

קהילת בית שלום

Temple Beth Shalom
Hebrew School
Handbook

2010-2011
5771

Carol Zager
Director of Education
Eytan Hammerman
Rabbi
Jeffrey Guest
School Board Chair

760 Route 6
Mahopac, NY 10541
Tel (845) 628-6133 Fax (845) 628-1730
School@TBSMahopac.org
www.tbsmahopac.org

Temple Beth Shalom

RABBI

GOALS OF THE TBS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The School Board of Temple Beth Shalom affirms that the strength and welfare of the Jewish people and the Congregation are inextricably bound to the Jewish education of our people. We believe that our school program should educate and equip our children to have a love of Judaism that will enrich their lives through adulthood.

We strive:

- ◆ To imbue the students with love of God and trust in God's goodness.
- ◆ To provide opportunities for the child to develop spiritual and ethical sensitivity through curricular experiences.
- ◆ To foster a positive Jewish identity within the student.
- ◆ To integrate the student's Jewish experiences with those of the synagogue community.
- ◆ To develop basic Jewish literacy, including the study of Hebrew, Siddur skills, Torah, Jewish history, and observance of important Jewish rituals and holidays.
- ◆ To provide experiences and develop skills in Jewish prayer, personal religious thought and creative spiritual expression.
- ◆ To emphasize the concept of *mitzvah* as a basis for Jewish belief and action.
- ◆ To provide focused opportunities for family involvement to enhance and encourage independent Jewish family life.
- ◆ To create an appreciation of lifelong Torah study as a vital link to our tradition.
- ◆ To develop a kinship with *K'lal Yisrael*, the world Jewish community, by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world and affirm our historical bond to *Eretz Yisrael*, the State of Israel.

Overview of the Hebrew School Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Ten Goals of the Temple Beth Shalom Education Program listed previously. It is a spiraling curriculum allowing several topics to “spiral” through the grades, growing in complexity as students mature.

DON'T MISS THIS GREAT PROGRAM FOR OUR YOUNG ONES -

Mishpachah is a monthly program designed for preschoolers and their families to become familiar with holiday rituals and begin instilling a Jewish identity. Songs, crafts and stories entice the youngest of our community along with our ***monthly Tot Shabbat program.***

Primary Grades

Students in grades *Gan, Geshet & Mechina* begin to develop skills and awareness of the holiday cycle, synagogue ritual, Jewish values & ethics, torah study and begin a program of Hebrew Reading Readiness. Gan class will meet Sunday mornings from 9:00 - 11:00AM. Geshet/Mechina will meet Wednesday afternoons from 4:15 - 6:30PM.

A full curriculum outline is found on the next page and on-line.

Departmental services, time in our resource center, arts and crafts, and Family Education Programs enhance classroom studies.

Hebrew School

Students in grades Alef through Hey begin an integrated Hebrew and Judaica curriculum. Hebrew Judaic studies are taught both on Sunday (9:00 AM – 12:15 PM) and Wednesday (4:15 PM – 6:30 PM) sessions of Hebrew School. Gimmel, Dalet, and Hey will be taught by subject matter teachers.

Students become conversant with the order of the worship service and the meaning of prayers, study lifecycle events for historical development and personal meaning, explore the weekly Torah portions and grapple with ethical dilemmas in a Jewish context.

A full curriculum outline is found on the next page and on-line.

Departmental services, time in our resource center, arts and crafts, and Family Education Programs enhance classroom studies.

TBS Gedolim

Cooking and Conversation with Rabbi Hammerman, our newly designed post b'nai mitzah class will meet twice a month from 6:30—8:15. The students along with Rabbi Hammerman will prepare dinner and then engage in a discussion on timely and interesting topics.

The Hebrew/*T'fillah* Curriculum

Years of Hebrew School education have taught us that though we have come a long way, we still have a way to go when it comes to effective language acquisition techniques. The majority of time we have spent in class with our students is focused on decoding (phonetics and reading comprehension). However, at the culmination of Hebrew School we expect that our students will know a quantity of *t'fillah* as both songs and chanted prayers, not as individual syllables or even a limited understanding of the vocabulary. A portion of the students' time each class will be spent on decoding and reading activities. These will range from traditional work from a text, to holiday and event-specific games and activities.

Gan

Ma Tovu
Shema
MiChamocho
Oseh Shalom
Shabbat blessings
Rom' mu

Gesher

all above plus

Psalm 150
Hinei matov
V'shamru

Mechina

All above plus

Tzadik K'tamar
Barechu
Yotzer Or
Amida/avot
Shalom Aleichem
Lecha dodim

Aleph

All above plus

Birchot HaShachar
V'ahavtah
Ma'ariv Arvim

Bet

All above plus

Ahavah rabbah
Amidah/kedushah
Ahavat olam

Gimmel

All above plus

Hatzi kaddish
Torah service
Torah Brachot
Havdallah blessings

Dalet

All above plus

Vayechulu
Reader's repetition
Birchat hamazon(1st paragraph)

Hey

All above plus

Kaddish shalem
Ashrei
Kiddush

Additional:

El Adon
Amidah/repetition

A Holy Partnership

Jewish education is a partnership. It is a unique and holy relationship between home and school, between parents, children and teachers. We believe that the synagogue and school are both important aspects of a child's Jewish learning experience.

In our school, we will do our part to make our educational program the best it can be. Parents will receive from teachers a letter of welcome and introduction before the start of the school year. This letter will include general goals, outline special projects for the year and delineate the teacher's expectations of the student. Teachers will continue throughout the year to communicate with families. Midyear and year-end report cards are another way of letting parents know what is happening with the children.

Another aspect of a child's Jewish education is the home - perhaps the most central and influential arena in a child's development as a Jewish individual. As Rabbi Morrison Bial states in his book *Your Jewish Child*:

Your home will be the single most important influence in the Jewish upbringing and fundamental Jewish education of your child. From earliest times, Judaism has been based on the supposition that the home is the foundation of our religion.

The skills and appreciations students learn in school must be practiced in the home or they will have little or no meaning for the child. We, therefore, encourage observances, discussions, learning experiences and celebration of Jewish life with family and friends at home. Through consistent communication, parent participation and education, and promotion of observance and learning at home, we hope to develop a true home-school partnership. Together we can fulfill the mitzvah of "*v'shinantam l'vanekha* - you shall teach them to your children."

To help complete this partnership, parents can take cues from the school's information and follow up appropriately with their child(ren). When parents know that a particular item was required for class, they can ask specifically how that object was used during that class. When a holiday is approaching, parents can check for the particulars that are being learned and ask what the child can do at home for the upcoming celebration. When asked to participate in a class project, enthusiastic involvement from parents will mean a great deal to the child - making him or her feel that Hebrew School and the things learned here are valuable.

Below are some suggested questions parents could ask children at the end of the school day:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✧ What was the funniest thing that happened in school? | ✧ What story did you read in the Bible today? |
| ✧ What project did you do today? | ✧ How would you have changed the ending? |
| ✧ What question did you ask today? | ✧ Tell me 3 different ideas you talked about in class today. |
| ✧ What question did your friend ask today? | ✧ Let's read one of your Hebrew pages together. |
| ✧ With whom did you sit today? | ✧ Tell me three different things you did today. |
| ✧ What does that prayer mean to you? | ✧ Show me what pages you read in school today. |
| ✧ What was your favorite part of class today? | ✧ Teach me something you learned today. |

Appropriate Shabbat Dress

Whenever children are called upon to lead our congregation in worship or participate in *t'fillah* in any way from the *bimah*, they should dress to reflect the joy as well as the significance of the occasion. **Girls are asked to wear dresses or skirts (please consider modesty regarding length)slack are acceptable, and their shoulders should be covered at all times while in the sanctuary. Boys are to wear slacks and shirts with collars.** In particular, shorts, jeans, overalls, ripped clothing, sports shoes and the like are not appropriate to the worship experience and do not manifest the spirit of Shabbat we wish to attain. Boys should wear *kipot* at all times while in the sanctuary, this is optional for girls.

SHABBAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE

The weekly observance of Shabbat is the place where our tradition is most readily accessible to our students. Attendance at Shabbat services affords students the opportunity to demonstrate and apply what they have learned, live Jewish life in a real and tangible way, take pride in their accomplishments and become involved with their family in the life of the congregation.

Students in Aleph through Dalet, *together with their parents*, are **REQUIRED TO ATTEND 10 SHABBAT SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE HEBREW SCHOOL YEAR.**

At least half of these must be at TBS. Monthly Family Services and Jr. Congregation are excellent ways to meet these requirements. You and your children are always welcome to attend regular Shabbat services as well. Reports on each attendance will be submitted to Carol Zager to monitor and assess child and family involvement in this program. Incentives will be awarded at various stages of this year-long project for the class with the best attendance.

The Friday night Shabbat Dinners are schoolwide events and open to everyone

A Family service follows at 7:00 PM and students will be asked to participate in the service. When you are notified of the details of your child's class dinner, please RSVP promptly. This is a mandatory event for each family of our Hebrew School and notification of the date and time will be sent home well ahead of the event as well as being listed below.

Hey Class Lunch and Learn sessions

Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30 AM, parents and students are expected to arrive by 10:00. There will be a study session and luncheon following services and will conclude by 1:30 PM. This is also a mandatory event for each family of our Hebrew School and notification of the date and time will be sent home well ahead of the event.

Special Grade Programs

Family Events

Family Services

As in the past, each grade of the Hebrew School is required to participate in a Shabbat experience. Some classes will be involved with Kabbalat Shabbat, while others will be participating in Shabbat morning services. Students will be prepared to conduct part of the service or add to our worship in some meaningful way.

Specific details and information about each class' participation will be sent home within the month prior to the actual service. We will combine class dinners in order to reduce the costs for everyone over the course of the year.

Class led service/school wide dinners

Gesher/Mechina — Friday January 21, 2011

Bet/Gimmel — Friday December 17, 2010

Aleph/Hey — Friday May 13, 2011

Dalet—Saturday March 5, 2011

Family Education Days

Learning should not be left only to the children. It is an essential value of the Jewish religion, and therefore its people, to continue our education throughout our lives. To that end, as well as to set a good example for our children and most importantly to create lasting and meaningful memories for the whole family. There will be two school wide family education events with specially designed age-appropriate activities. In order to insure the success of the program at least one parent attend with their child on these days. Notices will be sent home well in advance of the Family Education Day requesting your participation in this great morning. Please make every effort to be there. If you are unable to attend, your child will be placed with another family.

“Administrivia”

Dress Code

We expect all students to dress in a manner appropriate to a synagogue. If students are participating in team sports immediately prior to or after Hebrew school, uniforms will be allowed. However, hats, cleats and in-line skates are not to be worn at all during Hebrew School by anyone. Shoes must be worn at all times. Under no circumstances shall a person's underwear or bra be revealed or uncovered. **The shoulders of young women should be covered as they enter the *beit K'neset* and the head of each boy should be covered with a *kippah*. (It is optional for young women to wear *kippot*.)**

Materials

Your child will receive schoolbooks as part of your book fee. The books will be sent home at the end of the school year. We hope that they will help you build a Jewish home library. Books should be covered, labeled with the child's name and cared for as special objects. Please check to make sure your child is prepared for each class with their folder, a pen or pencil, and markers and glue.

Traffic

For the safety of our children, we ask parents to carefully observe all standard traffic regulations:

- ◆ Do not park in a Handicap Space unless you have a placard legally stating your right to do so.
- ◆ Please do not block the residential driveways or double park on Croton Falls Road.
- ◆ **Do not drop off or pick up children on the south side of Croton Falls Road, across from our main doors. It is extremely dangerous for children to cross that street!**
- ◆ Please drop off children through the main entrance not the back door. The back door, especially on Wednesdays, will be locked for security.

The Carmel police has issued a STRONG WARNING about traffic regulations. They WILL issue citations. Please TAKE CARE of our children and OBEY all traffic laws.

Pickup

On Wednesday evenings we will continue the pick-up line which will begin near the garage in the parking lot and wind its way down the side of the building to Croton Falls Rd. Please try and help us make this work... it will be more convenient for everyone and is a wonderful way to ensure your children's safety!

Hebrew School staff and parent volunteers will wait for all children to be picked up from the synagogue. Please respect the time and commitment of the school staff as they wait with your children. Let us know if you expect to be late. No child will be left at school unattended!

Promptness

Being on time is important. Please make certain children are in class and ready for school in a timely manner. Late arrival to class is often a contributing factor to difficulties in class. Also, please pick up children promptly, particularly in the evening.

Reporting Procedures and Parent Conferences

Teachers will report to you about your child's progress twice a year - in January and in June. In addition, if, in the school's estimation, your child is not performing at the school's expectation, you will also be notified by mid November and mid March. There will be an opportunity for you to discuss the reports with the teacher during privately scheduled conferences.

Religious Education Policies of Temple Beth Shalom

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

As part of the educational program of the Hebrew School of TBS, the honor of celebrating becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah is offered to those students who qualify. It is traditional for the ceremony to take place any time after the young person's thirteenth birthday.

The Board of Directors, the Rabbi, the Ritual Committee and the School Board have established the following requirements:

- ◆ The candidate for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony must be Jewish.
- ◆ The family must have been a member of this synagogue for at least two years prior to the ceremony unless approved by the B'nai Mitzvah Committee.
- ◆ The child must have attended and satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses in Hebrew School at TBS or an equivalent institution for at least five years immediately preceding the ceremony. The Rabbi and the B'nai Mitzvah Committee, providing the academic requirements are not compromised, will consider exceptions on an individual basis.
- ◆ The child is expected to attend Hebrew School during the year of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony in accordance with the Hebrew School Attendance Requirements delineated below - this specifically refers to completing the academic year in which the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony takes place.

Both **parents and students** are **REQUIRED TO** attend a **MINIMUM OF FIFTEEN** Saturday Morning Shabbat services during the year preceding the ceremony (at least 10 of which need to be at TBS). **NEW******

They must also attend a minimum of 5 Friday evening services.

Please refer to the TBS Bar/Bat Mitzvah handbook for all rules, regulations & requirements.

Attendance

Students in Hebrew School must be in attendance 75% of the time:

25 of 33 Wednesday afternoon sessions;

21 of 28 Sunday morning sessions;

After two consecutive absences, parents will be notified, and your child will have to satisfactorily complete make-up work to compensate for missed class sessions.

Continued absences will require your child to be tutored at your expense.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in failure to promote your child to the next grade or delay of Bar Mitzvah

Excessive tardiness or early departure (consisting of 2 or more tardy arrivals) will be treated as an absence.

Promotion

Promotion to the next grade is based on documentation that the student has successfully demonstrated mastery of the required material for his or her grade level. This decision rests jointly with the classroom teacher and the Educational Director.

Students who need to do additional work for promotion will be assigned appropriate activities or projects. Promotion will be dependent on satisfactory completion of the assignment(s).

Classroom Visits

We are delighted to have you visit your student's class during the school year. However, to avoid unscheduled interruptions or other disruptions of the school routine, we require advance notification of a visit. To arrange such a visit, please call the school office to set up a specific time and date. When you arrive at the building, please check in with the Education Director, who will escort you to the class.

Please be aware that we have instructed all teaching staff to request written authorization from the Education Director, before allowing an adult to visit the class.

At a time of heightened awareness of security issues, this policy will be strictly enforced throughout the school year.

Please note: This is not a time for a conference. Make arrangements apart from class time for a conference if needed.

We are also aware that once in a while, a friend might want to come to Hebrew School. This must be pre-approved by the Director of Education, no exceptions will be made!

Early Release

For your child's security, if he or she needs to leave Hebrew School early, parents must send a note to the school stating the time of release and the adult who will meet the student at that appointed early time. The student should present the note to the Education Director, wait for approval and then give the note to his/her teacher.

The adult should pick up the child at his/her classroom at the appointed early dismissal time.

No child will be allowed to leave the synagogue grounds unless written notice is received, the Education Director gives approval and an adult is present at the classroom to collect the child.

At a time of heightened awareness of security issues, this policy will strictly be enforced throughout the school year. Written notes must be delivered and signed in accordance with the above procedure and adults must meet children at the classroom door...

NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE!

Snacks

During each Hebrew School day, there is a brief break/recess. We will collect a nominal \$5.00 fee at the beginning of the year and provide a light nutritious snack each day. If children would like a bit more to eat during their break, they may bring from home a small amount of food in accordance with the *kashrut* guidelines of Temple Beth Shalom. The food must be sealed in its original packaging.

Commercially prepared foods must have a *heksher* - kosher certification - visible on the package label. Food prepared in home kitchens are NOT to be brought into our building. Below is a list of various kosher symbols found on packaged food. This is not a complete list; check with Rabbi Zucker or Carol Zager if you have any questions.



Communication



A vital aspect of our community and a pillar of quality education is communication between parents and faculty. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to keep the lines of communication open. We recognize that you know your children best and can help us to provide the most advantageous learning opportunities. Teachers will be happy to set aside a time to meet with you privately, by phone, or in person to discuss any concerns or problems you might have. Stopping teachers in the hallway immediately before or after classes or in the parking lot is not conducive to a meaningful dialogue. We will employ several methods of communication with families:

1. A monthly newsletter with class updates and specialized articles
2. Mail and email notification of upcoming events
3. Parent/teacher conferences
4. An open invitation for dialogue

School Closing

In the event that school must be closed due to weather or such, check the synagogue voice mail system (845) 628-6133 x11 for the most up-to-date information or listen to WHUD radio. Please also check email for updates. As we are an afternoon school, we will NOT automatically follow Mahopac school closings for inclement weather!

Parent Teacher Conferences

In January and February, 2011, we will schedule special times for teachers and parents to meet to discuss their children's progress and achievement in our school. On successive days, after school hours on Sundays and Wednesdays, parents can sign up for a time to meet with each teacher and receive their child(ren)'s midyear Progress Report.



Back to School Program

An important part of our year is Back-to-School program. This is an excellent opportunity to hear about our curriculum and learning opportunities, meet your child's teacher (without your child), learn what the upcoming year has in store for your family and meet all the other families in your child's class.

Please be with us on:

***Sunday September 12
The first day of school!!!***

Standards of Behavior

Philosophy

The School Board of Temple Beth Shalom feels that each individual should have the following rights:

- 1) The right to learn without interference from other people in the school or class.
- 2) The right to work together as students and teachers in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.
- 3) The right to have one's personal property respected by others.
- 4) The right to be protected from physical harm.

Expectations of Behavior

- 1) Students will be ready to participate in class activities
- 2) Students will not disrupt any other student's participation in class activities.
- 3) Students will not touch other students in a manner that would be considered offensive or disruptive, or use language that would be considered offensive or disruptive.
- 4) Students will not mistreat the property of TBS or of other students.
- 5) Students will behave in accordance with the sanctity of our *Beit K'nesset* (Sanctuary) at all times when they are within it. Items such as skateboards, in-line skates or sport cleats will not be permitted in the sanctuary at any time for any reason.
- 6) Students are to remain on campus at all times from the time they are dropped off until the time they are picked up. Help us by making sure your student goes directly into the school office or his/her classroom. If a student is discovered leaving the campus or missing, parents will be notified immediately.

In order to ensure these expectations are achieved, the following will be enforced:

- Classroom standards will be established by each teacher and students on the first day of school and mailed home.
- The *Brit Ha-Kittah* (Classroom Covenant) is to be signed by the student and parents and returned to the teacher at the next school session.
- The following are prohibited at all times: Defiance, Stealing, Vandalism, Dishonesty, Profanity and Vulgarity, Fighting, Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco.

Procedures

- 1) If there are consistent violations of the *Brit Ha-Kittah* (Classroom Covenant), the teacher will conference with the student.
- 2) If infractions continue, the Education Director will conference with the teacher and the student.
- 3) If there are further problems, the parents will be called for a conference with the teacher, Education Director and/or Rabbi and student to determine further action, which may include the following:
 - Parents on the premises during school hours
 - Isolation of student within the school setting away from the class
 - Suspension for a period of time with satisfactory completion of homework/study assignments
 - Any mutually agreed-upon arrangements by parents, student & TBS personnel at conference

If your student is suspended from Hebrew School, the School Board will monitor actions of all suspended students to determine whether readmission is possible after the prescribed time.

Severe Clause: In the case of extreme or unusual circumstances, the foregoing sequence may be suspended and action may be taken at the Education Director's/Rabbi's/School Board's discretion.

ACHARON, ACHARON HAVIV...

“THE LOOSE ENDS”

Tfillah / Prayer

During each Sunday Hebrew School session, students meet in the *Beit K'nesset* for *T'fillah* as part of the school day. They will become familiar with the melodies and flow of the service and will feel more comfortable in the synagogue as a *Beit T'fillah*, House of Prayer.

The Sunday morning Hebrew School service begins at 9:00 AM. We encourage parents who wish to attend this “learners” *minyan* to join us. It is an excellent opportunity to learn with us, say the Mourners *Kaddish* and to set an example for your child.

Library

Our students have regular access to the synagogue’s growing collection of children’s literature. The books will be housed in our new resource room.

We hope to continue to increase our collection through donations of books and money with which to purchase new volumes. Please encourage your child to borrow books and perhaps even visit yourself to help him or her select a book you both will find appealing.

Tzedakah



Tzedakah is a cornerstone of what it means to be a Jew; the commitment to give of one’s possessions to help those who are not as fortunate. It is not a choice, but a *mitzvah* - an imperative for living in society with others.

Tzedakah - righteous giving - has always been an integral part of our Hebrew School. It is the obligation of every Jew to give *tzedakah*. Those less fortunate than us have the legal right under Jewish law to food clothing and shelter.

Unlike “charity” (meaning lover or fondness), we do not give merely when we are able or willing or “in the mood.” Instead, we make *tzedakah* a regular habit, as well as seeking out special occasions, moments of joy and/or memory as additional times for acts of righteousness.

Each class will make contributions to causes or institutions of their choice. Students will decide as a class how they will practice *tzedakah*, to whom they may contribute money, or for whom they may perform some service.

At home, parents can encourage even our youngest students to bring their own money for weekly *tzedakah* contributions. Parents can also devise ways in which children can earn small amounts of money from which to draw when giving *tzedakah*. It is better for a child to bring 25 cents each day than to give \$5 once a month. In that way, the child learns that *tzedakah* is a constant obligation, not a sporadic “good deed.”

