



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where do Tehiyah families live?

The largest percentage of Tehiyah families lives in Berkeley (36%), followed by 20% in El Cerrito, 13% in Richmond, 10% in Oakland, 6% in Albany, 5% in Kensington, and 3% in El Sobrante. The rest of our families live in Sonoma, Piedmont, Vallejo, San Pablo, Crockett, and Alameda (1% in each city).

What does Tehiyah's diversity look like?

Diversity can be defined in a variety of different ways. In terms of ethnic/racial diversity, 15% of Tehiyah's student body is of color, and the school includes many different types of families, including traditional, blended, single parent, gay/lesbian, and families created by adoption. Additionally, Tehiyah's commitment to socio-economic diversity within the community is reflected in the large percentage of families who participate in the tuition assistance program. There are many different nationalities represented at Tehiyah. In addition to our Israeli population, families come from Argentina, Ecuador, Chile, Mexico, Honduras, China, Morocco, New Zealand, Australia, Russia, Eritrea, Canada, England, Germany, France, Italy, and Holland.

While the majority of families are Jewish, Tehiyah welcomes all families who want to offer their children an excellent independent school bilingual education in Hebrew and in English, in a community that teaches and celebrates Jewish culture, and honors and practices Jewish values. The school is not affiliated with any denomination or movement and welcomes the diversity of Jewish experience and tradition; Tehiyah has observant families, secular families, and everything in between.

What is the age cut off for kindergarten?

Tehiyah doesn't have an official age cut off. In general, the kindergarten teachers' experience has shown that, in most cases, children who are born after October 1 are usually not ready. However, we know that every child is different and that there are some children who are ready for kindergarten who have November birthdays and some who aren't ready who are born in June. It depends on the child and his/her particular social and emotional readiness for the kindergarten experience. Because of this, we are open to evaluating any child whose parents and preschool teachers think is ready for kindergarten regardless of when the birthday falls. If, after meeting your child, we feel that s/he would benefit from a Bridge-K year, we'll communicate that with you. Fortunately, Tehiyah has a fabulous Bridge Kindergarten program designed especially for students who have completed their preschool programs, but are not quite ready for kindergarten.

What do you mean by kindergarten readiness?

While some schools are mostly interested in cognitive achievement (i.e., skills in reading, math, etc.), at Tehiyah, the main focus is evaluating children's social and emotional readiness for kindergarten. By the term "social and emotional readiness," we mean children who can work productively both independently and in small groups, can focus for short periods on specific tasks, can advocate for themselves if conflicts arise, can speak clearly with age-appropriate language, can transition from one activity to another, can follow teachers' instructions, can play constructively with other children, share and cooperate, and have age-appropriate impulse control. Usually, preschool teachers can be exceptionally helpful in determining whether or not your child is ready for kindergarten.

What is the school's philosophy on teaching children about Judaism?

At Tehiyah, there is no *right* way to be Jewish. There are even non-Jewish families who have chosen a Jewish day school education for their children. As a Jewish community day school, Tehiyah welcomes families from all ends of the religious spectrum. The school is not affiliated with any particular synagogue or religious movement. There are observant, conservative, reform, renewal, and secular Jewish families here. The goal is that, no matter where a family lies on the religious spectrum, everyone should feel respected, appreciated and welcome at Tehiyah.

How much time is spent each day in General vs. Judaic Studies?

Kindergarten is taught with a team approach, including three full-time teachers (two general studies teachers and one Judaic studies teacher), who work together each day in a fully-integrated curriculum. Beginning in first grade, we break the day up into seven periods. Of those seven: five are general studies (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and enrichment classes); one is Hebrew instruction; and one is Judaic studies.

What does Judaic Studies entail?

Judaic Studies includes: Jewish history, Jewish holidays, *t'fillah* (prayer), Israeli history and culture, *Shabbat*, *Torah*, *parashat ha'shavua* (the portion of the week), and Jewish ethics and values. For more information about the specific subjects covered in each grade, please see the Curriculum Guide.

Do you teach any other languages besides Hebrew?

We made the decision to focus our daily language instruction on Hebrew for grades K-8 for a variety of reasons. Primarily, our students gain the benefits of a bilingual education. The learning of ANY language at a young age has been shown in countless studies to enrich and enhance a child's development of cognitive and creative thinking skills, and actually *improve* reading and writing skills in the child's native language. Learning a language – any language – while young also creates maps in the brain which support future language acquisition when children move to high school. In addition, when our students are able to understand and speak Hebrew, they can travel across the globe, enter any synagogue, and be able to read the prayer book, and can converse with Israelis if they travel to Israel. But, whether or not Hebrew will be a “useful” language for individual students, the gifts of learning a second language last a lifetime.

Where do Tehiyah graduates go to high school?

Tehiyah graduates have their pick of high schools. The school usually sends around half of our graduating class to the most prestigious private schools in the Bay Area. Our acceptance rate into private high school is much higher than that, but half of our graduates opt to attend public high schools with the largest group going to Berkeley High School. Below is a list of recent high school attendance:

Acalanes High School	Drew Preparatory School	Millennium High School
Albany High School	El Cerrito High School	Miramonte High School
Athenian School	Head-Royce School	Orinda Academy
Bentley High School	Ignacio Valley High School	Piedmont High School
Berkeley High School	Jewish Community HS	Pittsburgh High School
Bishop O'Dowd High School	Lick-Wilmerding High School	San Domenico High School
Branson School	Marin Academy	Urban High School
College Preparatory School	Maybeck High School	