



## Message from the Principal

It is always a wonderful feeling to welcome everyone back after a well deserved and relaxing summer break. We are pleased to welcome new staff and students to our Gesher Yehuda family.

The buzz in the building is tangible as our students are excited about our new “Building Character” program. We can already see the effect of the first character trait “RESPECT” in the interaction of the students both in the classroom and in the playground.

We look forward to a productive year full of growth in character and intelligence.

Deborah Katz

## Interview with Mrs. Liki Neiman Educational Coordinator (K-5)

**How do you determine if a child is a candidate for Gesher Yehuda, a school for students with learning differences?**

When parents come to us, we discuss the learning difficulties their child is having in their current school. I evaluate the child to determine if Gesher can help them maximize their potential academically and socially. We want to be certain that we can offer them the academic services they need to succeed as well as a social circle of friends so they will be happy.

**At what age should parents consider sending their child to Gesher Yehuda?**

Gesher Yehuda is a learning bridge. The younger the child is when he enters Gesher Yehuda, the stronger his chances are of being mainstreamed. Our youngest students are five years old. When they come in at that age, they have a better chance of joining general education. When a child comes in the third or fourth grade, it takes time to undo all the negative feelings and habits they have developed towards learning and school. In a general, mainstream school teachers are pressured to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time and if a student needs extra help, they often get left behind. This sets them up for failure and unhappiness.

When they enter our school, our goal is to gain their trust and make them feel safe and comfortable. We work hard to show them that we are all on the same team and we are here to help them. We build up their self esteem, social life, and academic skills so that they learn and reach their academic potential. Transitioning from a big classroom to a small classroom with individualized instruction helps them feel confident, happy, and successful.



**What kind of learning difficulties does Gesher Yehuda service?**

Children with learning differences might have differences with language processing, visual or auditory processing impairment. Some kids have difficulty focusing or sitting at a desk for extended periods of time. Some students have trouble with abstract thinking and are more capable with practical thinking.

We teach everything using multisensory methods, engaging all five senses and using visual, auditory, and kinesthetic strategies. Every student has learning strengths and weaknesses. By targeting every learning style, the student has the opportunity to learn using his strengths and that compensates for any weaknesses.

**How do the students receive individualized attention?**

We formulate a School-Based IEP (Individualized Education Program) for each student. In September we assess every student's skills in math, reading, writing, etc. We review all the skills that the student knows, as well as all the skills we think he needs to work on. We identify the year's long term goals as well as very specific goals for each student. In October we start teaching and assess the student's progress. In November we formulate the IEP. Regular meetings between teachers and educational coordinators ensure that the students are advancing and meeting their goals. Skills that have been learned are constantly reviewed and ingrained. When a student meets their goals, we start adding Common Core skills to their IEP to help them prepare for the mainstream.

Gesher Yehuda prides itself on very small class sizes, exceptional occupational and speech therapy programs, social skills and physical education programs. All our teachers are certified in Special Education or Speech and Language.

Mrs. Neiman is the Education Coordinator of Gesher Yehuda for the past 12 years. She has worked in special education for over 22 years.



**Parent Orientation**

At this year's parent orientation, Rabbi Eli Mansour, the Rabbinic Advisor of Gesher Yehuda, opened the evening and addressed the parents about the opportunities and dangers posed by technology facing students today. Rabbi Mansour compared Gesher Yehuda to Noah's ark as a protective shelter for our children.

Alex Paskie from TAG (Technology Awareness Group) provided an informative and eye opening presentation about internet safety. Without proper filters and protection, our kids can easily be exposed to dangerous and unsavory elements. Every Wednesday, a member of TAG will be in Gesher Yehuda to help with installation and customization of filters on devices. Students and parents are welcome to bring in their phones, iPads, tablets, and laptops.

Orientation is also an opportunity for parents and teachers to connect. A parent new to the school shared her son's comments, "I love my teachers and I love reading!" She felt it noteworthy to mention as her son never wanted to read in the past. The mother also emphasized how impressed she was when she initially came to visit the school: all the students were happy and had smiles on their faces. The parents were attracted to Gesher's professional, warm and friendly environment.

Another parent commented, "I constantly had to drag my son out of bed in the morning, now he is excited about leaving for school. He jumps out of bed and is ready and waiting in anticipation for the bus to arrive!"

It is always rewarding for us to hear that our students are happy and excited to learn!

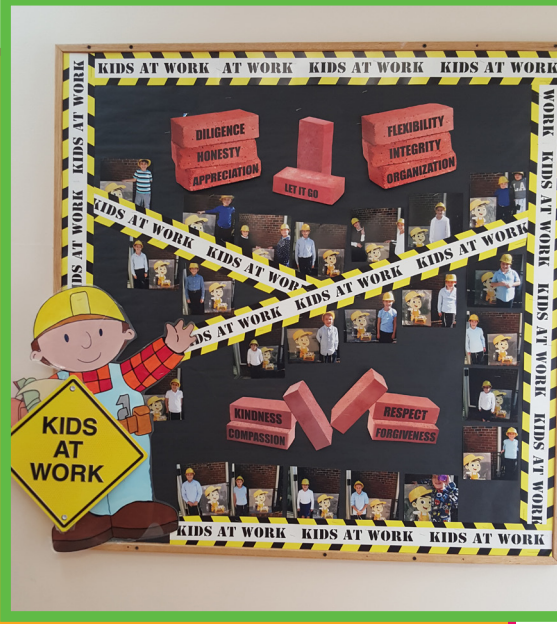
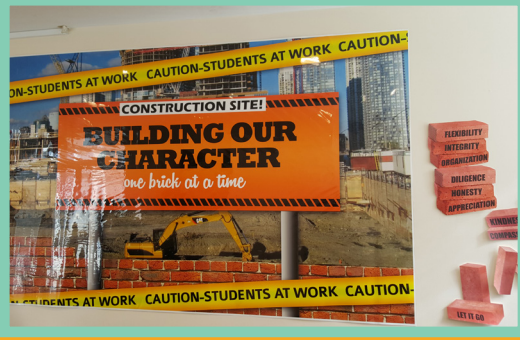


**Gesher Yehuda is Under Construction!**

We began our special Building Character program. This month we're working on treating others with respect. When students demonstrate an act of respect, they earn points and win prizes. Students with the highest scores will be featured on our Honor Roll board!

The 7th and 8th graders taught a chant to the school to help get everyone excited:  
R-E-S-P-E-C-T  
I give it to you  
And you give it to me!  
R-E-S-P-E-C-T  
You gotta treat people respectfully!

The incentive program was designed to help students internalize and adopt behaviors through practice, so that it isn't just an abstract idea anymore. Throughout the month, the teachers reinforce what it means to be respectful and model concrete techniques on how we can behave respectfully.



**We are very pleased to announce and welcome our new staff!**

**Gesher Yehuda**  
Mrs. Sara Lang, MA- Kindergarten Teacher

**Yeshivah Prep**  
Mrs. Marilyn Farrah- Pride of Jewish Women  
Mr. Yisroel Kleinman- CPR Instructor  
Mrs. Rachel Rosenbaum- Psychology and American History  
Mrs. Debbie Shabott, MS, Certified Speech & Language Pathologist  
Mr. Zvi Shimorsky- Science, Math, and Computers



**Trip to the Zoo**  
In honor of Parashat Noach, our K-5th classes were treated with a trip to Green Meadows Farm!





## **Yeshivah Prep Students Listen to the IDF**

The students of Yeshivah Prep High School had the honor and privilege of hearing a current IDF Colonel speak at the auditorium of Yeshivah of Flatbush. The colonel discussed the extraordinary measures Israel and the IDF take to limit civilian casualties as much as possible in their fight against terror. He explained how they make decisions in the field and the effort they make to maintain their high level of morality. He showed the students examples and situations where the IDF operates in a more difficult way and at a steeper financial cost just to preserve human life.

He stressed that as the students go out into the world, they are all ambassadors for Israel so it's important for them to understand the facts, and their responsibility to spread the truth.

# FROM OUR HIGH SCHOOL



## YESHIVAH PREP HIGH SCHOOL

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

# SAFETY



### **Commissions Fair**

At this year's Commissions Fair in Yeshivah of Flatbush, Yeshivah Prep High School

Students signed up for the extracurricular clubs of their choice including sports teams, music and band, advanced art, the Israeli awareness program and more!



### **New Computer Lab at Yeshivah Prep**

We are very pleased to announce the installation of a new computer lab at Yeshivah Prep. Ten state of the art computers, fully loaded with educational and office software, and all appropriate filters are being installed. The computers will be an invaluable tool for study and research.

