



# Inside SCHECHTER

December 22, 2023 / 10 Tevet 5784  
Weekly Parashat : [Vayigash](#)

Candle lighting: 4:03 PM  
Shabbat ends: 5:10 PM

## A MESSAGE FROM DR. LENA KUSHNIR



Dear Schechter community,

As we approach this much-anticipated winter break, I find myself reflecting on the journey we have taken together since the start of the school year—especially since the events of October 7th. The strength and resilience displayed by our students has been inspiring. Their ability to navigate these times is a reflection of the love and nurturing of their families and our dedicated educators.

[The message continues...Read more](#)

## Empowering the Jewish community to StandStrong

This month, the Schechter Parent Organization hosted a 4-week StandStrong course for current parents. StandStrong is a not-for-profit organization striving to change the narrative surrounding antisemitism and religious bullying by providing self-defense skills at no cost to keep communities safe and proud.

Schechter parent **Matt Travers** (pictured with his wife, **Tome Allali (SSDS '03)**, and their Kindergartener, Matan) is StandStrong's Director of Operations and has taught countless courses across Chicagoland—their unique system draws from various martial arts systems, including Israeli Krav Maga and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

**“Now, more than ever, we see the need for our communities to safely stand up and speak up as we support Israel and Jews around the world. I'm proud of our partnership with Schechter to train students, staff, and families to be safe, confident, and StandStrong against hatred.” —Matt Travers**





"With anti-semitism on the rise, I was interested in gaining knowledge of self-defense techniques and situational awareness, especially de-escalation strategies. I truly gained more than I anticipated." —Rachel Stites, Schechter parent

***Interested in starting a self-defense course?***

*StandStrong offers programs at their Northbrook Studio, as well as in schools, colleges, community groups, synagogues, and camps. Contact [Matt@standstrong.org](mailto:Matt@standstrong.org) or visit: [www.standstrong.org](http://www.standstrong.org).*

## Save the date for the 30th annual Sager School Musical!

Rehearsals are underway for our full-scale musical theater production, now in its 30th year. Nearly 100 students are participating in the cast, crew, and stage band. The experience fosters teamwork and responsibility, builds self-esteem, and creates a tremendous sense of accomplishment for all involved!



# Sager School Musical

**SAVE  
THE  
DATES!**



**SeUSSiCAL JR.**  
the Musical

**Performances:**

**Sunday, April 7  
3:30-5:00 PM**

&

**Monday, April 8  
6:30-8:00 PM**

Christian Heritage Academy  
Northfield, IL

## Specials at the ECC: Physical Education

Last month, we highlighted how weekly classes with Sager School specialists enhance the curriculum by featuring dance & movement with Rena Rozen. Next up: physical education!



Each Friday, Coach Chanan leads the *yeladim* in a fun & energetic PE class with 5 activities:

1. Chill-time (mindfulness and breathing to soft harp music)
2. Stretching
3. Dynamic exercises (counted off in Hebrew and English)
4. Dancing to the oldies (Coach's tunes are mostly 80/90s rock)
5. Daily sport, activity, or skill

"PE classes help build fine and gross motor skills, hand-eye coordination, balance, strength, speed, and agility. Young children hone organizational skills by learning the rules of each game and score keeping, and develop critical social skills through encounters with competition, winning and losing, and playing well with others." —Paul Chanan, Pre-K-8 PE Teacher



## No luggage required for this trip to Israel!

SunDay FunDays—our new event series for 3-6-year-olds—continued last week with the 3rd program: Tales & Trails through Israel! We were delighted to lead 30 families on an interactive journey through Israel, complete with hands-on activities and storytelling.



Special thanks to our engaging educators, **Tali Lupovitch** and **Ronit Levy**, and our fantastic Schechter student volunteers for



guiding our young participants on this adventure.

[View More Photos](#)

**Register now for the next SunDay FunDay in January**



Introducing a **free** monthly drop-in program designed with your playful **3-6 year old** in mind!

January 21,  
2024

**9:30-10:30 AM**  
**Schechter Northbrook Campus**  
**3210 Dundee Road, Northbrook**

Register at:  
[schechter.org/sunday](https://schechter.org/sunday)

## Tiny Tech Makers

Your child's inner techie is ready for take-off! Guided by our very own Makerspace team, we'll program robots through hands-on coding activities to navigate an out-of-this-world maze.



SCHECHTER  
BOT GOES  
TO SPACE

**Thank you to our partners:**











A partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.

**Kol Hakavod to Michael Simon for Hillel recognition**

## Kol Hakavod

to Schechter parent **Michael Simon**,  
**Executive Director of Northwestern Hillel**, for receiving the 2023 Cohen Outstanding Campus Award on behalf of his organization.

This award is presented annually to two campus Hillels for their achievements in

empowering student leadership and reaching a breadth and depth of students.

[Learn more.](#)

Michael additionally received personal recognition—he was honored for his 20+ years of service in the Hillel movement.



*Michael Simon is pictured with his colleagues accepting their award at the 2023 Hillel International Global Assembly*



**“I’m proud to be honored for my years of work in the Hillel movement, and I’m utterly humbled by the incredible work of our colleagues—Mazal Tov to all of the recipients of HIGA 2023 Awards! I am grateful for this celebration of the strength and vibrancy of our Northwestern Hillel community during this difficult moment.”**

**—Michael Simon, with his wife, Dr. Claire Sufrin (SSDS ‘92), and sons, Jacob (SSDS ‘25) & Ethan (SSDS ‘28)**

*We love to kvell about our community. Do you have news? Contact [Tami Warshawsky](#)*

## Thank you to this week's Day of Learning sponsor!



**DAY OF LEARNING SPONSOR**

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

In honor of  
**Ben & Amy Fisher's  
Wedding Anniversary**

Because now is the time to give the  
gift of Jewish Identity!

With much love and pride,  
Arna & Dad



**Every day at Schechter,  
students receive the gift of an  
outstanding education.**

**You can help support  
a day of learning with a \$250  
sponsorship to celebrate a  
child, honor a friend, mark a  
special occasion, or remember  
a loved one.**

[Learn More](#)

## Mark your calendars for 2024's first virtual program!

Presented as part of our Grandparent engagement series, this FREE program is open to all adults in our community. Click the flyer to register now.

# SCHECHTER Learns

At Schechter, we believe education is a life-long journey.



January 17, 2024 | 7:00-8:00 PM CST

Online



## Exploring within the Met Museum; Jewish Themes and People

with Laura Resnikoff, retired Columbia Business School professor and 11-year-volunteer guide at the Museum of Metropolitan Art in New York

Join us for an exploration of how themes in the Hebrew Bible are presented in a diverse collection of works of art from NYC's Metropolitan Museum.

FREE Virtual  
Lecture + Q&A:

REGISTER NOW



SOLOMON SCHECHTER  
DAY SCHOOL  
OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

A partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community.

## Grandparents: fostering connection through Shabbat

Join Schechter parent, Jewish educator, and theater artist **Jonathan Shmidt Chapman** for a FREE virtual workshop by our partners at **The Jewish Grandparents Network!**

You'll explore hands-on activities that use creativity, drama, and play to activate the weekly celebration of Shabbat with children ages 3–8. The program also includes guidance in how to utilize these resources for grandparents who live at a distance.



Tuesday, January 16  
6:00 – 7:00 PM CST

### The Family Room Live!



How to Bring Shabbat to Life with Grandchildren

Can't make the live Zoom date? Sign up and they'll send you the recording!

Register  
Now

Are you a Jewish professional looking to share these activities with your respective communities? Register [HERE](#) instead to sign-up for both the main event and the half-hour talkback immediately following the workshop.

# HAVE A WONDERFUL WINTER BREAK!



As we close out 2023, we are filled with gratitude for the resilience and strength of our extraordinary community. May 2024 bring peace, personal growth, and joyful Jewish learning to you and yours!

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