

Rashi Students' Hands-On Experience Designed by HMFH Architects

Cambridge, MA - The Rashi School, the Boston area Reform Jewish day school, recently engaged sixth grade students in a month-long project to explore what Jewish sacred space is and how it can be represented architecturally. Invited professionals from HMFH Architects, Inc. in Cambridge were on hand to discuss the students' three-dimensional models of synagogues.

The synagogue architecture project is a study unit integrating curricular goals in mathematics, language arts, and Jewish studies. Students began by examining text from the Torah to understand cues for sacred physical space. They also visited three distinct synagogues Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox to recognize the diverse expressions of Jewish architecture. Taken together, these two experiences helped students gain inspiration for their own projects.

The culmination of the project is an actual critique of students' three-dimensional models inspired by their individual research. Melissa Greene, an architect from



*Melissa Greene reviews the three-dimensional synagogue created by Phil Butler of Newton.
Photos by Linda Silverstein, Rashi School*

HMFH Architects in Cambridge, Mass., was impressed with the quality of the students' work and depth of their understanding of architectural traditions and concepts.

Rashi is relocating to a new intergenerational campus on the Dedham/Needham line shared with Hebrew SeniorLife's New-Bridge on the Charles community. Rashi's students in grades K-8 will begin the school year there in the fall of 2010. Greene, project architect for the new school, is responsible for construction documents focused on exterior details, construction administration, and color direction for interior finishes.

The 82,000sf new school, designed by HMFH Architects, Inc. for high performance sustainability, is located on a 166-acre campus overlooking the Charles River. The building is expected to earn LEED Silver for Schools certification upon completion.



Melissa Greene reviews the three-dimensional synagogue created by Adin Insoft of Newton.