

Schools

CJDS Gives Children the Gift of Another Year

One wouldn't think that serious preparation for college begins at age five, but state legislators do. With competition for college scholarships at stake, nearly half of all states, since 1975, have pushed back their birthday cutoffs hoping their state's older, more mature students will get ahead.

North Carolina legislators recently decided to alter the state's

cutoff date, currently October 16, to August 31. The decision, which will take effect in the 2009-10 academic year, will affect thousands of children across the state - those younger than five years old on August 31 will not be allowed to enroll in kindergarten.

"There are many kids in the preschool system who will have completed a four-year-old pro-

gram, and their parents don't want them to repeat that year," said Cheryl Rabinowitz, admissions and marketing director for CJDS. "But these kids aren't quite ready for kindergarten. Plus, parents are mentally ready to send their child to an elementary school environment."

To help bridge that gap, CJDS will offer a junior kindergarten in the 2008-09 school year.

The effort is close to Rabinowitz's heart. She elected to give her oldest child, Paige, a year in a transitional kindergarten several years ago. "It was a monumental decision," she said. "I know now that I made the right choice, but at the time, I lost a lot of sleep over that decision."

Rabinowitz said that she was emotionally prepared to have Paige, now a sixth-grader at the Barbara and Jerry Levin Jewish Middle School (which will merge

with CJDS in 2008), enter an elementary school environment, but a Jewish JK was only offered at preschools. "My decision would have been a lot easier if a program at an elementary school was available. At the time, it wasn't, but it will be available to parents and their children in the 2008-2009 school year and will allow parents to keep their children locally in the Jewish educational system through 8th grade."

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of delayed-entry children has remained consistent, somewhere between 6% and 9%, since the 1980s. The NCES, which assessed 22,000 kindergartners individually, reported that older children are better prepared to start an academic kindergarten than younger ones because they are more likely to be reading, have honed fine motor skills needed for writing, and possess important non-cognitive advantages, like being more persistent and more socially adept.

"We've had a lot of inquiries about a program," Rabinowitz



said. "Because of space constraints we didn't think we could do it sooner than this. We are starting a year earlier because of the need. It's an opportunity to continue your child's education in an elementary school setting while giving them academics without too much pressure."

The CJDS junior kindergarten program, primarily for children who have completed a four-year-old program, will use an academic JK curriculum. The school day will begin at 8:50 AM and will end at 2 PM with an option for extended care. Junior Kindergarten at CJDS will cost \$9,000, less than area private schools offering the same or a similar program.

We are currently accepting applications for new students in grades JK-8. For more information, please call Cheryl Rabinowitz at the school at 704-944-6820. ☆

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The Jewish Preschool on Sardis

It's a jungle out there. In recent weeks, the kids at The Jewish Preschool on Sardis have learned that lesson first-hand in Judaica, as they discussed how people and animals were created on Day 6. They followed it up with the story of Noah and the mitzvah of taking care of animals. To go along with these themes and enhance their gross motor development, the children learned how to do some different animal walks, following in the "footsteps" of bears, monkeys and seals. They also dressed up as different animals, built animal homes from blocks and read "Noah's Noisy Ark." The unit ended in grand style, with an animal parade.

As the children discussed that animals and people were created on Day 6, they talked about the differences between the two. While people can do mitzvot, animals cannot. Children were then asked to pick an animal and tell what mitzvah they could do that an animal could not.

Zoe Wojnowich: "Doggies can-



not build a house for someone."

Maryn Larsen: "Giraffes can't give tzedakah."

Toby Howie: "Tigers can't help set the table."

Sydney Zolotorof: "Kangaroos can't follow their teacher's directions."

Charlie Gorelick: "Giraffes cannot say the Kiddush."

Theodore Katz: "A dog cannot set the table for Shabbat."

Anna Petricoff: "A dog cannot hold the door open for its Mom."

Sam Olinger: "Dogs can't light the Shabbos candles."

Sam Baumstein: "Giraffes can't pray to Hashem."

Kate Lewin: "A doggie cannot carry the challah or say the bracha." ☆

Allocations

(Continued from page 3)

Charlotte community is able to designate \$248,323 to meet the specific needs of Jews in the former Soviet Union, Argentina and Israel as well as assist our Partnership community of Hadera.

The Federation thanks board members, community leaders and all others who have solicited countless contributions and attended numerous events and meetings. Thank you to the Jewish community. Your values inspire

us. Your strength empowers us. You are our family...giving to others, taking responsibility and acting with loving kindness. **THANK YOU FOR LIVING GENEROUSLY - It does a world of good!**

**This amount adjusted for campaign shrinkage and operational surplus allocation.*

All Jews are responsible for one another.
- Talmud: Shavuot 39a