



ROBERT M. BEREN  
ACADEMY

# OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT



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ACADEMY



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## 1. SUMMARY

Robert M. Beren Academy, founded in 1969 by a dedicated group of families who valued the importance of a Jewish day school education, is located on a 52-acre campus in southwest Houston, Texas. The state-of-the-art facility includes chemistry, biology, physics and computer laboratories; a 10,000-volume library, including a major Judaic collection; a regulation size gymnasium and an art room. In addition, there are two playgrounds and large

athletic fields for physical education classes and interscholastic athletic competition.

Robert M. Beren Academy (“RMBA”) is a Modern Orthodox day school that adheres to standards of academic excellence and exemplary moral conduct as it prepares its students to become self-confident, compassionate, practicing Jews as well as committed citizens and lifelong learners.

RMBA strives to help each student discover and develop his or her own potential and to infuse them with a passion for Judaism, a love of the Jewish people and a lifetime commitment to Torah and Mitzvot.

Robert M. Beren Academy is dedicated to preparing students for success in college and beyond and developing in students a mature appreciation of their Jewish heritage.



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Each student pursues a program of secular studies, Judaic studies, enrichment courses and extracurricular activities.

Accreditations and affiliations include the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/AdvancED, Prizmah: Center for Jewish Day Schools (formerly the YU School Partnership), the National Honor Society, the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston, the College Board, the Texas and National Association for College Admission Counseling and ACT.

Robert M. Beren Academy alumni now span generations of learners and leaders and are proud to continue to celebrate its excellence in Jewish education.



## THE MISSION OF ROBERT M. BEREN ACADEMY

- An integrated Orthodox Jewish and college preparatory education in an atmosphere of excellence
- A commitment to Torah and its ethical and moral precepts and to the Jewish people
- The development of a spiritual bond with the Land and State of Israel
- The dedication to our American heritage and achievement in contemporary society



## 2. SCHOOL PROFILE

RMBA offers two dynamic elementary programs: Traditional and Montessori. We are the only Jewish Day School in Houston which offers parents this unique choice. Both programs adhere to our mission statement and educate the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally. Our middle school program offers a truly differentiated approach to every child's education. Immediately upon entering the 6th grade, children are exposed to classes that fit their academic needs. We continuously seek innovative approaches to Judaic education such as a flipped Gemara classroom. Secular studies in the high school conform to the highest national standards for college preparation.

RMBA students have the third highest SAT and ACT score averages in the city of Houston. Our graduates attend the finest colleges in the country including: Columbia University, Harvard College, University of Pennsylvania and Yeshiva University. At RMBA we strike a balance between relevance and reverence in our Judaic Studies. Using the most up-to-date technologies and educational practices, our teachers engage the students and ignite their curiosity. Textual skills, critical thinking and knowledge are stressed, so that students develop a strong foundation. Our goal is to inspire children with the

desire and empower them with the ability, to continue independent Torah study.

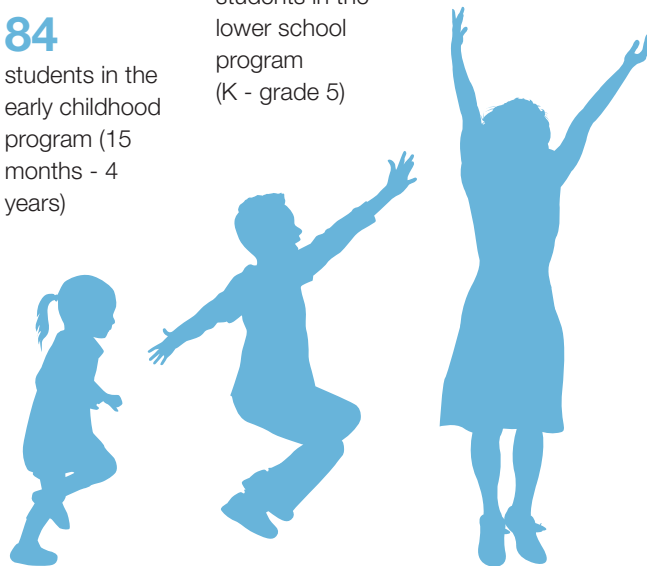
The mastery of spoken and written Modern Hebrew is a priority at RMBA. We differentiate our language instruction so that children with different backgrounds and abilities receive the individual attention and support they deserve. The combination of the dual curriculum fosters an atmosphere of academic excellence, which demands higher critical and analytic skills.

**RMBA HAS AN ENROLLMENT  
OF 330 STUDENTS.**

**84**  
students in the  
early childhood  
program (15  
months - 4  
years)

**131**  
students in the  
lower school  
program  
(K - grade 5)

**115**  
students in the  
upper school  
program (grades  
6 -12)



## 3. SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES

Robert M. Beren Academy is searching for a Head of School ("HOS") who will build upon the excellence of the current programs and will further enhance the student experience and support a close alignment of our faculty with the RMBA mission. A collaborative, energetic and dynamic leader who is a skilled communicator will be sought to fulfill the following priorities for the school:

### DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STRATEGIC PLAN

The new HOS will work together with the Board of Directors to create a strategic plan that contains measurable goals, and addresses: the dual Traditional/Montessori program in Elementary school; recruitment and retention of staff and students; parent involvement. The HOS will create a plan to distribute leadership responsibilities to teachers, so that they can grow professionally and have a personal stake in the school decisions.

### ENHANCE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN GENERAL AND JUDAIC STUDIES

The new HOS, working closely with the principals, will build on the system of observation that is currently in place to formalize and increase the frequency of teacher feedback with a goal of advancing classroom

instruction and helping teachers build their professional practice. School wide professional development will be implemented and will address the needs of different learners and divisions, covering such topics as AP training, curriculum design and mentoring, and will take place locally, at conferences or other external sites.

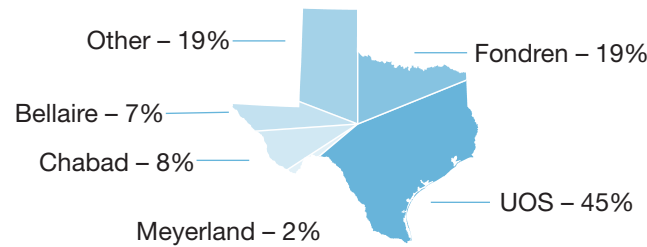
The HOS will review the curriculum mapping across the grades and will creatively address class scheduling to balance the desire for an academically rigorous program utilizing the finite school resources available. The HOS will connect with peers to learn best practices being implemented in similarly sized environments.

### DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN FOR GROWTH

RMBA has had a 25% growth in enrollment in the past three years (current enrollment is 330) and a facility that allows for additional capacity. The new HOS will be an innovative leader who will develop and implement strategies for growing enrollment and easily connects and communicates with a diverse demographic within our school and the community to build bridges for retention and recruitment.

Of highest priority will be the retention and recruitment of students in middle school and high school – where there is a higher level of attrition than in the lower grades. The HOS will develop a plan for RMBA to realize its growth opportunities.

### BEREN FAMILIES BY REGION



### PURPOSEFUL RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT OF EDUCATORS

The Head of School will need to strategically retain and recruit faculty that represent RMBA’s mission and Hashkafa. High quality teachers and administrators are integral to the stability of the students and the institution. The HOS will provide opportunities for educators to continue to grow intellectually and professionally with both general and personalized opportunities for professional development.

### FOCUS ON FINANCIAL STABILITY

RMBA has successfully achieved its missions within a stable financial enterprise through ongoing close management of the budget by the HOS, the business department and the Board of Directors. The HOS will oversee the current budget and will strategically plan future budgets and engage in development activities to continue to implement the mission of the school. The HOS, along with the Development Director and the Board

of Directors will work as a team and serve as connectors to new relationships and donors, so that all have a stake in the success of Robert M. Beren Academy. As the school continues to grow in enrollment, additional support and new streams of revenue for the school will be important to our continued success.

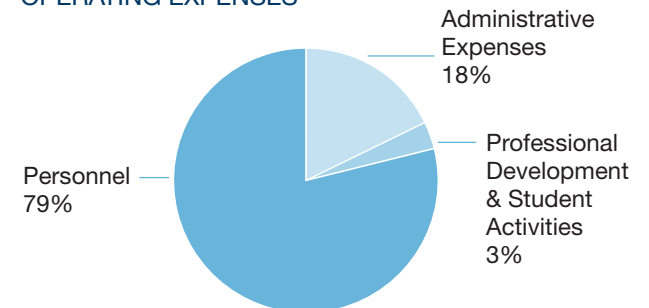
### TUITION

Early Childhood	\$ 9,756
Kindergarten	\$12,407
Grades 1 – 5	\$16,651
Middle School	\$18,621
High School	\$21,564

### FINANCIAL AID

Close to 60% of the student body at Robert M. Beren Academy benefits from our excellent program and curriculum because of our generous tuition assistance program. RMBA currently dedicates over \$1.6 million to scholarships.

### OPERATING EXPENSES





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## 4. CANDIDATE PROFILE

### COMMITMENT TO MISSION

The HOS will demonstrate commitment to and communication of the school's Hashkafa through general school policies, admissions policies, programing, hiring and halachic positions. He/she will share our belief in a dual secular and Jewish curriculum and will strive for excellence in both.

### EXPERIENCED EDUCATOR

The HOS will have a strong foundation and professional experience, preferably in education, including past teaching experience. The HOS will have the ability to implement professional development programs for teachers and staff.

### SKILLED SUPERVISOR

The HOS will have strong managerial acumen, providing a clear vision of excellence and guidance towards achieving it. He/she accepts responsibility for, and assesses, overall performance of principals and administrative staff and can ensure the principals' ability to supervise teachers and implement appropriate and effective education. He/she supports a positive work environment.

### EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNICATOR

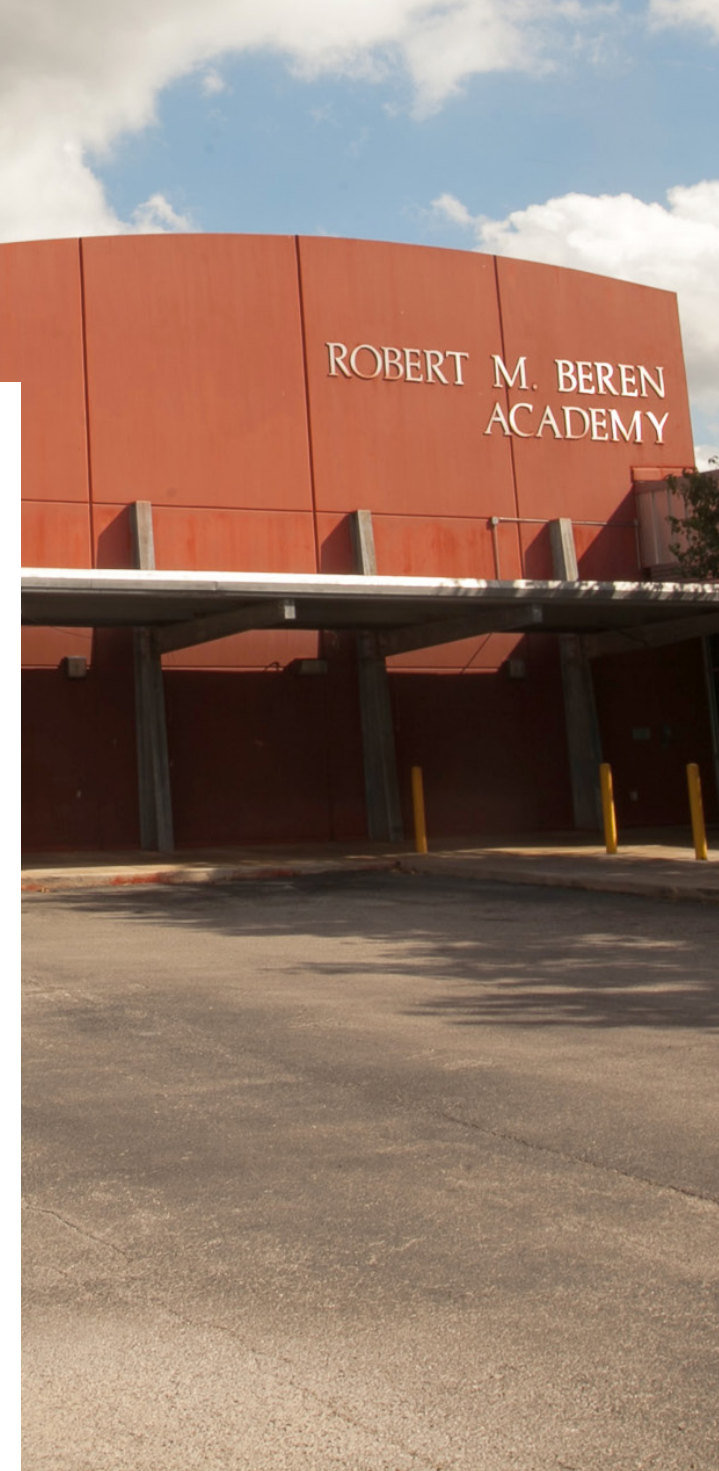
The HOS establishes and fosters personal relationships with faculty, staff, parents, students, alumni and other stakeholders. Ongoing and consistent communication via meetings, letters, emails and by phone is essential. He/she can establish a good rapport with the Board of Directors through transparent and open communication.

### COMMUNITY BUILDER

The HOS supports high functioning teams; he/she knows how to develop connections with faculty, staff, parents, students, donors and other educational and Jewish organizations throughout Houston. He/she is able to represent the school in a dynamic and positive light.

### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The HOS will have the ability to listen to others and gain their input before implementing change. He/she will have self-awareness; awareness of others' emotions and feelings; will develop and maintain working relationships with various internal and external parties; and will be decisive.





## 5. ACADEMIC PROFILE

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

We are passionate about helping our young children grow and learn by providing a nurturing environment that encourages them to actively explore and interact with their surroundings as they develop socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, creatively and spiritually. We maintain small group sizes, ideal adult-child ratios and ensure safe physical settings. Our staff is loving, attentive and responsive to the needs of each child. We strive to provide a meaningful Judaic backdrop that encompasses the celebration of Shabbat and Chaggim (holidays), the immersion of Ivrit (Hebrew) and the love of Limudei Kodesh (Judaic studies).



*Top: Each of our classrooms has at least one native Hebrew speaking teacher who enriches our students with Ivrit. We celebrate Shabbat every Friday. Our children enjoy a weekly Oneg Shabbat while taking turns being the Shabbat Aba and Ima.*





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### LOWER SCHOOL

RMBA's curriculum includes programs that have been nationally vetted and implemented across multiple school types in an effort to meet the needs of each child individually. Examples of these programs include: Columbia Reading Program; Collins Writing Program; Everyday Mathematics in grades 1-3 traditional; Go Math in grades 4 and 5 traditional. Our teachers participate in regular training and mentoring, giving them opportunities for personal and departmental growth. Our Limudei Kodesh and Ivrit classes are grade-specific and the curriculum includes TaL AM and Lehavin U'lehaskil.

Students enrolled in both Traditional and Montessori programs join together throughout the year for activities such as art, music, physical education, lunch, recess, field trips, plays, Oneg Shabbat, etc.

### TRADITIONAL PROGRAM

Our Traditional elementary program includes Kindergarten through 5th grade and offers a prepared learning environment that supports the academic, social and emotional development of each child. Educational standards align with and surpass Texas state standards, providing the opportunity for students to achieve their maximum level of academic excellence. Our instructional team consists of dedicated, creative and energetic educators who are committed to implementing best practices to ensure student success.

Small class sizes allow teachers to build a rapport with each student and determine each child's learning style. This creates an environment that is both challenging and supportive, as teachers differentiate in order to meet their needs. Teachers recognize that inspiring and supporting

students' abilities fosters academic success which leads to a lifelong love of learning.



*Lower school students work diligently preparing for the annual Torah Fair. Each student researches a variety of halachot, mitzvot or stories from Tanach.*



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## MONTESSORI PROGRAM

Offering a mixed-age group in a Montessori classroom promotes cooperation, peer tutoring and friendships of various ages. In a mixed-age group, the older children mentor the younger children, which allows the older children to expand their own academic and developmental skills. Younger children enthusiastically learn and are inspired/motivated by the older children. Eventually, the younger children become the leaders and role models. The interaction among the various age groups aids in communication, team building and leadership skills. Children are often found complimenting each other on their work instead of comparing their work. A teaching of the Rabbis says “Kol Yisroel Aravim Zeh La Zeh,” every Jew is responsible for the other. The mixed-age grouping gives a way of putting this very special mitzvah into practice.



*Going out on small group “field trips.” Going out guides the children in developing life skills that facilitate transition into the world as young adults. The children involved organize the event from start to completion. They use the resources of the community in preparation for the going out experience. They initiate research, set appointments and present their experience and findings to the class.*





## MIDDLE SCHOOL

Robert M. Beren Academy's educational program balances disciplines-based learning with child-centered inquiry. Academics are enhanced by a strong enrichment program and by myriad opportunities for students' self expression. The focus in middle school is on building textual skills. And, of course, our students continue developing their language skills in Ivrit. Block scheduling was introduced several years ago. The eighty-minute

blocks encourage collaborative peer-based learning and allows individualized teaching.

Starting in middle school and continuing through high school, all students are paired with a personal advisor. The Student Personal Advisor ("SPA") is a teacher or administrator that a student chooses. The student and SPA meet 2-3 times a week to discuss classes, peers, extracurricular activities, family – any subject that is on

the student's mind. The SPA will frequently attend the sports, drama or other events in which their student is engaged. The SPA's role is that of mentor, not friend. As such, they empower students to speak with teachers if they are struggling but unsure how to reach out, and are a safe and trusted place for each student to know they, individually, matter. We offer many extra-curricular activities such as a weekly Torah Café, student council, Middle School Retreat and in-school Shabbaton.



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## HIGH SCHOOL

Students attending Robert M. Beren Academy pursue an intensive dual curriculum of secular and Judaic studies (both regular and advanced classes are available). The secular studies enumerated in the school profile (which can be found on the school website under Academics) conform to the highest national standards for college preparation. The Judaic studies program consists of a sequential series of core courses, including intense study of Bible, Jewish Law and Philosophy. The combination of these two areas of study creates an atmosphere of academic excellence, which demands higher critical and analytical skills.

RMBA students are engaged in many extra curricular activities including: Model UN, AIPAC, Clubs, Student Council, High School Retreat and the annual play. Students complete 25 hours of community service each year.



*In their senior year, RMBA students travel to Israel to experience the country and learn more about the many Yeshiva and Seminary program options. It is a pivotal point in the students' high school career – strengthening bonds with fellow classmates and teachers. The majority of RMBA graduates spend a year learning in Israel.*





## LOVE OF ISRAEL

Our teachers serve as outstanding role models for our students in many areas, and Ahavat Eretz Yisrael (Love of Israel) is no exception. We are blessed to have Shlichim (emissaries) from Eretz Yisrael, who bring the Ruach (spirit) of Israel to our community. In addition, our Benot Sheirut (two college age Israeli women performing National Service) serve as Assistant Teachers in Lower School

Hebrew/Judaics and teach Torah, Hebrew, and Zionism throughout the school. Whether it is talking to the students about Israel, teaching them new songs, performing Parsha plays in Hebrew, or decorating the halls for each Jewish month, the Benot Sheirut are always engaging students in creative and entertaining new ways.





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## FACULTY

We are a faculty/staff of 68 individuals. One third of our staff has been employed for over five years; we make sure to keep our faculty fresh by bringing on new talent each year. Nearly 50% of the faculty have advanced degrees.

Our faculty strive to help each student discover and develop his or her own potential and to infuse them with a passion for Judaism, a love of the Jewish people and a lifetime commitment to Torah and Mitzvot.

Above all else, at Robert M. Beren Academy, we are a community. Our teachers love their students, believe in them and relate to them with warmth and care. Students are encouraged to develop in all areas and are empowered to become future leaders of the Jewish Community. Being a dual curriculum school, offering Traditional and Montessori programs, positively sets Robert M. Beren Academy apart from other Jewish Day Schools in the Houston area.





## 6. LIFE IN HOUSTON

- Houston is the fourth most populous city in the nation (trailing only New York, Los Angeles and Chicago) and is the largest in the southern U.S.
- Houston has a Theater District second only to New York City with its concentration of seats in one geographic area.
- Houston boasts more than 40 colleges, universities and institutions.
- Houston is home to the Texas Medical Center, the largest medical center in the world, with a local economic impact of \$10 billion. More than 52,000 people work within its facilities, which encompass 21 million square feet. Altogether 4.8 million patients visit each year.
- Houston ranks second in employment growth rate and fourth in nominal employment growth among the 10 most populous metro areas in the U.S.
- Home to more than 5,000 energy related firms, Houston is considered by many as the Energy Capital of the world.



- Houston's economy has a broad industrial base in the energy, aeronautics and technology industries: only New York City is home to more Fortune 500 headquarters.

Within this enormous metropolis, Houston offers a thriving Orthodox community, great lifestyle, affordable homes and the added perk of no state income tax!

There is no shortage of kosher food in Houston. Among the supermarkets there is fresh deli, a wide variety of meats and cheeses, freshly baked breads and bakery items, salads, burgers made on the spot and hot rotisserie grilled chickens, all of which can be taken home or enjoyed at eat-in areas (some supermarkets). The kosher restaurants include pizza, Israeli, vegetarian and an upscale steak and sushi establishment.

## 7. HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates are encouraged to contact RMBA's search consultant at Prizmah, Rabbi Maccabee Avishur. All inquiries will be kept confidential.

Please submit the following two documents:

- Current resume
- Cover letter indicating what you will contribute to Robert M. Beren Academy as its Head of School and why you are interested in this role

These materials should be sent via email to:  
**MaccabeeA@prizmah.org.**



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LEARN MORE ABOUT RMBA

[www.BerenAcademy.org](http://www.BerenAcademy.org)