



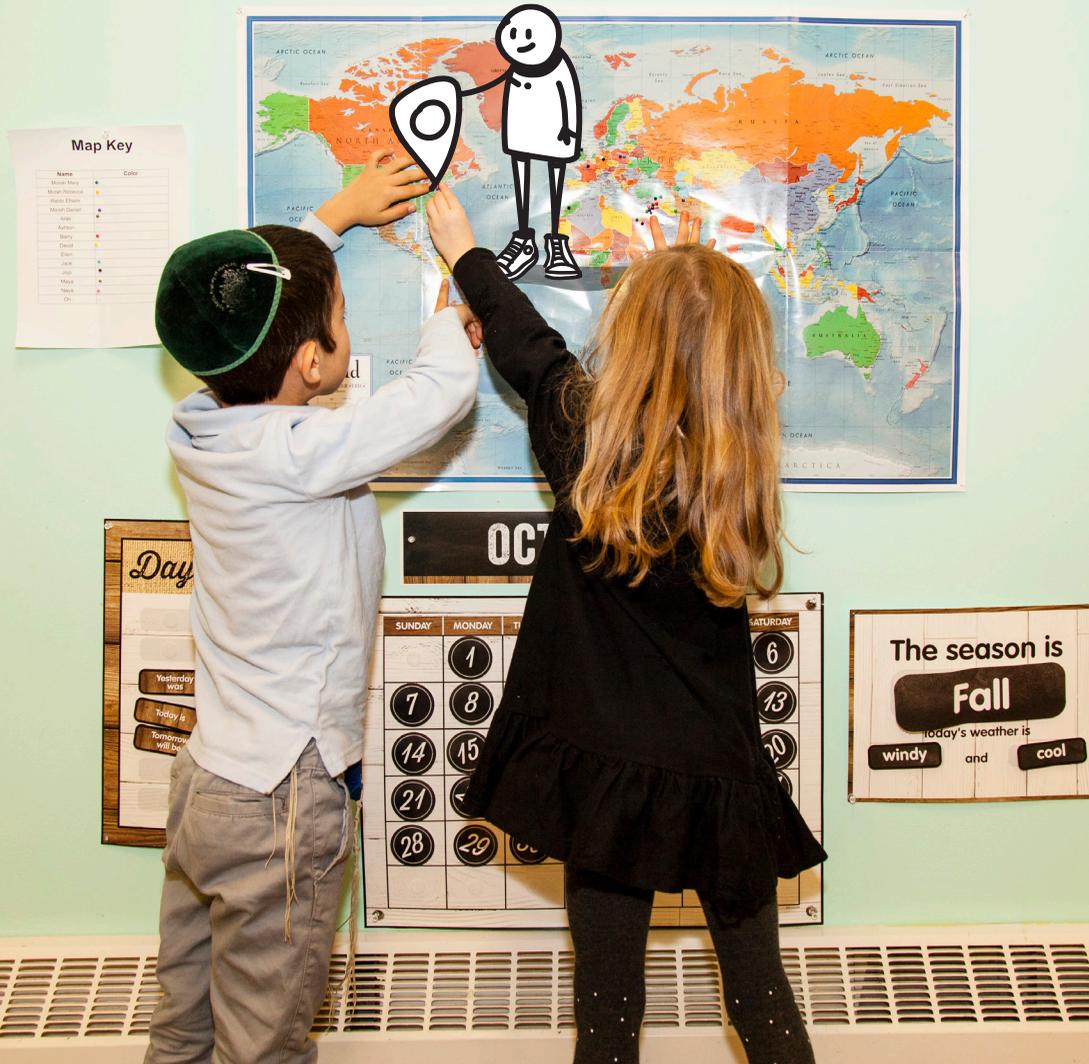
SEPHARDIC ACADEMY  
OF MANHATTAN  
האקדמיה הספרדית במנהטן

## This is SAM.



SAM is a student... and a dreamer. SAM is passionate about learning, determined, and creative, and wanted a school that would value and promote those strengths. SAM imagined a school where learning is fun and where one could explore, grow, and develop new skills and big ideas. A school in which the classrooms come alive, and the children and teachers create a loving and caring community. A school that would celebrate SAM's Jewish heritage and culture and teach kindness and respect. A school that would prepare SAM for higher learning and a successful future.

**Come along and see how SAM's vision came to life...**



## Sephardic Academy of Manhattan

Traditional Values, Inspired Education.

ברוכים הבאים לאקדמיה הספרדית במנהטן

Our core purpose is to help your child develop into an exemplary human being, informed by Jewish tradition and delivered through cutting-edge educational pedagogy. We implement curriculum that is recognized among the best academic programs in the country. As a result, our students are equipped with the foundational skills and attitudes to propel them to successful academic careers and fulfilling lives.

At Sephardic Academy of Manhattan, wherever you turn, learning comes to life. Under the guidance of exceptional educators, a room of four year olds masters a classic Hebrew song, kindergarteners build simple machines, toddlers learn to share and second graders progress from learning to read to reading to learn. Education at SAM is always rich, engaging, participatory and fun, and every aspect of our approach is guided by a shared commitment between professional leaders, classroom teachers and parents.

More than a school, SAM is a globally diverse community of families and educators united by a compelling vision for Jewish education:

- We offer our students a warm and loving environment that promotes intellectual risk taking and stimulates higher level thinking.
- We prize character education and cultivate a deep sense of morality, middot, and ethical responsibility.
- We ensure each student develops deep content knowledge, age-appropriate skills, academic mastery and habits of lifelong learning.
- We teach respect for the dynamic nature of Jewish life, embracing Torah observance and contemporary culture.
- We emphasize Hebrew literacy as a means of accessing ancient and modern Jewish texts and connecting with Jewish people in Israel and around the world.
- We celebrate our multicultural heritage developed over centuries, wherever Jewish communities have flourished in the past and today.
- We promote academic excellence in the humanities, math, and science by following sequences of skill building that have been proven successful.



## SAM's Educational Approach

Our approach to education supports children's curiosity and instills lifelong practices of learning, questioning, and taking intentional and compassionate action. Our instructional program educates the whole child, and helps develop the knowledge, skills and qualities that enable children to thrive.

We engage the learner's sense of discovery and wonder, offering each child the appropriate level of challenge and support within the context of communal learning. Using a universal lens that incorporates general and Judaic studies, children explore concepts in their environments and begin to appreciate the wonders of God's creations. They learn using a variety of approaches including inquiry, hands-on exploration, observation, artistic/literary creation, practice and presentation.

Children participate in extracurricular activities such as yoga, music, chess and swim, and continue their learning through special events and local field trips. New York City is both playground and laboratory - whether a trip to the park to observe seasonal changes or a visit to a senior living facility to spread joy and *hesed*.



## SAM's Cultural Inspiration

More than a geographic delineation, we are inspired by a traditional Sephardic approach to Jewish living. We have focused on ancestral communities that have flourished in open cultures and are influenced by the defining characteristics of these communities. These include an emphasis on the moral, ethical and communal aspects of Jewish life and observances, including respecting the self and others, welcoming friends and strangers with warmth and contributing to contemporary culture through commerce, the arts and sciences. We are proponents of Sephardic Rabbinic Humanism, which advocates for a social value system that is fair and just, and emphasizes the impact on interpersonal relationships that result from recognizing God's dominion over humanity, the lessons of the Torah and the guidance of our rabbinic sages. These guiding values transcend cultural and geographic lineage, presenting a world view that includes and unites Jewish families from all across the world.





## SAM's Talented Faculty & Leadership

Exceptional education demands extraordinary faculty and educational leadership. We attract teachers with a passion for creative education, and select our team based on their talent, training, experience, personality, and commitment to the values and mission of SAM. Content specialists further enrich and deepen the children's experience in a range of disciplines such as music, art, and physical education. Leading this effort are Chary Fox, our Director of Early Childhood, and Mary Peldman, our Elementary School Principal. Our directors are both recognized thought-leaders in Jewish education with decades-long experience working with children.

Chary Fox, MEd



Chary is the founding director of our early childhood program and oversees all educational aspects of the preschool. She is responsible for ensuring the social, emotional, and academic growth of our young students. Chary serves as a brilliant resource for children, teachers and parents, infusing our program with her signature warmth, boundless creativity,

and infinite wisdom.

Chary has been an early childhood educator for over 35 years and a preschool director for 29 of those years. She holds a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Outcome Assessment from Aspen University. Chary started a number of impressive programs and served as an educational consultant for Jewish schools worldwide including Israel, Canada, Chile, Florida, New York and New Jersey. In this capacity, Chary helped launch new schools, mentor directors and teachers, and develop curriculum.

Chary's success can be attributed to her unwavering dedication, commitment to families and her caring and nurturing approach to education. She recognizes the strengths in every child and makes sure that each child is given the proper tools to succeed. Chary brings the beauty of Judaism to the classroom and inspires children and parents to be active participants in our school community.

## Mary Peldman, MEd



Mary oversees all educational aspects of the Elementary School. She is responsible for curriculum development and the implementation of effective teaching methods. Mary's passion for progressive education has resulted in a learning environment that is simultaneously joyful and rigorous.

Mary grew up in Brooklyn as a member of the Sephardic Community. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Hunter College Honor's Program and a Master's in Elementary Education from Bank Street College of Education. She has completed additional training in curriculum development, project-based learning, and effective mentoring and leadership.

Mary has been actively involved in Jewish education for more than a decade. She began her career as a teacher and worked in a variety of educational settings including Manhattan Day School, City and Country School, and the Harlem R.B.I. program. She went on to teach grades kindergarten-4th grade at Beit Rabban Day School on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, where she also served in leadership roles developing curriculum, directing admissions, and culminating in her tenure as school principal.



Our educational team is enhanced by our Executive Director, Michelle Dayan, MEd, LMSW, who is focused on long term school strategy and mission implementation. Michelle also leads our administrative staff, who work diligently to ensure children, teachers and parents receive the highest level of care and administrative support.



## SAM's Community

Sephardic Academy of Manhattan welcomes families from a range of Jewish backgrounds seeking our approach to Jewish learning and life. We expose children to Sephardic customs while embracing cultural diversity within the classroom. We want our children to develop pride in their own Jewish heritage while learning to understand the many beautiful aspects of the Jewish cultural tapestry.

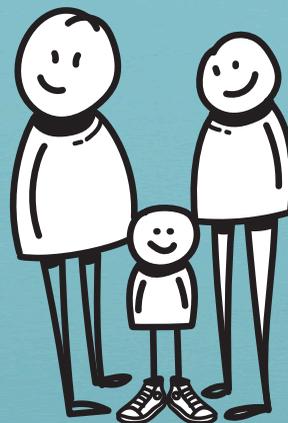


We view our parents as partners in education. Children are given many opportunities to share their work and discoveries with their families throughout the year. Our teachers continuously share photos and newsletters with parents to further strengthen the home/school connection. Parents are frequently invited to special events and celebrations, where they experience the joy of learning alongside their children.

## SAM's Early Childhood Program

Our early childhood center is a magical place. We nurture children's minds, bodies and souls using innovative curriculum and research-based methodologies. We respect the innate curiosity of children and create an environment that propels them to think, inquire and explore. Children participate in a combination of self-guided and teacher-guided play, promoting independence and enhancing children's academic and developmental learning outcomes.

We create enjoyable and intentional learning experiences by designing hands-on activities that guide children to their own discoveries. Children learn by engaging their senses, making observations and constructing understanding. With a focus on social/emotional growth, Jewish values, and early literacy and numeracy, our children develop the foundational skills and confidence to be kind individuals, critical thinkers and universal learners.





## SAM's Elementary School Program

Our elementary program is a natural extension of the early childhood experience. Children learn in a joyful and loving environment that supports their growth and independence. Our students learn the range of general, Hebrew, and Judaic subjects from content experts who are knowledgeable and passionate about their disciplines as well as skilled at teaching young students.

Our academic curriculum has been developed by some of the foremost leaders in the fields of math,

science and literacy and has been carefully selected in order to develop understanding as well as fluency. Students engage in project-based learning where they are challenged to examine real world problems and develop solutions. Over the course of each study children learn how to conduct investigations, research, synthesize and apply knowledge. This practice empowers children to see themselves as capable of having real impact while developing their thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity, all critical skills for success in the modern world.

## SAM's Upper School Program

SAM is on the cutting edge of education and is growing rapidly. We are setting a new standard for Jewish education that will benefit not only our own students but the community at large. Adolescence is a developmental period in which students are rapidly forming character and work habits. We are designing a high level educational program to support them in making positive choices. Our students will develop the skills and confidence to pursue higher education and lay the foundation for successful careers in the fields of their interest.

Our school is planning a state-of-the-art facility designed to meet the specific needs of our vision of progressive education. The Board of Trustees is committed to the imminent buildout of a middle school and high school. We expect our first class of high school graduates to be fully prepared for enrollment in the finest universities and committed to Jewish values and tradition.





Selecting the optimal school for your child/ren is a vital step toward unlocking their innate potential and preparing them for a successful future. We believe our progressive approach to learning, based on research and informed by tradition, propels children to a bright future. We invite you to set up a tour and learn more.



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SAM learned that with a strong education, hard work, perseverance, and support from family and friends, any dream could come true.

[sephardicacademy.org](http://sephardicacademy.org)

212-249-6391