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Akiva School – The Jewish Day School For The 21st Century

Taking a closer look at what defines academic excellence for today's world

“Academic Excellence” is a term that we often hear when it comes to summarizing what we want for our students at school. But what does “Academic Excellence” actually mean in today’s world where our students need a whole different skill set to be successful than a mere 20 years ago? It is no longer about just knowing the answer, but rather knowing how to find the answer, work with others to build the answer and evaluating whether the answer is actually the right step to take. As a forerunner in 21st century education, Akiva School follows research-based practices and breaks the traditional mold of academic excellence where rote and memory were the underpinnings to success. Instead, Akiva provides a holistic view of learning that combines a focus on skill building, content knowledge and expertise within the optimal learning environment to develop strong, moral citizens that can make a difference in the world today.

“The recipe for academic excellence can only be truly achieved with a focus on all of the key elements which can moderate it,” said Jennifer Fraenkel, Head of School at Akiva. “Research has shown, time and time again, that the key to a student’s success in school and life is linked to the inter-related areas of skill building, social/emotional and moral development – all of which must be responded to in a school’s educational strategy.”

Building Skills and Expertise for Real Life
 Akiva School offers students relevant, meaningful learning experiences that will develop the skills that are so crucial in today’s world. The school integrates 21st century interdisciplinary themes, such as environmental and health literacy and global awareness, into core subjects to promote critical thinking and creativity while encouraging students to create tangible, useful products to be shared with their community and world at large. Akiva leverages cutting edge teaching tools and technology as vehicles for delivering content and learning in meaningful, engaging ways. Akiva teachers benefit from regular, progressive professional development, cultivating their ability to identify each student’s particular learning styles and needs, and differentiate their lessons to ensure the success of each student. Akiva students are offered opportunities to

learn through real-life experiences and to connect with authentic organizations, companies and audiences. Only at Akiva, can elementary students study computer science, learn to code, and take a course in Engineering.

Promoting Positive Relationships for Social/Emotional Development

At Akiva, the learning environment is structured to promote effective communication, active listening, team work, collaboration and respect for others. Recent research tells us that truly effective leaders are distinguished by a high degree of emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Research has also shown that developing trusting relationships with responsive caregivers and teachers in

early childhood settings is crucial. In fact, a strong teacher/student relationship is the primary influencer of student effort and success. Akiva students thrive in a school climate where they have the right relationships. These relationships make them feel safe to take risks, give them recognition for who they are and what they have achieved, engage them to be participants in learning, and help them grow into confident, assertive, and active community members.

Cultivating a Moral Identity

Akiva’s educational philosophy is guided by the wisdom and values of Judaism. “Chessed” or “acts of kindness” are the foundation upon which the Akiva School is built. The Akiva community models, encourages, and rewards acts of caring, thereby supporting the moral development of stu-

dents. A focus on strong moral development helps Akiva students realize their call to social justice and rise up to be leaders in their community.

At Akiva School, where teaching is guided by 21st century learning best practices, true academic excellence means focusing on all areas of development which are interdependent and work together to moderate future success in school, work and life. For more information on Akiva School and their dynamic educational approach, please visit the Akiva Open House on Thursday, October 30th, 9:30am or 7:00pm, or visit our website at www.akivaschool.com.

The 21st Century Learning Model of Academic Excellence



Akiva School provides a holistic approach to learning, focusing on all the developmental drivers necessary to fuel true academic excellence.