from the perspective of a five-year-old. I will even give you a lollypop!

Good Shabbos,

Mrs. Katz

Calendar

Monday, Jan. 1: 12:00 PM Dismissal (No Busing!)

Wednesday, Jan. 17: Girls' School Play

Jan. 21 - Jan. 28: Mid-Semester Break - No Classes

Monday, Jan. 29: Classes Resume

Mazel Tov!

Mazel Tov to Mr. and Mrs. Yosef and Nechama Waslow (faculty member), on the engagement of their daughter, Tikvah Burkey (alumna & faculty member), to Yehuda Ariel Weiss!

Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Benyomin and Gevura Davis (parents) on the birth of a baby boy!

שתזכו לגדלו לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים

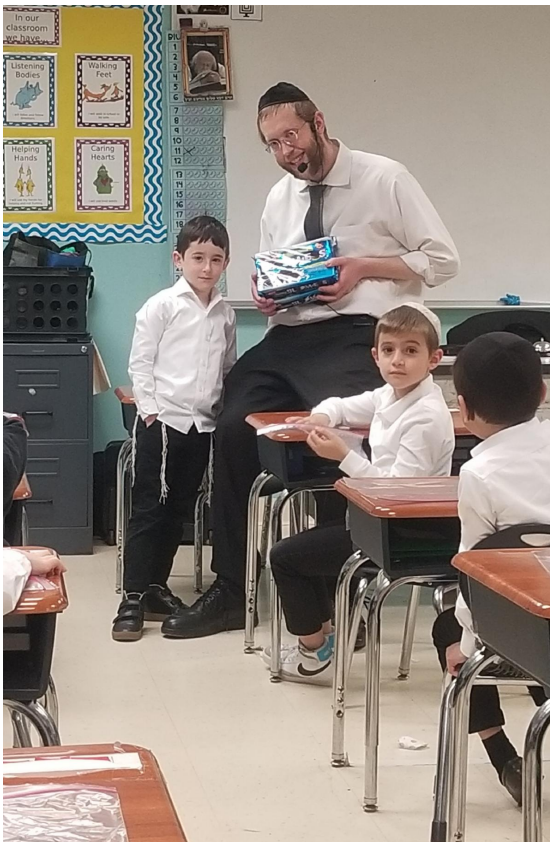
Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Mordechai and Sushy Svei (faculty) on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Aryeh Leib! Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Shimon Yehuda and Nechama Svei (faculty) on this simcha!

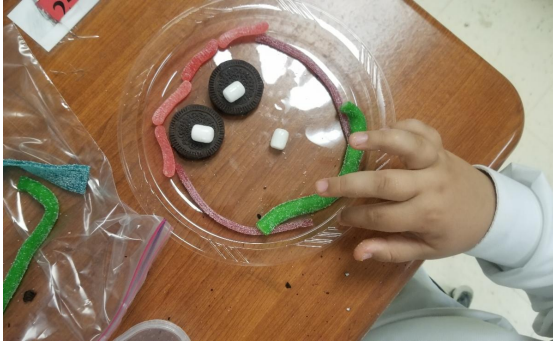
We want to hear from you! To share your simcha with the Politz Hebrew Academy community, please email mgowar@politzhebrewacademy.org

Quick Links

[Lunch Menu](#)
[2023-2024 School Calendar](#)
[Parent Handbook](#)

Highlights





Rabbi Morgenbesser's 1st grade made a Siyum on perek alef of Bereshis! They enjoyed all kinds of treats correlating to the six days of creation.





This past Tuesday, our 6-8 graders made a siyum on Masechta Yevamos. This was the culmination of their hard work, as part of the Mishna Yomi program, and was celebrated in Yeshiva. The Mesaymim enjoyed chocolate danishes and all boys received Masechta Kesubos to continue their learning in Seder Nashim.





3rd grade boys enjoyed visiting the library this week.







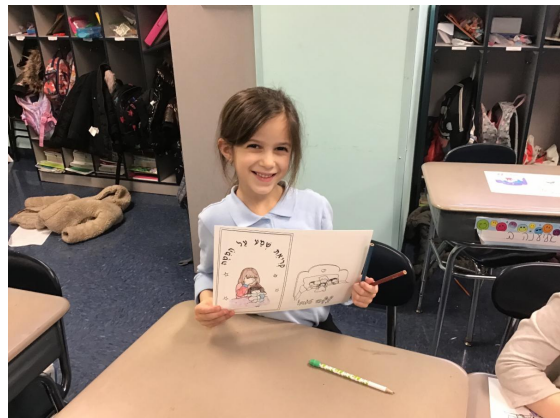
Kindergarten classes acted out Yaakov Avinu in Parshas Vayechi this week, swapping hands to give Ephraim and Menashe their brachos.







Mrs. Svei's 3rd grade began learning Shemoneh Esrei this week! The entire class received a special bracha from Mrs. Katz, followed by personal brachos from each talmida's mother read aloud to the class!



Miss Dick's 2nd grade girls learned about how Yaakov said Hamalach in this week's parsha and enjoyed making Shema cards to bring home!



Our Kindergarten was thrilled to learn that their morah, Miss Burkey, is a kallah!
Mazel Tov!

News & Events

**POLITZ HEBREW ACADEMY
PROUDLY PRESENTS**

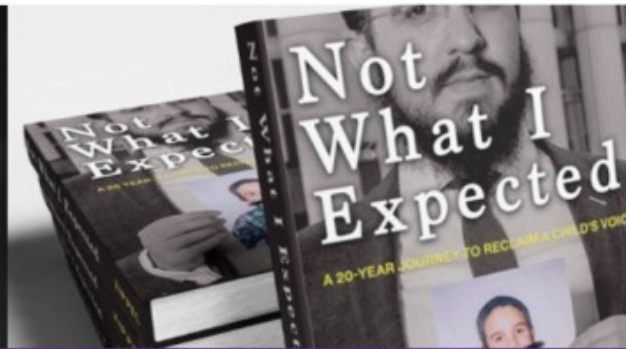


Full Circle

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024

ADULTS: \$12 STUDENTS: \$8 | 6:00 PM | 9225 OLD BUSTLETON

A MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS PRODUCTION



A Rabbi's Voice: From Victim to Survivor to Advocate

A Safety Kid Program

In 2019, Rabbi Avremi Zippel, a Chabad Rabbi in Salt Lake City Utah, publicly came forward about the decade of sexual abuse he endured at the hands of a childhood caretaker. He is believed to be the first Orthodox Rabbi to publicly speak out about his experience of sexual abuse. Since then, Avremi has taken a leadership role in combating sexual abuse in religious communities around the world and advocating for survivors. Avremi serves his community as the Chair of the Utah Council for Victims of Crime, a Legislative-appointed committee. His acclaimed memoir, *Not What I Expected*, was released in May 2023 and quickly recognized as an Amazon bestseller. He is a sought after author, lecturer and mentor to communities around the world.

SAFETY KID is a school-based child sexual abuse prevention and intervention initiative — empowering members of the Jewish community to create safe spaces for children. Started 8 years ago, this program provides Philadelphia-based Jewish Day Schools with teacher training, parent awareness and education events, and workshops for students in grades K-8. Safety Kid helps parents have open conversations with their children about safe touch, and provides children with language to communicate with safe adults in their lives about this very sensitive topic - a core tenet of abuse prevention. As a primarily donor funded initiative, we ask you to join JFCS in this critical partnership to help keep our children safe!

Sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia Lower Merion Kehillah

Join us in conversation with Rabbi Avremi Zippel

Hear his story of survival and the 20 year journey to reclaim his lost childhood, finding freedom in the opportunity to share his experience and supporting others in struggle

WHEN:

Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 8:00-9:30pm

WHERE:

The Brodsky Enrichment Center
345 Montgomery Avenue
Bala Cynwyd, PA

COST: Free to attend (\$18 donation suggested)

Donors who give a minimum gift of \$54 will receive a signed copy of Rabbi Zippel's book. Books will be available for purchase onsite.

REGISTRATION: <https://jfcsphilly.link/rabbisvoice>

For more information contact Ronni Troodler at
rtroodler@jfcsphilly.org



Do
Good.
Well.



Jewish Federation
of Greater Philadelphia
Lower Merion Kehillah

jfcsphilly.org | events@jfcsphilly.org

JFCS partners with The Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

K-8th grade scholarships available!



APPLY TODAY!



\$\$\$ for tuition

All K-8th grade Philadelphia students can apply! Up to 3 children per family can receive \$1,200 - \$3,200 per student, per year. Award is based on household size and income!



Quick & easy application

Students are selected via a random lottery in December and March. Any applications not selected in the December lottery will automatically be entered into the second lottery in March.



150+ partner schools

CSFP partners with nearly all Philadelphia-area private schools. If you don't see your desired tuition-based school on our school partner list, reach out to CSFP to see if they qualify to be a CSFP partner school.



www.csfphiladelphia.org/scholarship

Priority deadline: November 15

Final deadline: March 1

LEARNING TORAH. LOVING TORAH. LIVING TORAH.

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9225 OLD BUSTLETON AVENUE | PHILADELPHIA, PA 19115 | TEL: 215.969.5960 |
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Politz Hebrew Academy | 9225 Old Bustleton Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19115

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