



Temple Beth El Religious School Parent Handbook

Wherever children are learning, there dwells the Divine Presence. *Yiddish Proverb*

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SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY/FAMILY PARTICIPATION

The curriculum of our school is based on the premise that we who call ourselves Reform Jews should be proud of our heritage as Jews, as well as, the unique perspectives of the Reform movement. We nurture the self-esteem of all of our students, as individuals, members of families, communities, our nation, and as Reform Jews and part of the Jewish people.

We want our students to enjoy coming to Religious School and to enjoy being Jewish. Our teachers are chosen because they are good role models and adults who value and cherish their own Jewish identity. Students learn not only facts and tangible subject matter, but also have the chance to explore their values, identities and feelings. One of our chief objectives is to help students learn to celebrate their Jewish identity.

We believe that religious education is a family affair. The best way to motivate and encourage your child/children to get the most out of their religious education is to become involved yourself. Temple Beth El provides many opportunities for individual growth and family participation throughout the school year. Included are: family programs, Shabbat services, Congregational Shabbat morning learning opportunities, brunch and services once a month, adult education programs and holiday programs. Each grade will host a Shabbat brunch. Please check the school calendar for your child/children's class Shabbat date.

WHERE AND WHEN

Our Religious School meets on scheduled Sundays. Families with students in kindergarten through sixth grade have a choice of an early session that meets from 8:30 to 10:30 am or a late session that meets from 11:00 to 1:00 pm. All seventh grade, Sheva (the Hebrew number seven), students meet on selected Saturday mornings (see Religious School calendar). In addition, students in grades three through seven attend Religious School classes on either Monday or Wednesday from 4:45 - 6:15 pm. Students who live farther than 20 miles from Shalom Park are eligible to attend the Sunday Hebrew Option. Students in grades eight through twelve may participate in The Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies, which meets on Wednesday evenings.

IMPORTANT CARPOOL INFORMATION

The following is an excerpt from The Voice and was written by Cantor Bernard. Please read carefully and take the message to heart.

Why do so many parents allow their own impatience to put the lives of their own children and the children of others in jeopardy?

The entire (carpool) procedure takes about 10 minutes. Pedestrian traffic alternates with advancing the car line. Drivers are not allowed to be talking on cell phones as they approach the building. These measures are taken to ensure the safety of the children.

I've seen parents near the back of the line tell their children to weave in and out of the cars so that they don't have to wait. While they are loading their child into the car, they hold up everyone behind them. Then they bypass the cars in front of the building while parents and children are in the crosswalk. Parents ask their

children to cross the parking lot alone so they don't have to walk all the way over to the building entrance to fetch them. And don't get me started about the people with cell phones....

Each of these situations puts the children in danger. With so many large vehicles in the line, it is difficult to see the children as they maneuver between cars. This problem becomes even more dangerous when daylight savings time ends and it is dark at 6:15 pm.

Why does this upset me so much? First of all, I spend six hours a week serving as a volunteer chaplain on the pediatric unit at CMC. I spend most of my time in the pediatric ICU and the acute care unit. I see children who are "broken" from one kind of motor vehicle accident or another. Twice a week I see the result of that "remote chance" that something bad could happen. And for what? To get home three minutes sooner?

Even more, it says something about commitment to community. Judaism emphasizes our responsibility to the community. Being part of a community, however, means sacrificing some personal convenience for the greater good.

PICK UP PROCEDURES

The carpool procedures are designed to keep your children safe. All families must abide by these procedures. The school cannot be responsible for having children cross the street to meet you, venture through the other buildings to find you or leave school unattended. This is the same policy as any responsible school or camp. Do not put your child/children in the position of having to stay in the office until you can be reached to come and get them. We will not let any child leave school unattended.

As you enter Shalom Park, from Providence Road, please turn right towards Temple Beth El. Make an immediate right into the Temple Beth El driveway circle the Temple parking lot and form a line in front of the Bernstein Education building. Parents may park in the parking lot and pick-up their child/children at the sidewalk. No student will be allowed to cross the driveway to meet parents in the parking lot. IT IS TOO DANGEROUS. Please be courteous to the Shalom Park security staff. They are doing a fine job helping to direct traffic in order to keep our students safe.

Drivers may not be on their cell phones once the pick-up procedure has begun. If you must take a call, please leave the carpool line and park your car until you are finished.

Release of Students: If your child is being picked up by anyone other than parents or their usual carpool notify the office by phone or in writing. If a student is needed for an early dismissal they will be released with a call or note from parents to the school office and may be picked up in the office. No parent is permitted to get their child from class without checking with the office first. Parents should not pick student up from class. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILDREN.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Medical Release: All parents are required to fill out the medical release information on our Religious School registration form. If you did not fill out this part of your registration form, you must stop by the Religious School office and complete the form.

Medication: If your child/children need medication during school hours you should bring the medication and written instructions to the office and the medication will be administered from the school office. If your child/children needs emergency medications stored at school you must provide written instructions for the teachers.

IMPORTANT: TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL IS A "NUT FREE" SCHOOL. PLEASE DO NOT SEND SNACKS THAT CONTAIN NUT PRODUCTS WITH YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN TO SCHOOL. THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO EAT THEM IN CLASS. THE CONCESSION STAND DOES NOT SELL SNACKS CONTAINING ANY KIND OF NUTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

IMPORTANT! If your child is sick do not send them to school. It is vital that we make every attempt to keep our students healthy. If your child has a cough or shows signs of illness, you will be asked to come and get them. This is for the safety of our students.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parents should expect to receive regular communication from their student's teachers during the school year. This could be in the form of phone calls, emails or conferences. If you are not currently on the Temple email list, please email info@templebethel.org and request to be added. Parents will also be updated frequently by the Religious School office. If your email address changes during the school year, please remember to email the school office with the current information. In case of any kind of emergency or school closing, all families will be notified by email.

ED ALERT – EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

All families should opt in to our emergency Ed Alert notification system. This will allow you to receive a text and an email if there is an emergency, schedule change or school closing. Please click the link and complete the short form to be added. <http://www.myschoolpages.com/schools/templebethel/>

ATTENDANCE ☆ TEXTBOOKS ☆ TZEDAKAH

Students should attend school regularly. Students with excessive absences will be expected to make up work missed and arrange for tutoring if necessary. Students who miss 25% of their classes may not be eligible to receive a B'nei Mitzvah date or may be in jeopardy of losing their previously assigned date.

Textbooks are provided by the school. Workbooks become the property of the student. If books are lost there will be a charge to the student for replacement. All fourth through sixth graders are expected to bring their personal copies of the Mishkan T'filah prayer book to class. Third grade students will receive their books at the third grade Shabbat brunch. Fourth through sixth grade students, new to the school, are entitled to a prayer book and should request a copy in the school office.

Tzedakah is collected from all students in all grades each week. The individual classes will determine what organizations will benefit from these funds. Students are encouraged to "earn" their tzedakah money so that they feel the full impact of giving. The amount is not important; the habit is. Please do not forget to send your child/children with something to contribute.

PHILOSOPHY: GOALS OF REFORM JEWISH EDUCATION

Temple Beth El is a Reform Jewish Congregation, affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism. We embrace the "Goals of Reform Jewish Education" of the URJ.

We strive to educate our children to become:

- ☆ Jews who affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves inseparably to their people by word and deed.
- ☆ Jews who bear witness to the Brit (the covenant between God and the Jewish People) through the practice of Mitzvot (commandments) as studied in Torah and the classic Jewish literature it has generated, and interpreted in light of historic development and contemporary liberal thought.
- ☆ Jews who affirm their historic bond to Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel.
- ☆ Jews who cherish and study Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people.
- ☆ Jews who value and practice T'filah (prayer).
- ☆ Jews who further the causes of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing Tzedakah (righteousness), Mishpat (justice) and Chesed (loving deeds).
- ☆ Jews who celebrate Shabbat and the festivals, and observe the Jewish ceremonies marking the significant occasions in their lives.
- ☆ Jews who esteem their own person and the person of others; their own family and the family of others; their own community and community of others.
- ☆ Jews who express kinship with Klal Yisrael by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world.
- ☆ Jews who support and participate in the life of the synagogue.

2016-2017 CURRICULUM

Temple Beth El Religious School incorporates the **URJ Chai Curriculum** as part of our comprehensive approach to Jewish Education.

KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

Giborim – Mensches in Training

Main Topics of study: Heroes, Holidays in the Home

Heroes – Who are some Jewish heroes? What makes them a hero? What did they do that I can do in my life?

Who are some Biblical heroes? Who are some modern heroes? Mensches-in-Training – What is a mensch?

What mitzvot can I do to become a mensch? Holidays – Who are the heroes associated with each holiday?

FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM

Sofrim – Writers of the Torah

Main Topics of study: Torah, Israel, Holidays

Torah – What is our history from Genesis through Deuteronomy? What does the Torah teach us about being Jewish? Why is the Torah important to the Jewish people? Holidays – How does the Torah tell us to celebrate the holidays? Which Bible stories are connected with the holiday we are celebrating?

SECOND GRADE CURRICULUM

Chaverim – Friends

Main Topics of study: Exodus, Community, God

Torah—How did the Israelites become a community? How can we use the lessons in the Torah to live better lives? Synagogue—How does the Torah make our synagogue a holy place? How do we become a part of our synagogue community? How does our community pray? God—How does our community view God? Holidays—How do we celebrate the holidays as a community? What is the connection between the holiday and God? How do we talk to God?

THIRD GRADE CURRICULUM

Tzadikim – Righteous Ones

Main Topics of study: Jewish Values, Jewish Life Cycle, Hebrew

Values – What are some of the Jewish values? What are the Hebrew words for those values? How can we bring those values into our lives? Life Cycle – What are the Jewish life cycle events? What are the Jewish values associated with each life cycle event? Holidays – What are the Jewish values associated with each holiday?

Introduction to Hebrew language –Alef-Bet and basic Brachot (blessings).

FOURTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Neviim – Prophets

Main Topics of study: Prophets, God, Personal Prayerbooks

Prophets – Who are the prophets? When did they live? What did they teach? How do their teachings apply to life today? God – Where do we see God in the world? What does God teach us about living our lives? Beginning Hebrew prayers.

FIFTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Shoreshim – Connecting to our Roots

Main Topics of study: Jewish history through a study of notable personalities and events

History – How did history create the Judaism we know today? What are the roots of the Reform movement and how has it changed? What did each person contribute to history? What qualities did these people give to the Jewish people? What part of their life can we relate to and learn from? Holidays – What point in history did each holiday emerge? What was the original purpose of the holiday? Comparative Religion- Introduction to Christianity and Islam. Study of Hebrew prayer continues.

SIXTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Chalutzim – Pioneers

Main Topics of study: Holocaust and Israel

Israel – What is our personal connection to Israel? What makes Israel unique? What is our historical relationship to Israel? What are the conflicts there? What are our hopes and dreams for the land? Holocaust – How did Jews both in Europe and around the world react to the Holocaust? How did the Holocaust change the Jewish people in Israel and in the Diaspora? Study of Hebrew prayer continues and introduction to Torah trope.

SHEVA-SEVENTH GRADE CURRICULUM

Hineini – Here I am

Sheva represents the beginning of your child's journey into Jewish young adulthood. Learning and exploring with Rabbi Klass and Sam Swire, the Director of Youth Engagement students will dive into the tapestry of Jewish history and wisdom as a way to plot new discussions and experiences in creativity, prayer, and thought. From Biblical stories to Israel today, from the prayer book to experientials, from visual art to video creations and tending our new Shalom Green garden – all of Judaism will serve as a resource to help students create their own unique Jewish identities.

SPECIALTIES AND T'FILAH

All grades have the opportunity to participate in several special class programs throughout the school year, such as, grade experientials, drama, technology, music and art. This year students will be able to participate in the Shalom Green Environmental Initiative and work in the community garden. Kindergarten through second grade will attend t'filah (prayer service) each Sunday morning. Third through seventh grade students attend t'filah every other Hebrew week from 5:45-6:15pm. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend t'filah with their child/children whenever they choose. Several times during the year all the students will attend assemblies, experiential events, or other learning opportunities.

TIKVAH CHARLOTTE

Tikvah Charlotte is a consolidated special needs religious school program between Temple Beth El, Temple Israel and The Consolidated Hebrew High School of Jewish Studies. This program provides individual and group learning in Hebrew and Judaica and is geared for students who have unique learning styles that cannot be accommodated in a traditional class environment. Please contact Susan Jacobs if you are interested in information at sjacobs@templebethel.org.

GRADE LEVEL SHABBAT BRUNCH AND COMMUNITY SHABBAT SERVICE

Each grade will be assigned a special Shabbat service date during the year to participate in services, enjoy a delicious Shabbat brunch and sing Shabbat songs during brunch and services. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other families and share a special Shabbat together.

CONCESSION STAND

The Temple Beth El Religious School concession stand will operate between sessions on Sunday mornings and before Religious School classes on Monday and Wednesday. Most items are \$.50 and there are healthy snacks and water, as well as, candy and soda. Please discuss with your child/children about the choices you would like them to make regarding snacks. The school cannot be responsible for the choices they make. All parents are welcome to come in and supervise their child/children's purchases. **IMPORTANT: TEMPLE BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL IS A "NUT FREE" SCHOOL. PLEASE DO NOT SEND SNACKS THAT CONTAIN PEANUT OR NUT PRODUCTS WITH YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN TO SCHOOL. THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO EAT THEM IN CLASS. THE CONCESSION STAND DOES NOT SELL SNACKS CONTAINING ANY KIND OF NUTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.** All proceeds from the concession stand are used to support the school.

BEYOND RELIGIOUS SCHOOL - B'nei Mitzvah & The Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies

To be a candidate for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, a student is required **to complete four years of Judaic and Hebrew classes**. In addition, the student must attend classes in the Religious School for the entire academic year of the ceremony.

The Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies of Charlotte is a joint venture of Temple Beth El and Temple Israel. It is the primary institution of higher learning in our community for teenagers in grades 8-12. After three years of study in the Consolidated High School, a student will be Confirmed at the end of the tenth grade. The ceremony marks the end of an intensive year of study with the clergy and the beginning of a life-long commitment to the study and practice of Judaism. For information or to enroll your student, contact the Director, Roz Cooper, at 704-944-6782.

MADRICHIM

Upon entering the eighth grade, students are encouraged to return as Madrichim (teacher's aides). Their role is vital to the success of our school. They will work with our faculty serving as role models for the younger children. Madrichim may work in the Religious School and/or in B'nei Mitzvah training. Students in the 8th-10th grades who are actively attending the Consolidated High School and 11th & 12th graders, who are either enrolled in Consolidated High School or are actively participating in LIBERTY or any other Jewish youth group, are invited to apply for positions.

YOUTH GROUPS

We welcome your children at our fun, and exciting youth group programs and events. All Religious School students are members of TBE's fabulous youth groups and all may take full advantage of everything we have going on this year. We offer groups for every grade: KatanTY K1, KatanTY 23, KatanTY 45, and LIBERTY 67. For more information contact, Sam Swire, Director of Youth Engagement at sswire@templebethel.org.