



Seattle Jewish Community School

Challenging each Mind and Inspiring each Heart

Dereh Eretz

Our rabbis teach us that *dereh erez* preceded Torah (Lev. Rabbah 9:3). *Dereh Eretz*, the way of the kindness, is how we conduct ourselves as individuals and in our communities. At SJCS, our core values guide our behavior.

SJCS uses the Ladder of Success as the all-school framework for problem-solving skills along with *dereh erez* as the guiding principal for all social interactions. Behavioral norms at SJCS are intended to maintain a positive and productive environment for everyone within the school community. We work together to make SJCS:

- A place of safety for our bodies, our feelings, and our property – Beetahon
- A place for learning- *Limud*
- A place of compassion and respect- *Rachamim & Kavod*

We recognize that elementary school is a time when children are learning and experimenting with how their perceptions, feelings, and behaviors fit in the larger social context.

The following behaviors are considered a violation of our school norms:

- Verbal aggression: taunting, teasing, threatening, starting rumors, gossiping, sexually inappropriate talk
- Physical aggression: hitting, kicking, punching, choking, touching private parts of the body
- Social exclusion: the deliberate exclusion of one child

Consequences of Behavioral Infractions:

Being a member of a SJCS community comes with privileges and responsibilities. When a student's behavior is inappropriate, privileges may be revoked.

- Children who feel hurt or upset by these behaviors will be given an opportunity to speak privately with a teacher or staff member to receive support and, if needed, tools for improving their social perceptions and skills.

- Children who violate school norms also receive support and one or more of the following learning opportunities and consequences as needed: naming of the behavior and reminder about *dereh erez*; reference to the Ladder of Success; problem-solving with the teacher and/or staff member to understand motivation and alternative behaviors; filling out a Think Sheet; talking to the Head of School; time out from the social situation; notes home; parent meetings; or dismissal from school. *Aggressive behavior toward another individual, whether physical or verbal, warrants a more immediate and severe response and is grounds for dismissal for that day. Student may be asked to leave for a day, particularly in cases of physical aggression.