

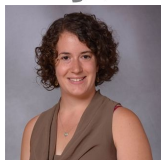


# Meet the Middle School Faculty

The Rashi School Virtual Open House  
Dec. 1, 2020



# The Rashi Middle School Experience



Deborah Berlin  
MS Science Teacher



Devon Beidler  
MS Learning Specialist



Monica Gibbs  
MS Mathematics Teacher



Michelle Bernstein  
MS Generalist



Julie Koven Levine  
Librarian



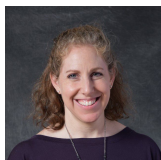
Eben Healy  
MS Mathematics Teacher



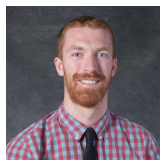
Mali Brodt  
MS Language Arts Teacher



Keith Civin  
MS Social Studies Teacher



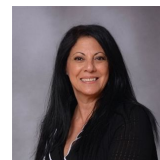
Jennifer Blum  
Head of Middle School (6-8)



Patrick Kerrigan  
MS Math & Science Teacher



Stephanie Rotsky  
Director of Social Justice



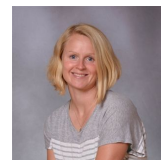
Raquel Levy  
Hebrew Teacher



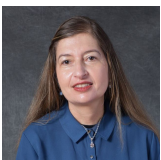
Ayelet Lipton  
Hebrew & Spanish  
Department Chair



Helen Ressler  
Jewish Studies Teacher



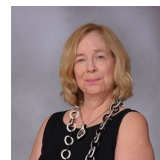
Venus Corriveau  
Director of Afterschool  
Programs



Dalia Mendel - Ferentz  
Hebrew Teacher



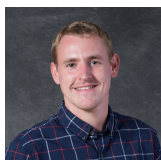
Nicholas Linder  
Director of Music



Joni Fishman  
MS Dean of Students



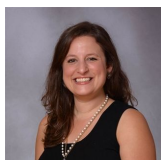
Larisa Grinis  
Hebrew Teacher



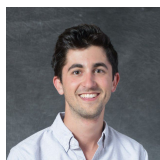
Bradley Meeder  
Mathematics  
Department Chair



William Shorr  
Spanish Teacher



Erica Smiley  
Director of Visual Arts



Zachary Albert  
MS Social Studies &  
Language Arts Teacher



Sherman Goldblum  
Social Justice Assistant



Rabbi Sharon Clevenger  
Dean of Jewish Learning



Joshua Horowicz  
Athletic Director



# The Rashi Middle School Experience

## with Jen Blum

- We know middle school students and their capabilities well, and thus, set the bar high.
- Academic Rigor at Rashi
  - Students take a deep dive into their courses honing both traditional academic skills and 21st Century skills.
  - Students engage and wrestle with the complex issues and connect their learning across their subjects through interdisciplinary units.
  - Learning is student-centered — our students enjoy hands-on, exploratory, project-based, and inquiry-based approaches that foster growth while building independence and autonomy as all students are pushed to reach their potential.
- Rashi takes a whole-child approach
  - Rashi middle school is a place where students are seen, known, and cared for — mind, body, and spirit.
- Rashi takes advantage of the K-8 nature of the environment.
  - Students gain confidence and mature through authentic leadership opportunities that would normally go to older students at K-12 or 7-12 schools.
  - The absence of older students allow them to stay youthful in all the ways you hope they will.
- These are the faculty you want in your child's life and as your partners during the middle school years.



# Math

## With Brad Meeder

### Personal

- Grade 6 → **Math Grade 6 or Pre-Algebra**, Grade 7 - **Pre-Algebra or Algebra**, Grade 8 - **Algebra 1 or Advanced Algebra/Geometry**
- Differentiated Instruction
- Supports and Extension

### Interwoven

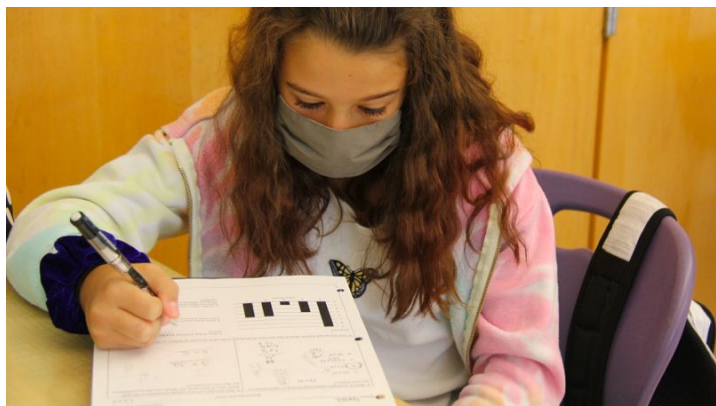
- Emphasis on deep conceptual understanding and using math as a language to communicate.
  - Grade 6 → Data and Statistics Project
  - Grade 7 → Social Justice Project — “Disproportionate Representation”
  - Grade 8 → Investment Project — “Exponential Growth”

### Exciting

- Math Olympiad Competition
- Logic and Coding Electives



# Math



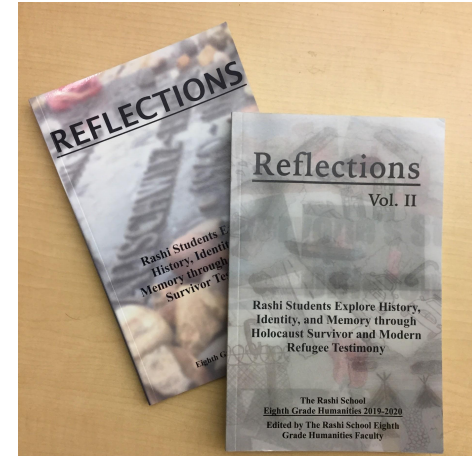




# English

with Zach Albert

- Take students from elementary school reading & writing to more sophisticated thinkers & learners
- Close Reading & Text Annotation
- Critical Thinking Strategies & Student-led Discussions
- Descriptive, Analytical, & Reflective Writing
- Interdisciplinary Humanities Project - Grade 8
  - Students explore history, identity, & memory through literature, Jewish ethics, & Holocaust survivor & modern refugee testimony





# Jewish Studies

## with Helen Ressler

- Strong emphasis on gaining text and critical thinking skills
  - How to navigate the Jewish bookshelf and find deeper meaning in the text
  - Grounded in Torah learning with exposure to Rabbinics and Modern-day source material
  - Jewish texts are living documents — text-to-text and text-to-self connections
- Encouraging confidence in Jewish knowledge and identity
- JPOD: Jewish Picture of the Day
  - Interdisciplinary learning to spark interest in the nuances of Jewish traditions
- Jewish Hypotheticals: design thinking to foster group collaboration, discussion, and debate.
  - “Should a synagogue be built on a former plantation?”
  - Shabbat on the International Space Station

\* Grade 8 emphasis on Jewish ethics



# Social Studies

with Keith Civin

## Enduring Understanding

*“When we as historians study an event of the past or present, it is imperative that we look at each event and its effects from multiple perspectives.”*





# Social Studies

## with Keith Civin

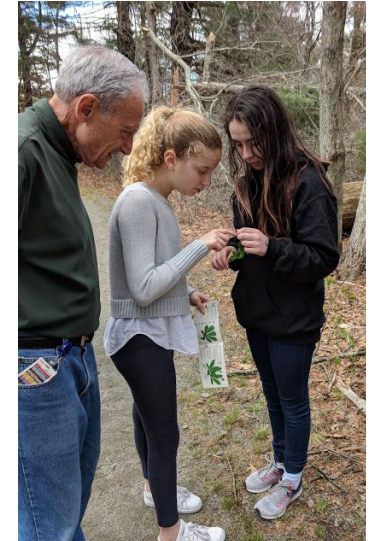
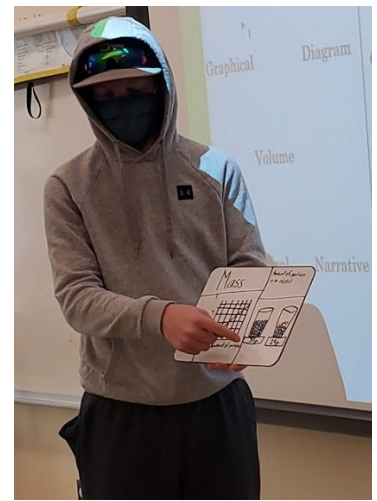
- I. The Civil War and Reconstruction
  - Each student given a character description
  - Analyze different questions and events
  - Write diary entry as their character
  - Share with classmates
- II. Current Events
  - Comparing coverage from CNN 5 Things and Fox News First
  - Georgia election stories Tuesday 11/17

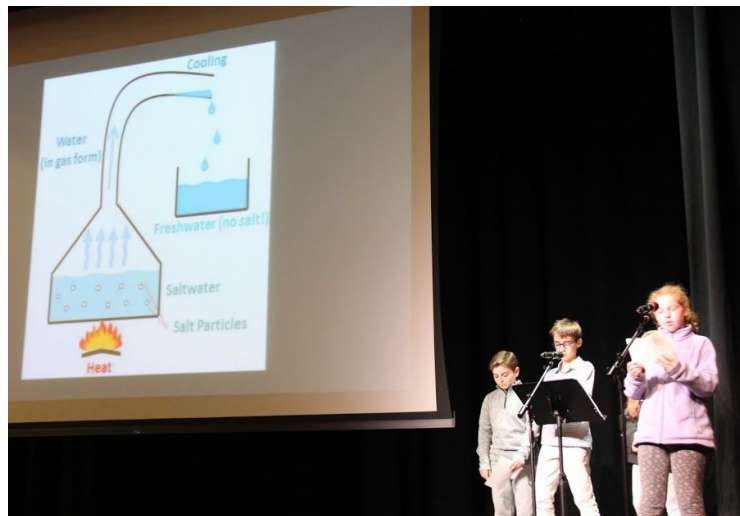


# Science

## With Deborah Berlin

- Inquiry model - hands on, lab based
- Science and society
- Collaborative work and cooperative development
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Grade 6: Environmental science
- Grade 7: Physical science, chemistry, and astronomy
- Grade 8: Biology, genetics, and chemistry







# Hebrew and Spanish with Ayelet Lipton

- Proficiency Approach - language acquisition is a serious endeavor - and joyful
- Thematic units - learning language in context, social justice integration. Examples include:
  - Friendship (Hebrew)
  - Superhero (Spanish)
- Comprehensible Input - target language throughout each lesson
- Language & Culture - authentic Israeli/Spanish/Latinx texts (stories, songs, poems, video clips)
- Hebrew: leveled - can enter at any point and have language peers
  - *Mechina* program for middle school transfers
  - In each grade level, same thematic unit is taught; students are grouped based on language proficiency
  - Pilot course for 8th graders - modern Israel class





# Art

## With Erica Smiley

- Exposure to many techniques and media, including traditional and digital
- Art History and critique: diversity of artists and voices
- Creativity and originality, exploration of self-identity
- Social justice integration
- Self-reflection and emphasis on the creative process



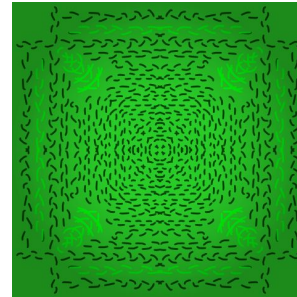
# Art: Digital Media

with Erica Smiley

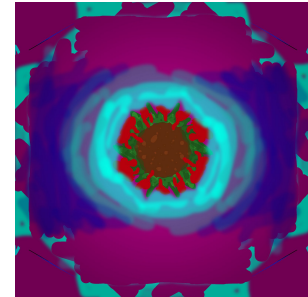
Pixlr: Animated GIF self-portraits



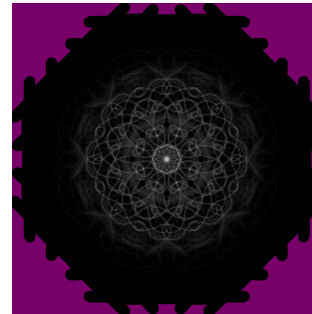
Ten Plagues Abstract Drawings  
(Radial Symmetry, myoats.com)



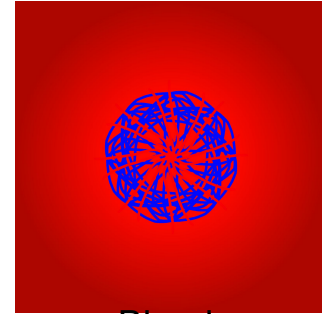
Frogs



Lice



Hail



Blood





# Athletics

## With Josh Horowicz

- Fitness and health
- Students have opportunity to be a part of one of Rashi's athletic teams beginning in Grade 5 and continuing throughout their middle school years
- Athletic offerings include soccer and flag football in the fall. Basketball in the winter. Baseball and softball in the spring
- Strong interscholastic game schedules vs. a variety of area independent schools
- Form relationships across Middle School grades
- Teams focus on skill building, team strategies, sportsmanship, resilience, and the life lessons learned through competition
- Experienced and dedicated group of coaches who are all Rashi staff members
- Opportunities for students to lead, to win, to lose, to work together — navigate those



# Academic Support and Differentiation

with Devon Beidler

## Direct Support

- Grade 6 Org Skills class - focus on Executive Function (EF) and active study skills
- Grade 7 and 8 Org Skills class - available for students who require ongoing EF and/or academic support (in lieu of Spanish in Grade 7/8)

## Indirect Support

- Weekly meetings between Learning Specialist and teachers to differentiate teacher process and student product to optimize learning outcomes



# Jewish Learning/Life (30,000 ft view)

with Rabbi Sharon Clevenger

- Emphasis on joyful Judaism that enriches our lives
- Academic rigor and with integration into other classes
- See the world through a Jewish lens
- Worship- student led and centered, time for prayer and also personal and large group reflection on current events
- The *b'nai mitzvah* experience, celebrating student learning and leadership in a relaxed and sacred environment
- Israel learning and Israel trip



# Social and Emotional Learning

with Joni Fishman



Source: Institute for Social and Emotional Learning

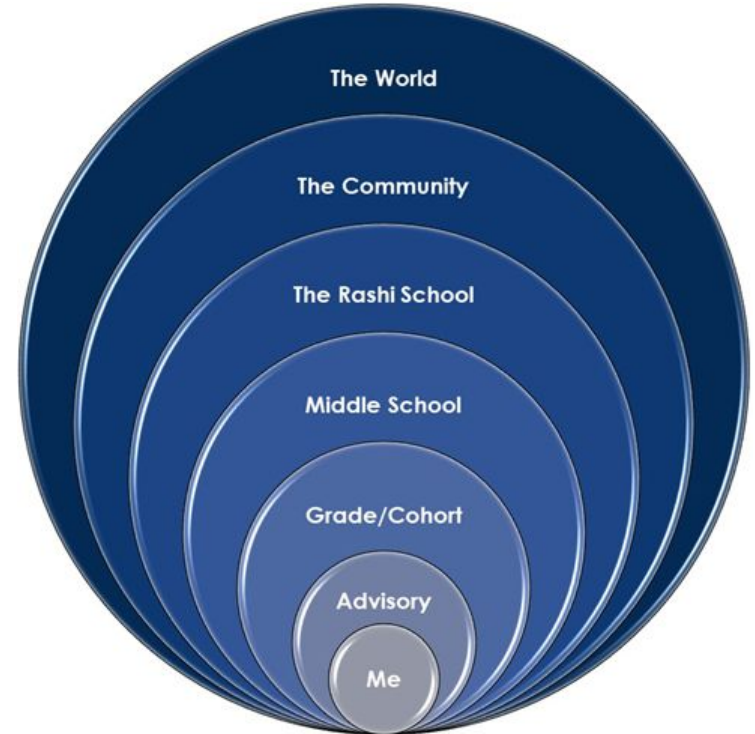




# Advisory

with Joni Fishman

- Groups of 6-8 students
- Explore range of social and emotional issues
- Enhance school-wide community
- Empower student voice and leadership
- Determine one's own individual identity
- Figure out where and how we belong
- Centered on equity, justice, advocacy, and action
- Highlight *tikkun olam* (repairing the world)





# Wellness: Making Effective Choices

with Joni Fishman



**Student Raised  
Issues**



**Health and  
Nutrition**



**Mindfulness  
and Resilience**



**Technology**



**Drugs & Alcohol**



**Sexuality and  
Gender Identity**



**Diversity/Social  
Awareness**







# Leadership

with Joni Fishman



- Empowering students to find their passion and to lead through voice and action
  - Student government, ADL, JCL, National Student Government Council, clubs
  - Admissions ambassador program
  - Start your own club, opportunity to participate in MS decisions, prepare students to take on leadership roles in a complex society, within school walls and externally
- You Can Best Access Learning When Your Soul is Nurtured



# Moving on to High School

## with Joni Fishman

- Our students are ready for high school
- Our families and students are supported as they navigate the high school process
- The data shows:
  - Our acceptance rates are outstanding
  - Most students are accepted by their first choices
  - Rashi graduates do well in high schools, colleges, post-graduate education, and in life
- We are incredibly proud of their skills, knowledge and ability to positively impact the world!

