



GUIDE TO STUDENT LIFE

2020-2021 • 5781



A student's experience at Yeshivat Or Chaim extends well beyond the classroom. The wide array of co-curricular activities, teams and programs encourage students to get involved in school life. Students are part of an environment that stresses contributing to the Jewish people while at the same time channeling their passions and honing their leadership skills. Bnei Akiva Schools emphasize a commitment to Medinat Yisrael. We expect our students to demonstrate *Ahavat Yisrael, Derech Eretz* and social responsibility towards the Jewish community, Canada, and the world at large.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

As part of their graduation requirement outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Education, students at Bnei Akiva Schools must complete 40 hours of documented community service. The vast majority of our students, however, complete well over the ministry's requirements with a variety of organizations within the Jewish community and beyond.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Bnei Akiva Schools maintain a close relationship with Bnei Akiva and the Mizrahi movement. Many of our students lead weekly Bnei Akiva youth groups, participate in Bnei Akiva Shabbatonim and attend or staff Bnei Akiva camps. Our students are also directly involved in community Yom HaZikaron and Yom HaAtzma'ut programs. As a movement, "Bnei Akiva inspires and

empowers young Jews with a sense of commitment to the Jewish people, the Land of Israel and the Torah."

The school maintains relationships with several chessed organizations. Students are involved in chessed projects, such as visiting nursing homes and packaging food or clothing for those in need.

The school also has close relationships with organizations advocating inclusion of individuals with all abilities.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

CHIDON HATANACH

A longstanding tradition, Yeshivat Or Chaim students have often competed in the final round of the International Chidon HaTanach competition held in Israel on Yom HaAtzma'ut. In 2014, the international winner was an Or Chaim student, and another Or Chaim student

BNEI AKIVA SCHOOLS HAS PARTNERED WITH THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:

Baycrest	CJPAC	JLIC Toronto	Od Yosef Chai	UJA Federation
Beit Midrash Zichron Dov	DANI	Kayla's Children Centre	One Family Fund	United Chessed
Bernard Betel Centre	Eemunah	Kensington Retirement Place	Shalva National Children's Centre	Ve'ahavta
Bnei Akiva of Toronto	Friendship Circle	MADD	Sharsheret	Walk with Israel
Canadian Blood Services	Habitat for Humanity	Mizrachi Canada	Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre	Yachad
Chai Lifeline	Hasbara	National Council of Jewish Women	Tomchei Shabbos	Yeshiva University
Chasdei Kaduri	Hatzolah	NCSY		YPI
CJJA	JACS			



placed in the top 16. In 2017, after placing first overall in the national competition, an Or Chaim student placed within the top eight internationally.

JERUSALEM MARATHON

In recent years, Bnei Akiva Schools has sent a delegation of dedicated students to Israel for the chance to participate in the Jerusalem Marathon in order to raise funds for charity. The team from each school is coached separately and each student has to raise \$3,000 in order to participate. Once in Israel, the group tours the country guided by our teachers and rebbeim, runs the marathon and spend time getting involved in beautiful chessed opportunities.

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Participating in the Jerusalem Marathon was an amazing experience. I enjoyed the experience of running for a cause, alongside so many fellow Jews. Traveling in Israel for the week was inspiring and an incredible opportunity.

AARON TAYLOR, '19

MODEL UN

Each year, our students participate in two different Model UN programs. Under the guidance of faculty members, students research the politics of the country they have been selected to represent, in order to play the roles of

real United Nations delegates at the conference. Participating in the Model UN programs adds to participants' knowledge of world affairs and their debate and public speaking skills. Qualifying students participate in Yeshiva University's Model UN Conference with hundreds of other yeshiva high school students across North America. All students are invited to participate in the Jewish Canadian Youth Model UN held in Montreal.

MOCK TRIAL

Students from Grades 9 through 12 have the opportunity to join the mock trial team, which competes in the Ontario Justice Education Network's (OJEN) Toronto Mock Trial. Following months of preparation, students play the role of witness or lawyer, competing against other school from across the GTA. Competing in a real courthouse, dressed as lawyers, gives the proceeding a true sense of gravitas. In addition to a greater understanding of Ontario's legal system, students gain valuable communication skills.

GRADE 10 CANADA-ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

In 2017, Bnei Akiva Schools launched our Grade 10 Canada-Israel Experience program, called *Kulanu Mishpacha*. This is an optional program in which Grade 10 students have the opportunity to fully integrate within an Israeli environment for four weeks during the school year and participate in an educational Israeli experience, while creating meaningful friendships with Israeli peers. Our students



MEET THE STAFF

MR. GERALD LAZAR DEAN OF STUDENTS

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Mr. Gerald Lazar oversees the co-curricular program at Yeshivat Or Chaim. Working with Student Council directly, he ensures the smooth-running of programs, the creation of clubs and initiatives and student committees. Mr. Lazar coordinates the organization of programs run by the school's religious leadership. Additionally, many other teachers are involved directly with specific programs, clubs and events.

are hosted in Israeli homes, participate in Israeli school life, explore Israel through tiyulim and experience what it means to live in Israel. Student participants valued the chance to feel completely immersed in Israeli life for the first time.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION WEEK

Holocaust Education Week is observed city-wide at the beginning of November. Institutions around Toronto host events, speakers, panels, and show films around a topic designated by the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre. Every year, Bnei Akiva Schools has worked with the Holocaust Education Centre in order to host an academic scholar to come speak to our students about historical aspects of the Holocaust that

they likely have never learned about before. The speakers are always excellent and all those present, students, faculty, and parents, come away with greater knowledge and understanding of yet another aspect of one of the greatest tragedies in our nation's history.

ART EXHIBITION

At the culmination of the school year, Bnei Akiva Schools hosts an art exhibition evening. The work displayed is a representative survey of all the artwork done throughout the year from all grades at both schools. The high-quality artwork comprises pieces in painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, and multi-media. Invitations go out to all Bnei Akiva Schools families, as well as to those in the wider community. Visitors typically come away with great enthusiasm, inspired by the quality of art done by our students.

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Participating in Model UN was one of the best decisions of my high school career. The emphasis on developing research skills, public speaking and becoming more informed has boosted my comfort and confidence levels when it come to speaking in front of an audience. Participating in a mock United Nations committee is an experience like no other.

EITAN MARKUS, '19

PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Bnei Akiva Schools runs an annual Public Speaking Contest available to all students. Judges vary from year to year, usually made up of a panel of teachers, alumni and community members. In recent years, a people's choice component was instituted to the competition, whereby the audience members themselves act as judges and text the number of their favourite finalist. The public speaking competition is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn to successfully communicate orally, to hone their

public speaking skills and to give students an opportunity to share their beliefs in an encouraging atmosphere.

ALUMNI CAREER DAY/POST-SECONDARY ALUMNI PANEL

In alternating years, Yeshivat Or Chaim is proud to host our alumni for two meaningful events: Alumni Career Day and our Post-Secondary Alumni Panel. Both events are tailored to help our Grade 10-12 students gain an appreciation for the many university and career options that exist for them once they graduate high school. Current students have the opportunity to ask questions and connect with alumni who offer valuable advice on their own academic and career journeys as young Modern Orthodox Jewish men.

LITERARY NIGHT

As part of their summer reading curriculum, Grade 9 students participate in a book club evening. Parents are encouraged to read the books and participate in the program as well. Students craft the discussion questions and a faculty member moderates the discussion. This evening is a wonderful opportunity for students to share their thoughts, perfect their public speaking skills and engage their classmates, parents and teachers in a sophisticated literary discussion.



SCHOOL E-NEWSLETTER

A weekly e-newsletter is published, highlighting the events of the week in both schools. Student committees in both schools are involved in the input and editing of the articles as well as a contributing photographer. Students gain public communication and editorial skills.

YOM HASHOAH

Every year, Grade 11 at Yeshivat Or Chaim is tasked with the oversight of the school-wide Yom HaShoah program. As a group they determine a theme and then create a program around that theme. The students usually present on current Holocaust research, recite *Kel Maleh* and hear from a survivor speaker. Aside from the education and commemoration aspect of this program, this is also a way for a grade to work together toward a very worthy goal.

YOM HAZIKARON

Grade 10 students work together with a member of faculty to create a meaningful program to commemorate Yom HaZikaron. They focus on Israel, the IDF as a whole, and individual heroes who have become victims to the ongoing struggle for statehood in Israel. The program includes a performance by the choir, a video presentation, speakers, and various other commemorative elements. This program is always a meaningful way to pause and reflect on the sacrifice of those who live in Israel as well as a reminder to the students of the centrality of the State of Israel in our lives.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers are always on the lookout for trips that will help enhance the learning that is done in the classroom. Trips have included a physics day at Wonderland, various exhibits at the ROM or the Science Centre, theatre trips to see Shakespearean plays in Stratford, and trips to various local universities as well.



MEET THE STAFF

RABBI NOAM HOROWITZ
MASHGIACH RUCHANI
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In his role as Mashgiach Ruchani, Rabbi Horowitz leads the school's religious and spiritual guidance and programming. Rabbi Horowitz helps to instil within our students an emotional connection to Judaism through Torah learning and discussions about personal growth. He infuses energy into programs and in the hallways. In addition to his role at YOC, Rabbi Horowitz is the Rav at Ayin L'Tzion Congregation

SHALHEVETH FREIER PHYSICS TOURNAMENT

Students in Grades 11 and 12 have the option of competing in the Weizmann Institute's Annual Shalheveth Freier Physics Tournament. Competing groups build a safe using physics principles that should be impenetrable by other teams, while trying to crack their competitors' safes. The national winners compete in a two-day international competition in the Davidson Institute of Science Education, at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, Israel.

LEADERSHIP

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student council consists of students from Grades 11 and 12. Working closely with the administration, they oversee and facilitate programming in the school. Annual activities coordinated by student council include sukkah building, pre-Pesach car cleaning, school lunch programs, school-wide Shabbaton, Sports Day, Winter Activity Day and basketball intramurals. A portion of funds raised by student council is donated to various local and Jewish charities.

SUKKAH BUILDING

Every year, Grade 12 students advertise their sukkah building skills to the community. In advance of building, students review halachot of building sukkot with one of the school's rebbeim, learn about customer service, and receive a safety tutorial. The students book appointments, create a schedule and go around the community in groups to build upwards of 50 sukkahs. The experience is one of bonding while learning both physical and entrepreneurial skills.

"BIG BROTHER" PROGRAM

At the beginning of Grade 9, each student is assigned a "big brother" in Grade 12. At the 9/12 BBQ, they have the opportunity to meet, for the Grade 9 to ask questions and the Grade 12 to share advice and guidance. Grade 9 students then have an older student available to them throughout the year, to answer questions and provide guidance. When possible, Grade 9/12 students will meet formally to check in as part of a larger program or learning initiative.



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I gained a tremendous amount from the sukkah building experience. I learned how to plan and schedule in the most cost and time effective manner and I also learned how to communicate with my friends and customers in ways I have never done before.

URI FRISCHMAN, '14

GRADE REPRESENTATIVES

Grade Representatives consists of students in Grades 9–11. Their role is to work with student council on supporting and running programming. Grade reps gain valuable leadership experience in student governance and affairs. They make decisions involving school-wide programming and enjoy taking the lead on shaping special activity days.

SPORTS DAY

The first school-wide program run by student council during the academic year is Sports Day. There are many activities scheduled for the day (not just sports!) including volleyball, basketball, soccer, Torah trivia, an art activity, a science activity and chess. Grade 12 students are offered an invaluable leadership experience, organizing and scoring the activities. Students appreciate having the opportunity to get to know students in other grades, particularly our new Grade 9s and to see their teachers involved in fun activities beyond the classroom.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Our Student Council and Lunch Committee offer daily lunch options for students to order. Students sample the

best Toronto kosher restaurants have to offer with different establishments patronized each day. Choices include BBQ, salads, pizza, sushi, laffas, among other delicious choices. Grade 12 students spearhead the initiative to raise money for their Grade 12 trip and in the process gain valuable planning and organization skills. Each year the rising grade looks forward to the time where they will choose what to offer to their peers and take charge of the BBQ.

PRE-PESACH CAR CLEANING

Yearly, our Grade 12 students organize a car wash before Pesach. Prior to the car wash, students learn about halachot of cleaning for Pesach and gain valuable teamwork experience during the day of the program. The car wash takes place at Or Chaim and students wash upwards of 40 cars in a day. Students enjoy the opportunity to bond outside of the classroom, while providing a service to the community.

GRADE 11 LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING

In preparation for acting as the school's student leaders, our Grade 11s participate in several leadership and teambuilding activities. Following an opening program,

they participate in several sessions, focusing on practical leadership. Themes include: What Does Leadership Look Like and How to Enact Leadership; Planning School-wide Programming 101; and The Essentials of Working in a Team.

INTRAMURALS

Intramurals take place several days a week during lunch. They are an opportunity for students in different grades to play together on the same team. On occasion, a staff member may be on a team as well. A Grade 12 student is elected into the “convener” position, organizing the teams, games and playoffs for the intramurals teams. Intramurals provide a fun way to unwind during the day and students look forward to seeing who will compete in and ultimately win the playoffs.

ACTIVITY DAY

Student Council generally runs two Activity Days a year. In addition to Sports Day, Yeshivat Or Chaim hosts a Winter Activity Day. Students choose to ski or participate in an indoor activity such as Skyzone. An opportunity to interact outside of the classroom and within different grades, the Winter Activity Day provides for school bonding, while highlighting a different aspect than is seen in the classroom.

J.U.M.P.

The Jewish Unity Mentoring Program is an NCSY leadership initiative which was created to provide the opportunity for students to develop into leaders while broadening their current understanding of global issues facing teenagers and the Jewish community in today’s world. Schools across North America have JUMP teams that discuss and create initiatives about social awareness, Israel, and Jewish observance, under faculty guidance. Each team comes to New York for an initial conference at the beginning of the school year and have several months to organize and present their plan to a board. The finalist teams are

flown back to New York to present their programs to an elite board and a winner is chosen.

ATHLETICS

BASKETBALL

The school has two basketball teams: Junior Varsity for Grade 9 and 10 students and Varsity for Grade 11 and 12 students. The teams compete in the TDCAA. The varsity team has the opportunity to play in various tournaments,



MEET THE STAFF

MR. GORD SKAROTT
ATHLETICS DIRECTOR
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Mr. Gord Skarott has been Athletic Director at Yeshivat Or Chaim since 2002. He emphasizes fitness and exercise in his classes and his personal life, having worked as a personal trainer and regularly competing in long-distance endurance events such as marathons and triathlons. Mr. Skarott takes his enthusiasm and love of physical activity into each class and attempts to find new ways for his students to have fun while being active.

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Being part of the soccer, cross-country and basketball teams was an indispensable part of my experience at Yeshivat Or Chaim. We focused on working as a team and improving our work ethic, both on and off the court. Representing Yeshivat Or Chaim also allowed my teammates and me to make a Kiddush Hashem on the court, field or track.

JOSH MAYER, '15



including Yeshiva University's Sarachek Tournament in New York. Tryouts for the basketball teams are held at the beginning of the school year and the season typically lasts from September to March.

CROSS COUNTRY

The Cross Country Running team, open to all students, also competes in the TDCAA. Tryouts and practices start at the beginning of the year and the season typically lasts until the winter.

HOCKEY

Students in various grades created the Hockey Club as an opportunity to play with other schoolmates who love the game. They rented ice and held games at mutually convenient times.

BASEBALL

Based on student demand, we plan on expanding our athletic opportunities to include a baseball team. The

team is formed in the spring and participates in exhibition games, with the possibility of a tournament.

SOCCER

The Soccer team is open to all students who qualify. While the soccer season is typically in the spring and summer, tryouts and practices usually begin in January. The soccer team also competes in the TDCAA.

CHESED AND VOLUNTEERING

CHESED COMMITTEE

The Chessed Committee has become one of the most popular committees in the school. Around five or six students are selected to plan chessed events and fundraisers and encourage activism and volunteerism amongst the student population. It spearheads projects throughout the year, a selection of which are detailed below. In addition, many of the students on the Chessed Committee choose to volunteer their time to these organizations beyond the school setting.



CHARITY CHOLENT CONTEST

A yearly highlight, our own homemade “Chopped,” the Charity Cholent Contest raises funds for Od Yosef Chai. Students learn how Od Yosef Chai helps needy families in Israel. They create teams, generally two per grade, and compete to make the tastiest cholent. A panel of esteemed judges, led by Mrs. Ripsman, taste the cholents and rank them based on taste, texture and visual appeal. The winning team takes home the Cholent Trophy and has bragging rights for the year.

WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

In partnership with Ve’ahavta, the Chessed committee collected warm winter clothing for those in need. To encourage students to donate, there were donated prizes offered to students who donated the most. It was a meaningful project for the Chessed committee to take on that could have a tangible impact.

PESACH FOOD DRIVE

Our Grade 10 students assist with Passover packaging at the National Council for Jewish Women. They learn about those in our community in need and hear about more opportunities to help. It is important as a team-building



experience as well, as they work together to package the food.

NURSING HOME VISITS

Under the guiding principle of developing active chessed among our students, Yeshivat Or Chaim facilitates at least one nursing home visit a year. In preparation, students in leadership positions plan a program to present at the Home and gain important pointers as to how to communicate with the residents they meet. Often, different groups will meet residents at different cognitive stages and hear wisdom and life stories gained by the residents. Once there, students sing, play musical instruments, schmooze with the residents and assist in the regular programming of the Home.

YACHAD

Many of our students participate in Yachad programming, an organization dedicated to integrating individuals with special needs into the community. Our students attend shabbatonim and programs. Some of them have also been asked to sit on the Yachad Board. Yachad members have attended mishmars regularly for a chabura learning and basketball program with a different class each time.

MOVEMBER

The Chessed committee encourages students and male teachers to grow a moustache and raise funds in support of male health. Students are encouraged to become knowledgeable about men's health. Throughout the month of November, the committee tracks facial and fundraising growth!

ARTS

CHOIR

Yeshivat Or Chaim's choir has performed at Closing Night of Holocaust Education Week, the school's Shabbaton, the community Yom HaShoah commemoration, and Mizrahi's Yom HaZikaron and Yom HaAtzma'ut program. The choir is trained by a professional chazzan and creates leadership opportunities for students in various grades. Students have appreciated the opportunity to perform at community events. All students with vocal talents are encouraged to join the choir.

BAND

A staple for more than a decade, the YOC band offers an opportunity for students with musical talents to perform for the school and other groups. Their speciality is infusing current rock songs into classic Jewish tunes. The band performs yearly at the school-wide Shabbaton and has also performed at the Simchat Beit Hashoeva, Netivot's Yom HaAtzma'ut program and our Shushan Purim program. Students select the songs to perform and rehearse throughout the year.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING

MISHMAR

Most Thursdays from 5:30pm–7:00pm, students participate in a school-wide mishmar program. Most weeks are planned by the Rabbeim and include a variety of informal

activities. Programs have included: visits to shuls to learn with shul Rabbeim; visits to nursing homes; volunteering for chessed organizations; learning with a guest speaker; chessed workshops; programming with Yachad; shmoozes in Rebbes' homes. Students appreciate the variety of activities and opportunities. Dinner is served as part of mishmar.

MATMIDIM

The Matmidim program aims at giving our students a greater breadth, understanding and love of Torah learning. Our Matmidim program meets for two additional times of learning each week. The learning consists of guided chavruta learning focused on independent learning, chaburah or small groups led by one of our Rabbeim. Students have a choice of topics, ranging from Mishna to Parasha to Shmirat HaLashon. In addition to the fulfillment of learning "*lishma*", students enjoy strengthening their relationships with our Rabbeim

BEIT MIDRASH PROGRAM (FORMERLY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM)

This program encourages extra learning *lishma* on Sundays and Thursdays. The Beit Midrash program meets on most Sundays after Or Chaim Minyan davening; and on Thursdays when mishmar is not held. Students learn in small groups and enjoy the atmosphere of motivated learning.

PARENT-STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS

Father-Son and Mother-Son learning programs are among our popular programs yearly. This year, we are excited to expand our programs and offer a Grandparent-Grandson learning event. Learning is generally in chavruta, with a summary at the end by a presenter. Presenters have included members of our staff, as well as community members. Students whose parent cannot attend learn with one of our teachers. These programs are great ways for our students to showcase their learning skills for their



MEET THE STAFF

RABBI EITAN AVINER **DIRECTOR OF JUDAIC** **ADVANCEMENT**

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Rabbi Aviner oversees our Beit Midrash programming which provides opportunities for growth and enrichment beyond the classroom. Rabbi Aviner has initiated our Junior Beit Midrash Programs, Fellowship Learning Programs and various shiurim for the greater community. Rabbi Aviner's involvement with our students' Judaic enrichment also includes heading our Israel Guidance department. On Shabbat, he oversees the youth minyan at Or Chaim.

parents and take on a different social quality before/after the learning.

BAS NIGHT SEDER

During the COVID quarantine, we began a daily Night Seder program, in partnership with the Or Chaim minyan, open to students, parents and community members. Learning was consistently well-attended! Rabbi Horovitz led his sessions with learning Sefer Yehoshua and Sefer Shoftim; and Rabbi Aviner on The Writings and Philosophy of the



Rambam. The Night Seder has continued for students as part of our evening online matmidim program.

LEARNING WITH BEIT MIDRASH ZICHRON DOV **AND ALUMNI CHAVERIM PROGRAM**

Our students have the opportunity to learn with members of Beit Midrash Zichron Dov, permanently housed in Or Chaim's Beit Midrash. In addition to individual opportunities to learn, the Beit Midrash offers a chabura class focusing on different topics for interested students. Alumni studying in post-secondary institutions in Toronto are encouraged to join the Beit Midrash's Chaverim program. Chaverim commit to learning as part of the Beit Midrash several times a week. It is great to have a continuous presence of alumni who are committed to life-long learning and growth. This program has fostered a spirit of Torah lishma throughout the building as well as demonstrating an eagerness on the school's part to continue the relationship with the students well beyond graduation.

YIMEI IYUN

Prior to several Jewish holidays, including Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Pesach, the students spend some time learning about those dates, outside of normal curricular topics. They learn and discuss halacha and hashkafa. These Yimei Iyun also provide an opportunity for assorted

styles of learning not always possible in a normal classroom setting.

OPTIONAL BIKIUT

Once a week, a member of faculty guides students through Masechet Taanit following Yeshiva University's established Bikiut program. An *amud* is covered each week.

CLUBS

At Yeshivat Or Chaim, students have the opportunity to participate in clubs and/or committees. Clubs vary year-to-year based on interest and student leadership. Students are encouraged to speak to members of student council or student activity coordinators if they are interested in initiating a new club or committee. Clubs must have a staff liaison supervising the activities in order to be an official school club.

FINANCE CLUB

A student-created initiative, this group arranges for speakers working in the business field to share their experiences with our students. Topics of discussion have included work-life balance, university experiences, career path choices, the specifics of a day-to-day business career and suggestions for remaining religiously connected while working in the field. This club has allowed students to gain valuable real-life ideas and advice. This club also competes in a simulated stock market exchange program.

MATH CLUB

A student-created club - if you can't get enough Math during scheduled times, this is the place for you! Challenging each other with puzzles and problems, this club aims to enrich academic experience in an informal setting.

DEBATE CLUB

A new student initiative, this club develops students speaking and argumentation skills. In a structured environment, students work on preparing and delivering debates, as well as debating "off the cuff."

ISRAEL ADVOCACY CLUB

A student-run club with faculty support, students gather to learn the latest Israeli news. They learn tips from experts and online sources about how to best advocate for Israel, particularly on campus. They engage in lively debate and discussion about how to best advocate for the best interests of the Jewish State as Canadian citizens.

FILM CLUB

A classic film, some popcorn and Mr. Teversham's analytical words. What could be a better way to spend an evening after school?

MOTIVATIONAL CLUB

A recent student-created initiative, this club focuses on motivating and inspiring students to work hard and succeed in school and beyond. The club re-energizes students and aims to keep them excited about achieving academic success.

SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

Students who enjoy writing and are looking to develop their analytical skills are encouraged to join the school newspaper. Our young journalists ask the tough questions and search for the truth, keeping our school community informed. Newspaper sections include outside news, opinions, Divrei Torah, athletics and more.

YEARBOOK

Yeshivat Or Chaim has a yearbook committee which consists of a group of Grade 12 editors and contributors,



a photographer, and a group of yearbook committee members from Grades 9–11. The group meets with the faculty advisor to create the yearbook that is given to the seniors upon the occasion of their graduation and the committee works together to ensure that this publication is a reflection of the past four years of high school. Artistic, creative, writing, planning and organization skills are all utilized in the process.

PR/BRANDING COMMITTEE

This committee is tasked with publicizing student council events and fundraisers. Students gain design, marketing and business skills as part of this committee.

SHABBATONIM

SHABBATON

The Yeshivat Or Chaim Shabbaton is a yearly opportunity for the school to spend a Shabbat together. The Grade 12s generally go up early, organizing programming for the rest of the school, including Friday night learning groups. Shabbat includes davening, Divrei Torah, singing and shmoozing. Programming in the afternoon has included a shiur with a member of Beit Midrash Zichron Dov, a nature walk, and a “shmooze” with members of the English Department. The Shabbat is a spiritual,

community-building experience, allowing our students to interact with each other and some of their teachers in an out-of-classroom, Shabbat atmosphere. Following Havdalah, the boys participate in dancing led by the Yeshivat Or Chaim band and conclude the evening with a bonfire and kumzitz. An annual highlight for students and staff alike – an experience not to be missed!

GRADE 9 ORIENTATION AND SHABBATON

Before the school year begins, the Grade 9 orientation introduces the students to who they need to know, how their schedules work and what the essential tools required for high school are. Following the academic orientation, the Grade 12s welcome the Grade 9s with a BBQ. The students meet and get to know one another and are arranged into “big brother-little brother” pairings. Grade 12s share their advice and ideas with the Grade 9s and the family feel of Yeshivat Or Chaim is palpable for Grade 9s – even before their first class! At the beginning of the school year, our Grade 9s travel to Camp Moshava Ennismore for a Shabbaton to start the year. They have shiurim in small groups with several rabbis, as well as a schmooze session with the student leaders who attend the Shabbaton. They enjoy meals together, singing and davening together and getting a feel for what the school-wide Shabbaton will look like in a few months. It provides an opportunity for all students –

no matter what elementary school they came from – to get to know one another and become a united group of Or Chaim students.

REBBE SHABBATONIM

Throughout the year, various Judaic Studies staff open their homes and host Shabbatonim for groups of students. Generally, each student will be invited to two “home Shabbatonim” with their Gemara Rebbe during the year. These Shabbatons have become an important part of the experience of the Yeshiva. The students enjoy singing together and informally schmoozing about Torah and Judaism.

MINYANIM

In seeking to provide multiple points of entry to spirituality and religious growth, we provide our students with

multiple options for minyanim, providing a variety in style and nusach. Currently, our minyanim include:

- “Yeshivish” Minyan – a traditional minyan;
- Sephardic Minyan – located in our new Sephardic Beit Midrash, which includes a Sephardic Torah;
- Chabad Minyan – Nusach Ari featuring Chabad niggunim;
- “Business” Minyan – for those who prefer a focused and efficient davening;
- Explanatory Minyan – where davening is an immersive experience, infusing singing and meditation;
- Grade 9 Minyan – while some Grade 9s daven in the Sephardic or Chabad minyanim, the remainder daven together, focused on providing students an opportunity to transition into leading davening and leining.

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The opportunities presented to the students have far surpassed my expectations going into Yeshivat Or Chaim. The curricular and extra-curricular activities provided makes Or Chaim an amazing place to learn, and the environment created by the students makes it a extremely fun place to learn.

MORDECHAI WOLFSON, GRADE 12





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