



HEAD OF SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY

Gesher Jewish Day School · Fairfax, Virginia



WELCOME

For more than three decades, Gesher JDS has been the center of learning for Jewish children of all backgrounds in Northern Virginia. Throughout the day, our academic program weaves meaningful Jewish learning with a rigorous general studies curriculum, providing a comprehensive education from Junior Kindergarten through Middle School. In partnership with committed parents, we provide an outstanding education anchored in Jewish values that enables our children to grow into adults engaged in healthy relationships, creative work, ethical leadership, and communal involvement. Our graduates emerge ready to excel in high school and beyond with a love for learning and Jewish ideals.

We seek an accomplished leader for the 2020-2021 school year (with a flexible start date as early as January 2020) who will embrace our mission and educational philosophy, adapt our community partnerships to the growing and evolving Northern Virginia Jewish community, and help us move forward to meet the opportunities that lie ahead.

WHAT MAKES GESHER JDS UNIQUE

Founded in 1982, Gesher JDS is a remarkable place of learning where children grow into the best versions of themselves with the love and support of our close-knit school community. We are committed to giving our children the highest quality secular and Jewish education because we believe that this combination prepares them best for the life we hope and dream they will lead – a life of meaningful relationships, creative work, and Tikkun Olam. Our children encounter new challenges and new opportunities as the world changes at a rapidly increasing pace. Gesher's vision is to lean into this vibrant future while maintaining meaningful, relevant connections to the rich wisdom of Jewish tradition.

Focusing on our students: We offer a combination of small classes and differentiated instruction in an intimate community atmosphere to create a personal and nurturing experience for each student.

Learning in and out of the classroom: We value education both in the classroom and beyond, providing the opportunity for students to take advantage of unparalleled learning opportunities throughout the Washington, DC area, as well as educational trips to nearby locations and to Israel.

Gesher Green: Our campus is much more than just our state-of-the-art building. We also use our beautiful 28-acre heavily wooded natural surroundings – an exceptionally large tract of land for this area – to develop “Gesher Green,” a unique, hands-on ecology-based model for Jewish learning.

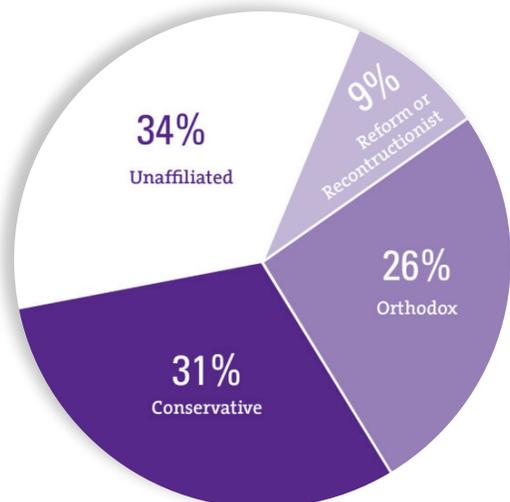
Expanding and engaged community: Nearly 300,000 Jews live in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, with 41% residing in Northern Virginia. Our Northern Virginia Jewish population has grown by 80% since 2003, offering new and exciting opportunities in our community.

PLURALISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Gesher Jewish Day School serves Jewish families of all types from across Northern Virginia, including those with varied Jewish affiliations, as well as no affiliation at all. We are committed to creating a religious educational environment that is inclusive and respectful of the wide range of family models, Jewish beliefs, and Jewish practices our students bring to their school. Our goal is to create a “meeting ground” where students with different family and community traditions regarding Jewish rituals, Jewish prayers, and Jewish texts can respectfully study together and learn from one another in a way that allows each student to develop and strengthen his/her personal Jewish identity and ideology.

Gesher is dedicated to educational excellence, an individualized approach to learning, and to providing a nurturing and exciting educational environment. We challenge our students to think critically and creatively and to acquire the skills they will need for tomorrow.

GESHER BRINGS TOGETHER FAMILIES FROM ACROSS NORTHERN VIRGINIA WITH DIVERSE JEWISH IDENTITIES.





MISSION & VISION

At Geshher Jewish Day School we inspire our students to:

BE PASSIONATE ABOUT LEARNING

PRACTICE JUSTICE, KINDNESS, AND RESPECT

ASPIRE TO A LIFE GUIDED BY JEWISH VALUES, TORAH, AND COMMUNITY

TEN HABITS OF A GESHER GRADUATE – GESHER JDS GRADUATES ARE:

- RESILIENT -

We seek challenges and are not afraid to fail.

- CURIOUS -

Our eyes are open for opportunities to learn and grow.

- COMPASSIONATE -

Our hearts are open to the needs and experiences of others.

- REFLECTIVE -

We look at ourselves realistically so that we can improve.

- ROOTED IN TRADITION -

We find ways to make Judaism a meaningful part of our lives each day.

- ENGAGED -

We form meaningful relationships with others in our communities.

- LEADERS -

We advocate for our beliefs.

- MORALLY RESPONSIBLE -

We improve the world in ways that are consistent with Jewish values.

- COMMUNICATORS -

We write and speak proficiently and effectively in both English and Hebrew.

- AWARE -

We seek to understand our communities and the world around us.



GESHER JDS AT A GLANCE

ACCREDITATION/AFFILIATION

- VAIS, the Virginia Association of Independent Schools
- Member of Prizmah, Center for Jewish Day Schools
- Partner agency of The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

GRADES

- Junior Kindergarten through 8th Grade

NUMBER OF STUDENTS, FACULTY, RATIO

- Approximately 118 students
- Approximately 40 faculty and staff
- An 8:1 student to teacher ratio

LOCATION

- Fairfax, Virginia
- 20 miles west of Washington DC

CAMPUS

- Built in 2007
- 28 acre campus
- State of the art facility in a wooded setting

TUITION (FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE)

- Jr. K: \$12,100/year
- K-8: \$21,500/year

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM

- Full array of Judaic programs, including weekly Shabbat celebration
- Excellent student-teacher ratios
- Dual-language curriculum
- Trilingual middle school instruction
- Integrated outdoor education program
- Annual 8th grade Israel trip
- STEAM lab and technology program
- Opportunity to participate in MATHCOUNTS national math competition
- Specialty classes in Physical Education, Music, Art and Library
- Daily hot lunch program
- Buddy program partnering students across grades
- Licensed before and after-school care
- After-school enrichment programs
- Transportation available

Gesher Test Scores in all subjects go above and beyond other Independent Schools as well as Suburban Public Schools.



Gesher's 2018 Middle School Math Scores are in the: **94th percentile**
We scored 4 points ahead of Suburban Public schools: **90th percentile**
And 5 points ahead of Other independent schools: **89th percentile**



Gesher 2018 Verbal Reasoning scores for students in 5th-8th grades are in the **93rd percentile**
6 points higher than other Independent Schools: **87th percentile**
8 points ahead of Suburban Public Schools: **85th percentile**

WHAT'S NEXT FOR GESHER JDS GRADUATES

Upon completing Gesher's rigorous academic program, our students excel at some of the highest ranked high schools in the nation. These schools include:

- Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Arlington County Public Schools
- Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School (partner high school)



Gesher students go on to attend a vast array of top colleges and universities throughout the country, including:

- American University
- Brown University
- Bryn Mawr College
- Case Western Reserve University
- Colby College
- College of Charleston
- College of William & Mary
- Lehigh University
- Princeton University
- Stanford University
- Syracuse University
- The Ohio State University
- University of Alabama
- University of Virginia
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Maryland
- University of Miami
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Tech
- Wellesley College



NORTHERN VIRGINIA AREA: A UNIQUE LOCATION

Located in Fairfax, Virginia only 20 miles from Washington, DC, the Gesher JDS tranquil, wooded campus sits in close proximity to some of the best educational, economic, and cultural opportunities in the nation.

WASHINGTON DC AREA:

- Beautiful historic monuments and landmarks
- Free Smithsonian museums and National zoo
- Theaters, Concerts and Festivals
- Numerous world-class universities and colleges
- Award winning restaurants
- Several international airports nearby (IAD, DCA, BWI)
- Professional sports teams: Washington Capitals, Washington Wizards, Washington Nationals, DC United, Washington Redskins

NORTHERN VIRGINIA JEWISH COMMUNITY:

- Northern Virginia is home to dozens of thriving Jewish congregations, including multiple:
 - Conservative synagogues,
 - Reform temples,
 - Chabad-Lubavitch centers, and
 - Reconstructionist synagogues
- Home to over 60,000 Jewish households, with over half the Jewish adults being under the age of 50.*
 - Over one-quarter (26%) of households include children ages 17 or younger.*
 - One-quarter of Northern Virginia Jewish households are synagogue members.*
- The Northern Virginia JCC is located 7 miles from Gesher.

*2017 GREATER WASHINGTON JEWISH COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY: <https://www.brandeis.edu/ssri/pdfs/communitystudies/DCJewishCommunityStudy.pdf>



OPPORTUNITY

The Gesher JDS Head of School position represents an outstanding career opportunity for a creative and visionary educational leader to be a catalyst for both personal and community growth. The changes and expansion in the Northern Virginia Jewish community presents opportunities and challenges to evolve the school's outreach and enrollment funnels in step with these new developments. Continued influx of new high-tech companies throughout the Northern Virginia region such as Amazon's new headquarters in Arlington will also bring new families, new partnerships, and new opportunities to advance the Gesher JDS community.

Within the school, the educational program is well established as confirmed by our 2018 10-year reaccreditation from the Virginia Association of Independent Schools. This creates a solid platform for new leadership to maintain and build on our positive academic momentum and address ongoing challenges, including: building on recent efforts to advance an upgraded curriculum; continuing to improve the depth and quality of our Judaics program; and further develop and mentor our extraordinarily talented and dedicated faculty.

A successful Gesher JDS Head of School will meet these opportunities with vision, energy and motivation. He/she will have the opportunity to write the school's next chapter and help us reach our full potential.



WHO SHOULD APPLY/ HEAD OF SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

In light of the opportunities at Gesher JDS, the next Head of School should demonstrate most or all of the following competencies and characteristics:

- A passion for Judaism, Jewish education, and service to the Jewish community.
- Exceptional listening and communication skills, including writing and public speaking.
- Strong management skills with an emphasis on maintaining high standards, demanding accountability of him/herself and others, and ensuring consistent follow-through.
- A leadership style that empowers and motivates faculty and staff, promotes teamwork and accountability, and inspires confidence in the excellence of our school.
- A demonstrated commitment to education with an ability to promote innovation in the classroom, and adopt/share best practices.
- The ability to enthusiastically and effectively lead institutional advancement efforts, including marketing and fundraising.
- Outstanding experience in community outreach, building on existing relationships, and forging new partnerships.
- The ability to develop and execute a strategic plan with poise and self-reliance.
- A commitment to educational excellence, community growth, and financial sustainability.
- A proven track record of building high-functioning, collaborative teams through effective hiring, development, and mentoring.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- An advanced degree in education, administration, leadership, or related fields.
- A demonstrated record of success in teaching, leadership, and/or educational administration, preferably including 5+ years of experience in an independent school.
- Experience with curriculum development and pedagogy, ideally at the elementary and/or middle school levels.
- Proven skills in marketing strategy, community engagement, and financial management.



APPLICATION

Prizmah Center for Jewish Day Schools represents Gesher JDS in recruiting a talented educational leader for this exceptional leadership opportunity. Interested candidates should contact the lead consultant, Amy Wasser, at amyw@prizmah.org or call 813-624-2716 with any questions.

Please submit application packages to Ms. Wasser, including the following:

- A cover letter detailing specific qualifications for and your interest in this opportunity
- Your current resume
- A statement of your educational philosophy
- Name(s) and contact information for up to three references (we will obtain permission from you before contacting references)
- Any additional documents you deem important to demonstrate your qualifications and interest for this opportunity



GESHER
Jewish Day School

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#GrowWithGesher