

BERMAN

MELVIN J. BERMAN HEBREW ACADEMY



B UPPER SCHOOL



When you think of your child graduating high school, what **skills, knowledge, spiritual connections** do you hope they have? What kind of **opportunities** do you want available to them? What type of **community** do you hope they surround themselves with as they become adults?

At Berman Hebrew Academy, our graduates go on to be leaders in their chosen fields, and engaged in their religious communities. Our students develop the habits of mind to be able to learn and the habits of heart to find joy in the learning process. Having been given voice and autonomy during their school years, our graduates are confident in their abilities, know where their passions lie and have access to the seminaries, yeshivot, colleges and universities of their choice. They have the character to work well with others, and the compassion to care for their community.

This book was designed to help you discover how our educational philosophy and values shape the Upper School academic and co-curricular experience. Find out how Berman gives your child options, opportunities and prepares your child for a lifetime of learning.

Welcome to Upper School!
We look forward to learning with your child.

Rabbi Dr. Yossi Kastan, Head of School
Mrs. Malka Popper, Upper School Principal
Ms. Dita Cooper, Upper School Dean of Students

TABLE OF CONTENTS



- Judaic Studies. 3
- General Studies. 4-5
- Clubs and Electives. 6
- Guidance. 7
- College Guidance. 7
- College Matriculations. 8
- Israel Guidance. 9
- Gap Year Programs. 10
- Athletics. 11

QUICK FACTS
FROM THE
CLASS OF
2020

NUMBER OF **AP**
COURSES OFFERED

13

NUMBER OF **AP**
EXAMS TAKEN

90

UPPER SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT
FOR THE 2020-21
SCHOOL YEAR

172
STUDENTS

% of SCORES **3 OR ABOVE**

94%

MEAN **SAT**
1344

MEAN **ACT**
27

NATIONAL MERIT
SEMIFINALISTS

2

NATIONAL MERIT
SCHOLARS

2

AVERAGE
GRADE SIZE

43
STUDENTS

JUDAIC STUDIES



Hebrew Language

The goal of the Hebrew program is to create a community of Hebrew speakers who can participate in a casual conversation or in sophisticated discussions in Hebrew. They can enjoy a Hebrew lecture, read a Hebrew book or read a Hebrew article in an Israeli newspaper using a critical lens. They can write a letter or an essay about personal, cultural, social, political and global issues.

The Hebrew curriculum has four areas of focus: Speaking, Reading, Listening and Writing. Additionally, the curriculum is designed to create critical thinking skills through sequential linguistic progression (grammar and vocabulary) embedded in socially relevant themes, resources, and learning experiences.

The Hebrew program follows the Bishvil Halvrit curriculum which includes a complete scope and sequence rooted in the areas of focus and is in alignment with ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). The curriculum is designed with the premise that mastery of the Hebrew language promotes students' understanding of their history, culture and tradition, excites them about lifelong Jewish learning, fosters a sense of belonging to the Jewish people and cultivates strong ties with Medinat Yisrael (the State of Israel) and Am Yisrael (Peoplehood).

To complement the Bishvil Halvrit curriculum, each of the classes will engage in a Project Based Language Learning project (PBL) where they will try to explore issues based on a theme and try to come up with some solutions to the issues that they have encountered. They will need to create this project using some of the vocabulary and grammar that they have learned in the Unit of study, but they will also need to go and teach some other group what they have learned from the entire process of researching the problem and the possible solutions. Where applicable, they may also actually employ these solutions to solve the problem that they explored. These projects show real proficiency in language use, and are a wonderful way to raise the confidence of our Hebrew speakers as they grow in their skills.

Courses include: Hebrew 9 (Regular, Plus, Honors)
• Hebrew 10 (Regular, Plus, Honors) • Hebrew 11/12 (Regular, Plus) • Hebrew 11/12 Honors Hebrew Literature

Talmud

Our Talmud program is designed for students to acquire the skills necessary to become lifelong learners of Gemara (Talmud) while at the same time developing the love for learning that inspires the students in their Judaism and Jewish lives. With these goals in mind, courses *masechtot* (tractates) and *sugyot* (topic areas) are selected in order to engage students in skill building, critical and analytical thinking, with an emphasis on the implications for our religious lives. Students will also study *bekiut*, which will include *mishnayot* of the tractate being studied or *halachot* relevant to the material being learned to cultivate a breadth of knowledge and exposure to rabbinic texts. The Talmud department offers different types of courses, each one engaging with rabbinic tradition, but with different areas of focus and emphasis.

Courses include: Talmud Foundations, Plus, Honors • Kodesh • Kollel/Midrasha • Beit Midrash

Tanakh

The *Tanakh* department offers two courses each year, one in *Chumash* and one in *Nakh*. The curriculum is designed to promote students' understanding that *Tanakh* is our God given guide to life, to explore essential topics of our religion through the lens of the *Tanakh* text and its commentary, and to apply the lessons of the text to their own lives. We endeavor for students to develop a love of *Tanakh* as their spiritual heritage and a desire to be lifelong learners of *Tanakh*. Each class works on skill development, tailored to the level of the students, in the area of textual translation and analysis. These skills include reading and translating *Tanakh* and commentary, identifying the structure of and finding the main ideas in the text, comparing and contrasting similar verses and stories, recognizing literary devices used throughout *Tanakh*, analyzing the approaches of different commentators, identifying and understanding the differences between *pshat* and *midrash* as well as the relationship between the two. *Chumash* and *Nakh* courses are offered at three different levels, meeting students where they are at and facilitating the growth of their skills and knowledge.

Courses include: Chumash (Regular, Plus, Honors)
• Nakh (Regular, Plus, Honors)

GENERAL STUDIES



English

The Upper School's English curriculum fulfills two primary functions: to expose students to a body of literature and to foster writing skills and strategies. The central assumptions of the literature component are that reading, analyzing, and writing about literature fosters critical thinking skills, exposes students to a body of literature important to our national and global culture, and develops empathy for characters, and by extension, for other people. We want literature's depth, variety, and relevance to awaken students' curiosity and delight. Finally, literature has asked humanity's toughest questions. We expect the literature and writing we teach to engage students in an ongoing dialogue about our past, present, and future.

Since written expression is so vital to academic and professional success, we require our students to write frequently and fluently. We vary the type of assignments throughout the four-year curriculum because different forms of writing necessitate different skills and rhetorical strategies. Technical skills are necessary for clarity, but they do not ensure it; an awareness of the rhetorical situation is as critical to effective writing as is knowledge of basic grammar.

Courses include: English 9, 9A • English 10, Honors • English 11, Honors • English 12, 12 Honors • AP English Language (11th grade) • AP English Literature (12th grade) • Media

History

The Upper School's history department introduces students to cultural, economic, political, and social developments that play a fundamental role in shaping the world in which they live. Through careful examinations of the events, lives, and historical events and trends, students develop the context to understand the development of contemporary institutions, the role of continuity and change in present-day society and politics, and the evolution of current forms of artistic expression and intellectual discourse. Through the spiraled curriculum, students engage with history in order to understand their role in the world, and how attitudes have evolved over time.

As a student of history, students read and comprehend primary and secondary texts, engage critically and constructively in the exchange of ideas, and write effective historical arguments. The educational "time travel" serves to further excite and enlighten students to a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between past and present.

Courses include: American Studies I • American Studies II, Honors • Modern World History, Honors • AP European History • Holocaust and Human Behavior • AP Government

Mathematics

The goal of the math department is to engage in the teaching and learning of mathematics that challenges students to be independent learners and develop sound reasoning, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills necessary to compete in a global society. A variety of resources, including different instructional delivery methods, activities, technology supplements, and assessments are employed in order to reach all students and encourage them to become confident in their abilities. In our increasingly data-driven world, particular emphasis is placed on studying real life applications of mathematical concepts. In the more advanced math courses, students study how to model important phenomena in fields such as physics, chemistry, architecture, and economics. Additional learning goals include the ability to interpret data and graphs, to present data-based evidence in written, mathematical and visual forms, and to understand the essential nature of mathematics in everyday life.

Courses include: Geometry (Regular, Plus, Honors) • Algebra II (Regular, Plus, Honors) • Functions & Trigonometry • Precalculus (Plus, Honors) • AP Calculus AB/BC • Statistics • AP Statistics (some years) • Calculus/Statistics Plus

GENERAL STUDIES

continued

Science

The goal of the science department is to encourage creativity and innovation through scientific inquiry, develop a curiosity and appreciation for the complexity of the world around us by the systematic gathering of data, and learn that science is an approach to problem solving based on logical and critical thinking. Through various methods of observation and experimentation, our students will experience a critical thinking approach to problem solving.

The school's interdisciplinary approach connects topics in science in relevant and applicable curricula. Students will learn practical and analytical skills which will be used in other disciplines and throughout everyday life.

Courses include: Biology Ecological • Biology Microbiology • Chemistry (Regular, Plus, Honors) • Physics (Regular, Plus, Honors) • AP Physics 2 AP Bio • AP Computer Science Principles A/B AP Psychology • Engineering I, II



Ava, 9th grade

My parents and I were considering two schools last fall. I was leaning toward Berman because it was more similar to the environment that I was coming from. I really enjoyed my time at Berman, mainly because everyone was so nice: the kids, the teachers and the administrators. On my first day of in-person class, everyone in the building was so helpful and I felt taken care of. I continue to feel this way in the fast responses the parents and staff have had to us on our grade WhatsApp group as well. I was drawn to Berman for the variety of academic and extra-curricular program offerings. I now write for Hamodia, our school paper, and am a member of the Mock Trial and Debate teams. We've been meeting virtually and in person. It has been another great way to meet others in the school while I've been balancing my homework. While this isn't the way I was expecting to start High School, I feel very welcomed and am so happy to be at Berman!

Art

The mission of the Helene Berman Seidenfeld art department is to provide an arts education that encourages exploration, critical thinking and hands on learning, ultimately fostering a lifelong relationship with the arts.

Students are encouraged to explore their interests and passions, cultivating their creative minds, through various media. Therefore, a variety of courses are offered in order for students to gain exposure to and experience in the arts.

Courses include: Studio Art I, II • Painting, Honors • Ceramics, Honors • Photography, Honors • AP 3D Art (Ceramics) • AP 2D Art (Photography, Painting, Drawing)

EXTRA AND CO-CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

ELECTIVES

- American Sign Language I, II, III, honors
- Sports, Health and Fitness
- Beit Midrash
- Study Hall
- Ceramics, Honors, AP
- Digital Photography, Honors, AP
- Studio Art, Honors, AP
- Painting, Honors, AP
- Principles of Engineering I, II
- AP Computer Science Principles

CLUBS

- Aerospace Club
- Berman Buddies
- Chess Club
- Cuisine and Tie Dye
- Culture Club
- Debate Team
- Engineering Club
- Friendship Circle- Miami Marathon
- Gemara Fundamentals
- Girl Up
- Green Team
- HADAS
- Israel Action Committee
- KTM
- Lunch and Learn
- Matanotes
- Math Leagues
- Medical Club
- Mock Trial
- Model Congress
- Model UN
- No Place for Hate
- Peer Tutor Club
- Pen Pals
- Ping Pong Club
- Politics Club
- Pom Pom Team
- Psychology Club
- Shalva
- Slam Poetry
- Smart Sacks
- Spikeball
- Sports Debating
- Sports, Health, and Fitness
- Tennis Club
- Tik Tok
- Tisch Club
- YU Bekiut



GUIDANCE

High School is a time of significant social and emotional growth for our students. Our goal is to provide a variety of support structures and opportunities for guidance as they can navigate through high school.

Our Upper School Guidance Counselor supports our students individually and collectively as they mature throughout high school. The guidance office is a space for students to drop in and chat, have weekly check-ins or just relax in a calm space for a few minutes during the day.

Our Guidance Counselor works closely with our Dean of Students to create, implement, and oversee our Advisory Program. Advisory, is an opportunity for students to come together in small groups (approx. 8-10) with a faculty advisor to meet bi-monthly. Conversations surround teen mental health, stigma, managing stress, and other topics relevant to adolescent development. The advisor, who may or may not be a student's teacher that year, is one of many adults that students form valuable out of class connections with.

Each week, our Upper School faculty comes together for Grade Level Advisory Meetings (GLAMs) to check in on how students are doing academically, behaviorally and emotionally. Having this formal time and space to come together as a grade level team ensures that our faculty has the full picture of how each student is doing and the ability to work as a team to support each student.

Our Educational Support Services (ESS) team provides a variety of services and support to students in the Upper School. Students can work one on one or in a small group with a dedicated ESS teacher on executive function skills, skill development, or academic support. Our ESS team also serves as advocates to help students access learning.

College Guidance

The Berman College Counseling program works closely with students to examine college options and to find colleges with the right fit for a student's academic, social, and religious needs. The college counselor advises and supports students and families throughout the entire college exploration and application process. Starting in 9th grade with

Benjamin, 12th Grade

Before Covid, I was on the cross country, track, and JV basketball teams. I have also participated in math leagues and fundraising by running the Jerusalem marathon for Shalva. I've been a member of the student council both for my grade and for the whole school (which is happening this year!). My favorite classes have been physics, both honors last year and AP2 this year. We had an incredible teacher with a huge depth of knowledge who explained things clearly and pushed me to learn and excel in the subject. I also enjoy my Gemara classes. It is my 3rd year with R' Grosberg and he has been influential of how to live as a Orthodox Jew in terms of practice and textual skill building. This balance of general and Judaic studies is what I appreciate most about Berman; we are taught and given a strong foundation in both Judaic and general studies knowledge, with an intense workload that will prepare us for college and beyond.

grade-wide presentations, the process moves towards individual and family meetings by beginning in 11th grade. Along with discussion of college options, advising includes discussions about Upper School course selection, summer internship and program options, SAT/ACT testing options, Naviance and application processes, assistance with financial aid and scholarship resources, essay writing support, and guidance through the deferral process for students planning a gap year.

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES AND MATRICULATIONS

2013-2019

(**Bold** indicates matriculations)

Alfred University
American University
Barnard College
Binghamton University
Boston College
Boston University
Brandeis University
California College of the Arts
Carnegie Mellon University
Catholic University
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
College of Charleston
Columbia University
**Columbia University/Jewish Theological
Seminary Joint Program**
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Drexel University
Farleigh Dickinson University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Goucher College
Harvard University
Hofstra University
Hunter College
Indiana University, Bloomington
Johns Hopkins University
Kansas City Art Institute
Lander College for Women, Touro College
Lesley University
Long Island University



**Massachusetts Institute of
Technology**
McDaniel College
McGill University
Montgomery College
Muhlenberg College
The New School
New York University
Northeastern University
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Queens College, CUNY
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rutgers University, New Brunswick
San Diego State University
School of Visual Arts
Simmons College
Smith College
**Stern College for Women,
Yeshiva University**
Stony Brook University
Syracuse University
Temple University
Touro College

Towson University
Tulane University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Delaware
University of Hartford
University of Illinois,
Urbana-Champaign
**University of Maryland,
Baltimore County**
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Massachusetts,
Amherst
University of Michigan
University of North Carolina,
Chapel Hill
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Virginia
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Virginia Commonwealth University
Washington University in St. Louis
Yeshiva University



ISRAEL



One of our core values is to inspire students who are deeply committed to the land and state of Israel, its history, culture, people and language. This value not only guides our curriculum and programming but we graduate students with a deep connection to *eretz yisrael* and *am yisrael*.

We intentionally teach Hebrew language with the goal of fluency but also as a means to connect to the people and culture in Israel. One hallmark of our Israel programming is the our Mission to Israel where our Upper School students and Judaic Studies faculty travel to Israel for 10 days learning, exploring and immersing themselves in the culture and history of Israel. The mission takes place every four years and we eagerly await Mission 2022!

Through our Israel Advocacy Club and AIPAC involvement, our students stay up to date on the happenings in Israel and learn skills to advocate for Israel. Our students produce a Yom HaAtzmaut celebration complete with student performances, music and dancing that brings families from the DC Metro area to celebrate Israel at Berman.

We are fortunate to welcome many Israeli families to Berman each year and embrace the connections and culture they bring with them.

After graduation, 90% of our students have a gap year at a yeshiva or seminary program. Some students opt for service in the IDF and eventually make Aaliyah. Our goal is to help our students in finding the right Israel program and ensure they have the skills to be successful.



GAP YEAR PROGRAMS



Amudim | Darchei Binah | Eretz Hatzvi | IDF | Lev HaTorah | Machon Maayan
Midreshet Amit | Midreshet Emunah | V'Omanut | Midreshet HaRova
Midreshet Lindenbaum | Midreshet Mevaseret Yerushalayim | Midreshet Moriah
Midreshet Torat Chesed | Migdal Hatorah | Migdal Oz | Netiv Aryeh
Nishmat | Orayta | Sha'alvim for Women | MTVA | Tiferet
Yeshivat HaKotel | Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush) | Yeshivat Reishit
Yeshivat Shaarei Mevaseret Zion | Yeshivat Torat Shraga



ATHLETICS

The Berman Hebrew Academy is committed to offering a robust athletics program that will create positive experiences for our student athletes and foster a life-long commitment to health and fitness. We believe that athletics is a conduit to teaching our students many important life lessons: teamwork, sportsmanship, commitment, and discipline. Athletics can also help students to develop a strong sense of self and bolster confidence and self-worth. A quality athletics program also helps to foster a sense of school and community pride.

As a member of the Potomac Valley Athletic Conference, The Berman Hebrew Academy competes against other area private schools in a variety of competitive sports. Our teams compete at the highest levels of league play and maintain a level of excellence. We hold our student athletes to high standards and attending practice/training is an important component of our program as well.

The Berman Hebrew Academy offers the following interscholastic sports for boys and girls:

Fall Season (September-October)

Soccer (Middle School and Varsity)
Cross Country (Middle School and Varsity)
Girls Volleyball (Middle School and Varsity)
Winter Season (November-February)
Basketball (5th grade, Middle School, Junior Varsity and Varsity)

Spring Season (March-May)

Baseball (Middle School and Varsity)
Softball (Middle School and Varsity)
Boys Volleyball (Middle School and Varsity)
Track and Field (Middle School and Varsity)

