

## **GORDON DAY SCHOOL – Q & A**

### **What grades are in the School?**

Gordon Day School serves students in Kindergarten through fifth grade.

### **What are the student-teacher ratios?**

Gordon Day School prides itself on maintaining class sizes small enough to allow for individual instruction. There are two kindergarten classes, each filled with 11 students and led by one teacher and one assistant teacher. There is one classroom for grades 1 through 5 and student enrollment is capped at 18. There is one teacher and one assistant teacher.

Our lead teachers are state-certified, but we encourage and provide the means for ongoing professional growth and development programs.

### **What are the school hours?**

School hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. on Friday. Elective enrichment classes are offered each day from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. except Friday. Aftercare is available after regular class dismissal and until 5:30 p.m. every day.

### **Do the students wear school uniforms?**

Children are required to wear three-button, collar shirts -- any color – but embroidered with the school logo and any variety of khaki or navy blue bottoms. On Fridays, children wear the school's white shirts with blue pants or skirts.

### **Do boys wear kippot?**

Yes. Since Gordon Day School is part of Beth David Congregation, conservative synagogue, boys are required to wear kippot.

### **What accreditations does Gordon Day School have?**

Gordon Day School is a fully accredited school, with certifications from the Association of Independent Schools of South Florida (AISF) and the Southern Association Colleges and Schools (SACS).

### **Where do Gordon Day School graduates attend middle school?**

We aim to place each graduate in the most appropriate learning environment. Some of the schools that have accepted our students are Ransom Everglades, Gulliver Academy, the Hebrew Academy, Miami Country Day School, and Palmer School. We take pride that our children are not only well prepared for middle school but they have excelled academically, social, morally, and spiritually.

### **What does the Gordon Day School curriculum offer?**

Gordon Day School provides an enriched curriculum that relies on the philosophy of teaching students at their own level. Teachers are constantly assessing students through formal and informal evaluations. Our low

student-teacher ratio provides educators opportunities for differentiating curriculum through knowledge of each student's progress. Teachers encourage individual learning at all stages. Our interactive instruction includes critical thinking skills and the use of Smart Boards in each classroom.

Aside from our formal evaluations, you'll see your child's progress each and every Friday, when students bring home their Portfolios containing a weekly assessment. Our parents find this to be an invaluable resource.

### **What are Publishing Parties?**

Gordon Day School is famous for its emphasis on student writing skills and it hosts Publishing Parties to feature final works. The children's pieces - from paragraphs to research papers - begin with brainstorming sessions. The work is drafted, reviewed, revised, and edited. The final pages are printed on the School's state-of-the-art publishing technology and displayed at a party that parents are encouraged to attend.

**Do students have access to computers?** Gordon Day School has a strong commitment to technology and boasts a state-of-the-art computer lab with 22 computers. In each classroom, in addition to the Smart Boards, there are two computers and one digital camera. Additionally, the Computer Lab, grades 4 and 5 classrooms, and the Art Room/Science Lab also have Smart Boards.

### **How do Gordon Day School students score on standardized tests?**

While the students earn extremely competitive scores on standardized tests, the School's environment focuses on intellectual, spiritual, and social growth. In addition, the school fosters a sense of community, so students learn to respect people, nurture relationships, and stand strong on even the every-day causes they consider worthwhile.

### **How do Jewish studies fit into the curriculum?**

The Jewish value system dictates at Gordon Day School - mutual respect, kindness, determination, and mitzvot. Children are encouraged and responsible for engaging in community service projects. In addition to applying these principles to secular studies, Kindergarten classes have a 45 minute block each day of Hebrew and Judaic Studies; grade one has one hour of Hebrew and Judaic Studies per day. In grades two through five, we offer 45 minutes of Hebrew language and 45 minutes of Judaic Studies daily, at which time students learn about the holidays and Jewish practices, ideals, and customs. Students also attend a 45 minute Shabbat every Friday, which is a festive service with singing and class presentations.

### **Does Gordon Day School serve lunch?**

Parents can order their children lunches from kidsdeli.com, which delivers fresh, healthy meals to school each day except Wednesdays, which is reserved for the pizza fundraiser for the children who choose to participate. And of course, parents can pack for their children what they like, so far as the food is dairy or parve.

### **When can I apply?**

The registration process begins in February. Information is first mailed to families of existing students, then to synagogue members and then to other inquiring families.

**Do parents get involved in the school?**

There is a very active Parents' Association at Gordon Day School and it leads efforts such as fundraising, school support, and recreational events. The Welcome Picnic, as one example, kicks off the school year, while the Chanukah Carnival is held in conjunction with the synagogue. There is a variety of school-wide events throughout the year, as well as ongoing classroom programs and exhibits which parents participate in acknowledging their children's achievements.