

For more information, please contact us.

**Chicago Jewish Day School**

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## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **Why should we choose Chicago Jewish Day School?**

Chicago Jewish Day School is a multi-denominational Jewish day school on the cutting edge of best practices in progressive education. In 2018, we celebrated our extraordinary commitment to engaging and educating the next generation of Jewish learners and leaders when we moved to our new 2.6-acre campus in the Irving Park neighborhood. Through our integrated and experiential learning curriculum, we are recognized for both our academic excellence and our meaningful approach to Judaic Studies and Hebrew. Together, they create a challenging and thought-provoking curriculum that develops a child's capacity for complex learning and a strong moral compass. 95% of our graduates gain acceptance to their first-choice high school, including Chicago's competitive selective enrollment and private schools, where they become leaders in their schools and communities.

### **What are the benefits of a dual curriculum?**

Recent studies suggest that people who master more than one language build a more resilient brain, are more proficient at multi-tasking, and are better able to set priorities. Chicago Jewish Day School students begin learning Hebrew from day one, and these young minds quickly gain proficiency in a second language. This not only provides them with a sound cultural foundations, but also wires their brains to accelerate learning in all academic subjects.

Chicago Jewish Day School's dual curriculum teaches our children both knowledge and values, in both General Studies and Judaic Studies. We seek to nurture students who are not only literate, but who also are empowered to become educated members of the Jewish and general community

through the skills, values, and experiences that they acquire. The use of Hebrew as a spoken language coupled with our progressive, integrated and experiential curriculum develop children's capacity for complex learning. The study of sacred and Biblical texts develop critical thinking and analytical skills. Managing a dual curriculum promotes organizational and time management skills which lead to solid study habits. Chicago Jewish Day School's challenging and thought provoking curriculum prepares graduates well for advanced study. Most of all, however, Chicago Jewish Day School promotes and fosters ethical and moral identity development in each individual child

### **How is the day divided between General Studies and Judaic Studies?**

General Studies and Judaic Studies classes rotate between morning and afternoon sessions with both disciplines weaved throughout any given day. This creates more flexibility, and also addresses the impact the time of day has on learning. At Chicago Jewish Day School, we have similar academic goals for both General Studies and Judaic Studies — deeper understanding, critical thinking, and real world application — and believe that what we learn in each area enhances and capitalizes on our learning in the other.

### **What about music? Art? Technology? P.E.? Recess?**

We believe in the importance of integrating all these disciplines throughout our day. In addition, Chicago Jewish Day School has specialists in music, art, P.E. and technology who work with each grade multiple times per week. Our students have recess twice each day. This is just one of the wonderful opportunities for children of different grades to interact with each other socially. When the weather

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permits, recess is held outside on the grassy athletic field or our beautiful new playground. Otherwise, recess is held inside our gymnasium.

**What is the student/teacher ratio in your classrooms?**

Our student teacher ratio is 5:1. Our classes typically range from 12–16 students per class and most grades have two classes per grade. This year in our Junior Kindergarten class, we have two teachers and an assistant. In our Kindergarten classes, we have two General Studies teachers and two Hebrew/Judaic Studies teachers. In our Grades One through Five, each class has one General Studies teacher and one Hebrew/Judaic Studies teacher. In Middle School, our students rotate from class to class with a different, specialized teacher for each of the academic disciplines.

**How does Chicago Jewish Day School address individual learning needs?**

At Chicago Jewish Day School, we take our cue from our students — and are particularly attentive to student individuality. The question, “What is best for the student?” is at the core of all decisions. Each student is unique. Therefore, policies as well as learning and behavioral expectations are established in a broad manner that allows for individualized decision-making that reflects our respect for the individual students and their needs, both those needing extra support and those requiring enrichment. Differentiation is embedded in our curricular choices and teaching methodology across the subject areas. We celebrate the developmental stages of learning and provide for each student’s unique timetable for unfolding their abilities. In addition, the teachers in our Reach Department provide additional support to students in order to address a wide variety of student needs.

**Where is the school located?**

We have recently moved to our new, beautiful campus at 3730 North California Ave in the Irving Park neighborhood of Chicago, easily accessible from the Kennedy for both our downtown and suburban families. This 65,000 square foot facility on over 2.6 acres allows us to create a campus that enhances the education we offer our students.

**What are my transportation options?**

Chicago Jewish Day School offers a bus transportation option for our families to and from school. We currently offer four buses that make a variety of stops throughout the city and suburbs to accommodate our families. Currently, about 67% of our students take the bus to and from Chicago Jewish Day School. Carpooling is also very popular at Chicago Jewish Day School. Upon enrolling, you will receive a school directory to help facilitate this process. Additionally, our Director of Admissions, Cortney Stark Cope, is happy to help connect you with other families in your area.

**How long is the day?**

GRADE	DROP OFF	ARRIVAL	DISMISSAL
JK	8:00 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	3:15 p.m.*
K-5	8:00 a.m.	8:15 a.m.	3:15 p.m.**
6-8	7:45 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.**

As a convenience to our families, we offer both Before Care and After Care services on our campus.

PROGRAM	START/END TIMES	DAYS
Before Care	7:30 a.m.	Monday–Friday
After Care	6:00 p.m.	Monday–Friday

Additionally, we offer after school activities, called After School Adventures, three days per week. These programs, which include activities such as circus arts, cooking, dance, karate, *Mishna*, yoga, and many others, begin immediately after school and end at 4:30 p.m.

**What about lunch? What if my family doesn’t keep kosher?**

Chicago Jewish Day School values and respects the varied approaches to the laws of *kashrut* (keeping kosher) that exist within our community. Our observance of *kashrut* is guided by the concern that all members of our community feel comfortable eating at school functions. Therefore, we ask parents to send in a dairy/*parve* snack and lunch for their child on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays and to send in a kosher meat/*parve* snack and lunch on Thursdays and Fridays. Optional catered school lunches are available for purchase.

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\*Parents have the option to pick-up their child after lunch at 12:30 p.m.  
\*\*Chicago Jewish Day School dismisses at 2:30 PM on Friday afternoons for *Shabbat* and dismisses at noon on the afternoon preceding Jewish holidays.

**I'm worried I might not be religious enough, or I might be too religious to attend Chicago Jewish Day School.**

As a multi-denominational day school, we are proud of the fact that our families hail from diverse Jewish backgrounds. While many of our students come from families that are Reform, Conservative or Modern Orthodox, we also have many families who do not identify with a particular denomination. All of our families come together in the desire to ground their children with a strong sense of Jewish identity and knowledge. At Chicago Jewish Day School, our students understand that there is not just one way to be Jewish and celebrate and respect the different ways we all come to our Jewish identity and practice.

**I'm thinking about high schools. What schools do Chicago Jewish Day School graduates attend?**

At Chicago Jewish Day School, we take pride in the fact that our graduates have choices. Our students are represented at all the top schools in the city of Chicago and nearby suburbs. Our graduates have been accepted to:

- Abraham Joshua Heschel School
- Amundsen High School
- Beacon Academy
- The Chicago Academy for the Arts
- Evanston Township High School
- Francis W. Parker School
- Ida Crown Jewish Academy
- Jones College Prep High School
- Lane Technical College Prep High School, *Alpha Program, Omega Program*
- Latin School of Chicago
- Lincoln Park High School, *Double Honors, International Baccalaureate and Performing Arts Programs*
- New Trier High School
- Nicholas Senn High School, *International Baccalaureate Program*

- Niles North High School
- Niles West High School
- Northshore Country Day School
- Northside College Prep High School
- Ogden International School of Chicago, *Baccalaureate Program*
- Rochelle Zell Jewish High School
- Roycemore School
- Rudolf Steiner School
- Steinmetz College Prep High School
- University of Chicago Laboratory School
- Von Steuben Metropolitan Science Center, *Scholars Program*
- Walter Payton College Preparatory High School
- Whitney M. Young Magnet High School
- Wolcott School

**Is Chicago Jewish Day School accredited?**

Chicago Jewish Day School is accredited by ISACS (Independent School Association of Central States). This prestigious and highly sought after accreditation puts us in a community of excellence with other top independent schools in the Chicagoland area. Additionally, we are part of the PRIZMAH, NBOA, NAIS, and ASCD networks. We partner with and are supported by the Jewish United Fund as well.

**For more information, contact Cortney Stark Cope, Director of Admissions, at 773-948-8607 or [cstarkcope@chicagojewishdayschool.org](mailto:cstarkcope@chicagojewishdayschool.org), or visit us online at [www.chicagojewishdayschool.org](http://www.chicagojewishdayschool.org)**