

The Orthodox Jewish Day School in America

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This paper attempts to project traditional Jewish sources onto the arena of Orthodox Jewish elementary education in the 21st century America. The paper focuses on the traditional education of young Jewish boys. A brief examination of the past century of Orthodox Jewish education in America describes the current practices and how they developed. Traditional Jewish scholarship is used to derive a traditional Jewish philosophy of education. Special consideration is given to the question of secular education in a Jewish elementary school. The needs and environment of current students are examined. Some modern progressive views of education are shown to be similar to many of the ideas found in traditional sources. Based on these views of education, and the current needs, a “perfect” school is considered. Finally, and more importantly, some suggestions for moving the current school closer to the “perfect” school are considered.