

Children with Special Learning Needs or Learning Disabilities

We have a Hebrew tutor on staff to work directly with students who have special learning needs that affect their ability to learn Hebrew. Each day, this teacher will work with small groups of children in twenty-minute blocks while Hebrew is being taught in the classrooms. We have found that keeping the children in groups will allow the communal experience of Hebrew School to continue while each child's learning needs are met.

We are also pleased to continue our partnership with MATAN: The Gift of Jewish Learning for Every Child. The Hebrew School has worked in partnership with MATAN for the past several years to help us provide an accessible Jewish education for all of our learners. If you would like to learn more about MATAN, please visit their website at matankids.org

During the summer of 2007, we expanded our working partnership with MATAN to include a new class for kids in 4th and 5th grades with visual and auditory processing disabilities in the Hebrew School. The class will meet on Monday afternoons from 4 to 6pm at Heschel and will integrate with the other Hebrew School students for music and special programming. Students in the class will also be invited to participate in our Reach for Shabbat programming, including the family retreat in November and the optional program pieces in the spring semester.

We are delighted to have hired Ayana Baicher to teach the class. Ayana is Israeli and has been working in the US for several years. She has a degree in special education with a concentration in dyslexia and hearing impairment. She has taught in all-day schools as well as Hebrew Schools and understands how supplementary Jewish education works. We are working with Ayana and the Education Director at MATAN to create a curriculum for this class, which will include holidays, history, Parshat Hashavuah, and Hebrew.

For more information about special needs and learning disabilities, please contact Hollis Gauss at hgauss@bj.org