This past two weeks with the students has been so rewarding! We are engaging in some really great conversations about how we think about tefilot (prayers). I had students look at the prayers throughout the Maariv service to think about how that prayer fits in terms of three categories: praise (sh'vach), gratitude (hodayah), and request (b'kasha). Ask your child about the categories—I'm really trying to have them internalize the Hebrew so that they can look to this term to give them a stronger idea of a prayer's meaning.

We also talked about a mitzvot value: the concept of holiness (kadosh). I had students pair up in small groups to think about the idea of holiness within people, places, and objects and later on, we moved to talking about examples within Judaism (such as the 10 Commandments). The students have very big ideas about this concept and I was extremely moved to hear their thinking—as well as their ideal 10 Commandments. We will be connecting kadosh to the Torah and the Ten Commandments later on in the month.
Last night, the students and I came together with Morah Paula's Bet/Gimel class to do a Maariv (Evening) service. The children participated in a thoughtful conversation about building the world with love (based off one of my favorite songs (which was written as a response to September 11th): "Ohev Chesed Yibaneh" (original version is here). What does "a world built with love" look like to you? This could be a really good conversation to have on Shabbat with challah, your family, and other loved ones. For good challah, definitely check out Rosenfeld's Bagels. If you have your own recommendation, let me know! I'm always on the hunt.

I so enjoyed seeing everyone at the Family Education Program with Rabbi Penzner

Sincerely,

Morah Alli