

June 5, 2009

210-302-6900 - www.eka-sa.org

Sivan 13, 5769

Parasha: Naso

Candle Lighting 8:13 pm

EKA Summer Schedule:

June 8 – June 12	8:30am – 4pm
June 15 – July 3	Office Closed
July 7 – July 31	10am – 2pm
August 3 – August 18	8:30am – 4pm
August 19	First Day of School

Kiddush Lunch in Honor of 8th Graders

Bucay, Noorily, and Sonsino families are sponsoring a kiddush lunch at Congregation Rodfei Sholom on **June 6, 2009** in honor of all of the 8th grade graduates. Everyone is invited to attend.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!



EKA 2009 Graduates



Kindergarten Promotion!

Message from the Head of School

Dear Parents,

The school year ended yesterday when our youngest students in Kindergarten presented a heart-warming retrospective of their first year here at the EKA. Just moments later we recognized the accomplishments of our 8th grade seniors, who represented the 32nd graduating class of our school.

But how have we grown and improved, and what have we accomplished as a school? What innovations have we introduced since August, 2004? I have divided these into four areas: Administrative, Curriculum, Programmatic, and Faculty. I am sure you will enjoy reading what we have accomplished as much as Mrs. Scott and I have enjoyed working with our teachers and staff to implement them on behalf of your children.

Best wishes for a wonderfully relaxing and refreshing summer vacation with your families. We will miss you and thank you for your support building a school in which we can all take pride.

Shabbat Shalom,

Robert A. Scott, Head of School

Administrative

- Enrollment procedure
 - More standardized
 - More comprehensive
 - Smoother process
 - Using outside agency for Tuition Assistance allocations
- New Marketing Brochure
- New School Logo
- Revised and redesigned student report cards
- Implemented mid-quarter Progress Reports
- Parent-Teacher Conference Sign-up
 - Added evening sessions
- Lunch 'n Learn Information sessions for Grades 4 and 5 Parents
- Middle School Information Session for Grade 5
- Developed annual high school information packet for 8th grade
- Worked with PIE to redesign more comprehensive Parent Directory
- Weekly Spirit Days
- Separate "Back to School Night" evenings for K-5 and Middle School
- New Middle School Uniforms
- Revised and updated Parent-Student Handbook
- Revised and updated Employee Handbook
- Extensive and detailed yearly calendar distributed prior to start of school
- Recognized and accredited by State Board for Educator Certification of the Texas Education Agency to provide Continuing Professional Education activities for renewal of teacher certification

Curriculum

- Adoption of Houghton Mifflin Reading Literacy Series K-5
- Implementation and mastery of 71 phonograms in K-3
- Daily Journal Writing K-4
- Adoption of Everyday Math program K-2
- Adoption of Addison Wesley Grades 3-5
 - Strong emphasis on learning basic math facts and computational skills
- Continuing to work towards better meeting needs of individual students
 - Multi-level instruction
 - Kindergarten Enrichment
 1. Language Arts
 2. Math
 3. Judaic Studies (Torah Time)
- Kindergarten Torah Time
 - Jewish Holiday/GS curriculum integration
- Strong Kindergarten emphasis on:
 - Daily journal writing
 - Word wall
 - Portfolios

- Increased decorations around Chagim to promote a Jewish environment
- Judaic Studies Enrichment Track in lower grades
- Complete revision of Judaic Studies Curriculum
 - Navi (Prophets)
 - Chumash
 - Israel
 - Dinim
- 8th Grade Comparative Judaism course
- Grade-level specific Judaic Studies Workbooks for each holiday
- Outdoor education programs
 - John Knox Ranch
 - Honey Creek
 - Marble Falls
- Expanded Sukkah Hop program
 - Multi-synagogue visits
 - Kindergarten neighborhood visit
 - Middle School Progressive Sukkah Dinner
- Redesigned electives
- *Chesed* (Community Service) component added for promotion or graduation
- Israeli dance added to
 - PE curriculum, K-2
 - After-school activity Gr. 3-5
 - Middle School elective
- Middle School Headmaster's Roundtable
- Established chapter of National Junior Honor Society
- Students can receive up to 3 years of high school foreign language credit for Hebrew at EKA
- Students can receive up to 2 years of high school math credit for math at EKA
- Middle School students write weekly Divrei Torah for RamRecorder and deliver them at Kabbalat Shabbat
- Winners and placement in city-wide Laurel Crown Foundation Poetry Contest
- Winners and placement in McNay Museum and San Antonio Fiesta Art Contests
- Winners and placement in American Math Contest
- Winners and placement in District and Regional Science Fair
- Placement in City-wide Spelling Bee
- Winners and placement in Private School Interscholastic Association Competition
- Student art work displayed permanently throughout school, including Middle School painted ceiling tiles
- Complete updating of Computer Lab and most classrooms
- Total revision of Website

Programmatic

- Mensch of the Month Certificates and Mensch of the Moment stickers
 - Recognize good middot by students
 - Scheduled breakfasts with Head of School
- *Hava Nirkod* Dance Troupe
 - Performed at EKA and community functions
- Spelling Bee (Grades 4-8)
- Middle School Oratory Contest
- Dinim Bowl
- Mitzvah Fair
- International Folk Art Day Participation
- Sports Night
- *Hatarat Nedarim*
 - Middle School release of vows before Yom Kippur
- 8th grade Flower Sales
- Parent Visiting Days added to parent lunches during Book Fair
- Establishment of Knesset (Student Council) with actual voter registration and voting procedures
- Student-led, family-style Model Sedarim
- Middle School Lock-in
- Middle School Shabbaton at Camp Young Judea

- Austin Jewish Academy and Monterrey, Mexico Day School
- 8th grade trip to Israel
- EKA open on Martin Luther King Day so that Middle School students participate in city-wide march
- All-school Kabbalat Shabbat each month
- Established Interscholastic athletic teams
 - Soccer, girls basketball, tennis
- Lag BaOmer Sports Day including an academic component

Faculty

- Appointed the following positions:
 - School Counselor
 - Coordinator for Special Needs
 1. Outside tutoring schedule
 2. Faculty tutoring schedule
 3. Speakers for faculty meetings
 4. Assists in arranging for outside diagnostic assessment at private or public school
 5. Represents EKA administration and faculty members at public school ARD meetings
 - Kindergarten through Grade 3 General Studies Coordinator
 - Middle School Coordinator
 1. Grades 4-8 (inclusive)
 - Director of Judaic Studies
- Faculty Advisory Committee
- Established weekly “Star of the Week” display for teachers
- Provided a wide-range of professional development opportunities, including
 - Multilevel Instruction (Region 20)
 - Bullying (Dr. Javi Villanueva)
 - Phonograms (Kathi Cummins -San Antonio Academy)
 - Using Classroom Learning Centers (Liz Morris -- Akiba Academy))
 - Speech and Language Proficiency (April Smith)
 - Communication and Language (Dr. Roslyn Horowitz)
 - ADHD (Dr. Josh Rotenberg)
 - Dealing with Difficult People
 - Speech Pathology



EKA's Got Talent!

Thank You

Sandy Katz, owner of *signs to go* in San Antonio, donated the EKA Logo podium banner that made its debut at our 8th grade graduation.

Chesed Hours Opportunities

Gina and Nim Meishar have contacted the San Antonio Food Bank about doing Chesed Hours there. The Food Bank will assign a shift sometime during the summer for groups of 15 or more. If you are interested in participating please contact the Meishars at 884-9146 or gzm@sbcglobal.net.

OR

Beldon Library needs students Grades 4 and older to help with the inventory and straighten books. Call Marlene Raynolds 302-6805 for information.

From the Science Lab

Due primarily to the contributions of Joseph Brookman and Yoni Cohen, the EKA, was recently acknowledged by the Earth's Birthday Project for helping save 0.4 acres of the Amazon rainforest. This project was in conjunction with recent Earth Day activities.

On May 22nd, Dr. Alex Miller (Madeline Miller's dad) presented a very engaging and relevant talk on the environmental consequences of a proposed gold mine at the headwaters of Bristol Bay, which is one of the world's great salmon fishing areas that he has traveled too many times. His talk was attended by all of the EKA 8th graders (who are studying pollution and the environment) and most of the EKA 6th graders (who just studied freshwater resources) and 7th graders (who just finished studying ecosystems).

BE A JCC Maccabi Games® HOST FAMILY!

August 9-14, 2009

We are reaching out to the Jewish community to ask that you open your hearts and homes to visiting Jewish Athletes this summer! Be one of the more than 300 local Jewish families who will extend a warm welcome to 700 visiting JCC Maccabi Games® athletes from across North America and around the world.

Being a host family is a wonderful way to be a part of the JCC Maccabi Games® experience. Many past host families have developed long-lasting friendships with their visiting athletes and their families. The entire San Antonio Jewish community is needed to help make sure there are enough homes for every athlete.

Register as a Host Family by downloading a registration form from our website at www.jccsanantonio.org/maccabi09! In addition to much more information about the JCC Maccabi Games experience, you can also find out which delegations will be visiting in case you know someone from that city.

Being a host family isn't hard at all. Families with children of all ages will enjoy being a part of the Games as a Host Family. Just a few things you should know:

- If you have a Jewish home in San Antonio or the surrounding area, we NEED you Aug. 9-14!
- Each host family is asked to host a minimum of two (2) visiting athletes providing each athlete with reasonable and separate sleeping accommodations. We will make air mattresses available if needed.
- Hosts are asked to provide a light breakfast each morning and dinner Sunday through Tuesday. We will provide the athletes with lunches each day.
- While it's not a requirement, we will need several kosher homes for kosher athletes, please let us know if yours is a kosher home.
- For your convenience, we will have three transportation hubs where host families may drop off and pick up athletes: These hubs are: the JCC, Trinity University and Concordia Lutheran Church.
- Host families will be provided with the week's schedule at an orientation in advance of athletes' arrival.
- There will be planned events each night of the week except Tuesday evening which is designated as Host Family Night. Host families are encouraged to get together with other host families and plan an evening of fun for the athletes.
- Being a Host Family is very rewarding for both the hosts and the athletes! Don't miss out on this gratifying experience!

Register TODAY as a Host Family!

Call Cathy Pottorf at 302-6870 or download the registration form from our website at www.jccsanantonio.org/maccabi09!

Every Jewish home is needed! We hope we can't count on yours!