



N. E. MILES
JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Learning for a Lifetime למידה לחיים

We're partners in
changing the world

Nurturing and inspiring generations

ChaiLights

State Champions & Super Coders: Two Years in a Row!



Our seventh grade Dash and Dot robotics team has done it again! This group of students was named the state champions in the Wonder League Robotics Competition for the second year in a row! That's not all though, this year our students are in the top 1% of teams and have been invited to compete in the international finalist round and the perfect score round for their coding! There were over 5,000 teams in the competition and over 80 in Alabama.

Our students were already familiar with the Dash and Dot robots because the NEMJDS was an early supporter of the Wonder Workshop which teaches programming basics through hands-on play with their robots, Dash and Dot. What was especially exciting for our students is that after being named state champs in 2016, they set a goal to make it even

further in this year's competition.

We especially want to thank Amit Sherman, NEMJDS parent and team coach! Read the full story [here](#)!

Celebrating Science in Grades Four & Five (Plus Design, Innovation, Research, & Public Speaking!)



Our fourth and fifth graders are participating in the Celebrate Science program at the McWane Center. This is a contest where schools submit their own prototype of an exhibit which if chosen will be on display at the McWane Center.

As a class, students have come up with three different ideas, and they are working together to figure out which idea is the strongest. They have narrowed in on buoyancy, sound vibrations, and lightning for their topics. They also presented their ideas and received feedback from Elizabeth Gargus, a McWane education specialist. Get the full story [here!](#)

A Movie Premiere from Second Grade



Recently the entire school gathered for the movie premiere of *Banana Zombie Invasion!* Since the beginning of the year, second grade has collaborated on a project called *Plishat ha-Banana Zombim* or *The Banana Zombie Invasion* in Hebrew class with Morah Dani.

The students wrote this story, and it evolved into a movie—completely in Hebrew! Our students worked together to write the story, screenplay, and even act in the film. In addition, when you read their *Banana Zombim* book, you can see how students' cursive Hebrew writing has developed since the beginning of the year!

As we watched the premiere, the entire school was smiling. The whole school was blown away by the second graders' creativity, acting, and of course, their Hebrew skills!

What Do Teachers Do Over Winter Break? Drum Circle, E-Day, and Pin Art!



At the NEMJDS, two of our pillars are family and creativity, and those came together over Winter Break when our faculty gathered together to have a drum circle with Ms. Rottembourg and to work on an art project with Morah Sari. This wasn't just for teachers and staff though, people brought their families!

In addition, our teachers had their own E-Day! Teachers all identified an area in which they are interested and learned and shared a recap. As a faculty, we collaborate and share daily, and we loved that we could start 2017 by sharing our own learning to better the school! Check out the full story [here!](#)

Hebrew Authors & Researchers: Nocturnal Animals



The third graders recently finished books they wrote about the lives of nocturnal animals (all in HEBREW!)

These students were already strong researchers from their work on their Presidential Wax Museum, and they loved using their skills to find out more about their animals. Once students researched, they used their Hebrew language skills to craft a story, and they also took a bit of creative license. For example, third

grader David explained, "Owls are my second favorite animal, and I knew they were nocturnal, so I picked the snowy white owl. I said they eat Doritos and Sprite for lunch." Read more [here!](#)

A Cross Curricular Spotlight: Refugee Experiences



At the NEMJDS, we embrace our Jewish and American values as we engage with our world. At the beginning of the year, upper school students heard from alumnus Mack Krell about his experiences working with Syrian refugees in Berlin. Throughout the year, our seventh and eighth graders have looked at contemporary and historic refugee experiences.

In Language Arts, students recently read the book *Inside Out and Back Again*. This Newbery award winning novel details the struggles of a Vietnamese ten year old girl in 1975 who moves from Saigon to Alabama. Students then used their research skills to analyze other refugee and immigrant experiences. Students identified trends as they researched. Additionally, in Israeli History, students learned about Israel taking in Vietnamese refugees in the seventies. Read the full story [here](#).

Spelling Bee Buzz:

Congratulations to our school winners! Samuel was our school champ, and he came in second place at the City Spelling Bee and then went onto complete in the County Spelling Bee!



The NEMJDS Spelling Bee is being made possible, in part, by The Birmingham Jewish Foundation's Landy Family Fund and is being coordinated with help from former NEMJDS Spelling Bee Champ and alumna, Ellen Landy.

Alumni Spotlight: Paperclips & Tools Against Intolerance from Alison Lebovitz



In January, our Upper School students headed to Whitwell, a little town in TN, where they learned a big lesson. In 1998, middle school students in Whitwell, a small rural town, decided to collect six million paperclips to try to wrap their head around what six million looked like, but the project evolved into so much more! The Whitwell students ended up collecting thirty million paperclips and getting a railcar, which was used in Nazi Germany to transport people to camps, to house the paperclips in a memorial. This project evolved into a documentary and a nonprofit which educates schools about the importance of tolerance.

Students began their visit to Whitwell by hearing from Alison Goldstein Lebovitz, NEMJDS alumna and director of the One Clip nonprofit. We started in the library which housed the artifacts related to the paperclips project where Alison explained to the students the significance of their surroundings. The library houses artifacts including a Torah which began its journey in Lithuania and a jacket worn by prisoners in camps during the Holocaust. In the library, students also were able to read the binders of letters (pictured above) the Whitwell students have received in relation to their project. These letters tell the story of the paperclips people have sent, and they come from every continent on our planet! We concluded our visit to Whitwell by visiting the memorial and reflecting on the power of tolerance.

Alison explained to us that this project and the importance of kindness and acceptance is an NEMJDS value and a family value. She talked to our students about how in their daily lives they will make choices, and it's crucial to make the choice that will help people.

She also shared how lucky she felt and how lucky we are that for years there have been parents and families who have made the decision that our school is important. She shared an anecdote from her sister's time at the NEMJDS about how when a student was picked on, the teacher explained to the students that staying silent was a problem. Her message was that "being neutral makes the oppression worse."

She ended her discussion with the students by explaining that the way you treat people when nobody is looking is what matters. Then she gave each student a gold paperclip to wear as a conversation starter about what the paperclip represents. She concluded by saying that when asked, she explains that "the clip reminds me of my responsibility to do at least one kind thing for others daily."

*This project connects to The Better Together Names, Not Numbers© project, an interactive, multi-media Holocaust project created by educator, Tova Fish Rosenberg. The Better Together Names, Not Numbers Program is generously supported by a prominent national foundation .



Upcoming at the NEMJDS:

March 15, 8:00-9:00, LJCC Track: Walk & Talk- How to Effectively Discipline?

Discuss the struggles and strategies to disciplining your toddler with Sheri Krell and other parents of children ages 0-4. RSVP to LChessin@nemjds.org.

March 22, 7:00 pm, N.E. Miles Jewish Day School: What Goes In & Comes Out of Our Mouths Kashrut & How We Speak

The Abrams Institute for Lifetime Learning invites you to the How to Build a Jewish Home series event focusing on Kashrut and how we speak facilitated by Rabbi Leff.

RSVP to sgreene@nemjds.org.

April 5, 12:00-12:45, N.E. Miles Jewish Day School: Lunch & Learn- Kindergarten Readiness from a Whole Child Perspective

Discuss what non-academic skills children need to prepare for kindergarten with Sheri Krell and other parents of children ages 0-4. Lunch will be provided. Space is limited. RSVP to

LChessin@nemjds.org.

Visit Our School

Interested in learning more about our program or touring state-of-the-art learning environment? It would be our pleasure to give you a personalized tour! [Contact us](#).

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To Make a Donation:

Call Lynn Raviv, Development Director at 879-1068 or Sally Friedman, Birmingham Jewish Foundation at 803-1519.

To donate online, go to nemjds.org/giving.

About Our School

For the last 44 years, the N.E. Miles Jewish Day School has been committed to a warm, safe, and positive atmosphere in which children from diverse levels of religious observance are inspired to grow and celebrate Jewishly and embrace life-long learning. With a strong basis in academics, Jewish education, sense of community, development of leadership and menschlichkeit, our school is an integral part of our community and works to make it even better. [Learn more](#) about what it means to be a part of our school family.

Connect With Us!

The Latest:



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