



Temple ☆ Emanu-El
A Home, A Family, A Warmth to Tradition
TORAH SCHOOL

Rabbi Morton J. Cohn
Torah School



Parent
Handbook
2023-2024

MESSAGE FROM THE RABBI BENJ

Dear Friends,

On behalf of our community here at Temple Emanu-El, I want to thank you for making the decision to give your child a Jewish education. The gift you are bestowing on your children is a long-term commitment that takes a great deal of time, patience, and love to nurture. It is also a gift that has the potential to bring your children a lifetime of meaning, joy, friendships, and belonging. Our hope for you at Temple Emanu-El is that you and your children will discover a connection to our tradition and our community that keeps you wanting more. We also hope that your children will discover the richness of our culture and find that they have a place to occupy in the future of Judaism.

Our Torah School adheres to the philosophy that effective learning cannot happen in one way and in one medium. We do our best to minimize the amount of frontal learning because we want our children to feel as engaged in their learning as possible. We also know that Judaism must be experienced through all the senses and through all different kinds of activity. Our students learn about their heritage through cooking, through dance, through games, through music, and through art. Our hope is that your children can follow their interests in our Torah School and can bring their full selves to their time with us.

One of the most important things that we need for you to understand is that our learning at Torah School will only be as effective as it is reinforced at home. We only see your children for 3-4 hours per week, so our hope is that we can empower you to build Jewish homes to help your children live out their Jewishness in their everyday lives. Our goal at Emanu-El is that you will celebrate the holidays and Shabbat, tell your children our Jewish stories, and live out our Jewish values in your homes and in our larger community. Please contact me or Rabbi Devorah if you are curious about how we can strengthen the connection between your Jewish homes and the learning your children engage in at Emanu-El.

May this new year bring you lots of joy and success, and may your children embark on a learning journey that helps them discover and deepen the meaning of their Jewish identity.

L'shalom,

Benj Fried

Associate Rabbi

TORAH/HEBREW SCHOOL POLICIES

These are the rules and regulations of the Torah School

OUR PARENTAL COMMITMENT TO A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

FOR OUR CHILDREN

As role models for our children, it is critical that each of us consistently engage in behavior that exemplifies the Jewish values and ethics we are all committed to upholding. This commitment carries the expectation that at all times we will each strive to foster a positive atmosphere that models the following:

- Appropriate behavior toward adults and children.
- Use of appropriate language toward adults and children.
- An awareness of the power of our words.
- Tolerance toward others.
- Respect for the feelings and thoughts of others.

Following these principles, we will continue to foster a healthy environment for our children.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is required as a prerequisite for promotion to the next grade level. Excessive unexcused absences will result in consultation with parents and the Rabbi Educator. If a student is absent seven (7) or more sessions in a single school year and does not make up missed work, he/she may be required to do Hebrew tutoring over the summer to keep up with their class at the parents' expense.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We recognize the benefits our young people derive from participation in sports and other activities. At Temple Emanu-El we attempt to make reasonable provisions for any students who choose to be involved in such extra curricular programs. If your child will be participating in afternoon sports leagues or other activities, we want to know it at the beginning of the year. Any missed work may be made up at home.

SNACKS

We will serve Challah to the students each Sunday. If you have a special occasion (like a birthday) and want to bring in snack please let your child's teacher know. We have a **NO NUTS** policy!!! Please remember to check the list of ingredients to make certain that the product you are bringing in has not been processed in a plant that uses peanuts or other nuts. Some of our students have very serious food allergies and we want to avoid all problems if possible.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Torah School has adopted the following discipline policy:

When the teacher feels that the instructional program cannot continue because of the behavior of a student, the following steps will be taken to assure that the instructional program can continue.

1. A disruptive student will be warned by his teacher to stop disrupting the class. If the disruptive behavior persists the student may be asked to go to the office. The teacher will notify the parents.
2. If the disruptive behavior persists over multiple classes the parents may be called in to the office to meet with the Rabbi Educator, Administrator and Teachers to determine the best path forward to ensure a successful classroom environment for all.

We expect teachers to deal with minor discipline problems within the classroom.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We are prepared to adapt classroom materials and teaching approaches to meet the learning needs of any student in our school. The more information we have regarding the learning styles of any students with learning differences or other special needs, the better our chances of providing the student with a positive Jewish educational experience. Please do not hesitate to call if we can be of assistance in this regard. Confidentiality will be honored.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If you must pick up your child before a class session is finished, please come to the Torah School Office to get an Early Release Slip to give to your student's teacher.

TZEDAKAH

During the first period of Torah School, the teacher collects *tzedakah*. *Tzedakah*, or righteousness, is one of the cornerstones of Judaism. We teach a concern for the needy and hope that by bringing either a small monetary contribution or a donation of packaged food, the children will develop a sense of caring. The money is deposited in an account and on the last day of Torah School the students vote for the organizations that will receive a portion of their contributions. Food donations are usually sent to Jewish Family Services

BRINGING FRIENDS

If your child wants to bring a friend to Torah School, **you must contact the Torah School Office and fill out an emergency contact form for the visiting student.**

JEWISH FAMILY EDUCATION

Jewish learning is a life-long process. However, sometimes a busy schedule doesn't leave room to attend the classes or read the books we might want to. We have learned that another way for adults to "learn Jewish" is by learning with their children. So, we provide opportunities during the year for families to come together.

Family Camp: Every other year our Torah School Families gather for a weekend of fun and learning at a local camp or retreat center. This is a fantastic way to form friendships and build community here at Temple Emanu-El.

Adult Hebrew Classes: These classes are offered by the same teachers that your children have for Hebrew. We have classes to learn to read and basic conversational skills.

Adult Learning Opportunities: Periodically though the year the Temple will offer adult education classes during Torah School, yoga, Parenting classes, etc. Please watch for flyers or check the Temple Bulletin for these classes.

FAMILY SHABBAT

Family Shabbat occurs several times during the school year on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. from October to May. Birthdays during the month are honored, and there is usually a story sermon presented by the Rabbis or our puppet players. This event is geared for families and we encourage Torah School families to attend and to enjoy the Family Shabbat dinner offered after services.

LIBRARY

We have a collection of over 300 books for children in our Temple Library. We encourage you and your children to use and check out books from our Library, as it is good to have Jewish books in your homes.

TORAH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

KINDERGARTEN: This curriculum is entitled “How we do Jewish” and covers several areas from Holidays and Shabbat to prayer and music to basic Jewish values. We focus on grade appropriate learning and on making Jewish fun!

GRADE 1: Bible stories and introduction to G’milut Chassadim, Acts of Loving Kindness and introduction to prayer and holidays

GRADE 2: Torah Stories and Israeli Cities where we show on the map where these stories took place and what these cities are like today.

GRADES 3-7: Our Judaic curriculum will for the upper grades is a curriculum that focuses on God and spirituality. This curriculum focuses on the ways we talk about God in our tradition and the ways we experience God in the world. It will focus on ideas such as God’s role in creation, the belief in tzelem Elohim—that all people are created in the image of God, and ways that we can foster relationship with God.

TORAH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Torah School K thru 2nd Grade and 7th Grade meet on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Torah School 3rd thru 6th Grade meets Sundays 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. AND on Wednesdays

ONLINE at 4:00 – 4:45

OR

IN-PERSON 5:00 to 5:45 p.m.

Please visit the Torah School page of the Temple Emanu-El Website

<https://teesd.org/> for the current Torah School Calendar.

Please email star@teesd.org or call the Torah/Hebrew School Office if your child is going to miss class 619-286-3096.

HEBREW CLASS SCHEDULE

All 3rd through 6th grade students are required to attend a Wednesday Hebrew class in addition to attendance to Sunday Torah School 9:00am to 12:00pm. Wednesday Hebrew classes are offered online 4:00 to 4:45pm or in-person 5:00 to 5:45pm.

Note: Students should not arrive more than 15 minutes before their class begins and should be picked up promptly after their class ends. ***The School Office must be notified in advance in the event that students must be dropped off earlier or stay after class.***

In the event that you are unable to come to Wednesday Hebrew classes we do offer 1-on-1 Hebrew lessons. These lessons can be online or in-person on a day and time that is convenient for both the student and instructor. 1-on-1 Hebrew classes cost an additional \$575 and are not encouraged if you can make it to Wednesday classes. This option is truly for those who can not find any way to get their student here or online on Wednesday.

HEBREW SCHOOL CURRICULUM

In Kindergarten through Grade 2, we introduce our students to the Hebrew language. We teach a modern Hebrew vocabulary including words relating to family relationships, body parts, colors, etc. We also include some basic prayers: the candle blessing, *Kiddush*, the *Motsi*, the *Shema*. The purpose of this study is to help younger children to become familiar with the sounds of Hebrew in a relaxed way and to prepare them for more formal study of Hebrew which begins in Grade 3.

The 3rd through 6th grade Hebrew classes are divided into 4 color levels which meet during one period on Sunday and one session on Wednesdays.

All Hebrew classes are focused on decoding and reading Hebrew and learning to read and chant the blessings for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Katom (orange) level focuses on these prayers:

L'hadlik neiroi - Candle Blessings

Sh'ma/ V'ahavtah

Birchot HaTorah

V'zot HaTorah

Etz Chaim

Barchu

Ma Nishtanah

Kachol (blue) level focuses on these prayers:

Sh'ma

V'ahavtah

Mi Chamocha

B'rachot Shel Mitzvah

B'rachot Shel Shabbat

Kiddush - Friday Night

Ahavah Rabbah/ Ahavat Olam

Sagol (purple) level focuses on these prayers:

Avot V'Imahot

G'vurot

K'dusha

Shalom Rav/ Sim Shalom

Oseh Shalom

V'shamru

Zahav (gold) level focuses on these prayers:

Torah Blessing

Haftarah Blessing

Chatzi Kaddish

Kaddish Yatom

Asher Yatzar

Elohai Neshamah

Nisim B'Chol Yom

After completion of Katom through Zahav students take the **Adom (red)** Hebrew class which meets only during one period on Sundays and focuses review of the above prayers and on these prayers:

PRIVATE HEBREW TUTORING POLICY

All students wishing to celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah must enroll in our Hebrew classes. We encourage private Hebrew tutoring under the following circumstances:

1. When a member joins the Temple after their child(ren) would normally have entered the Hebrew program (in Grade 3). These children may be privately tutored to catch up to their peers. Once caught up, they are expected to attend their Hebrew School grade at Temple.
2. When students are identified with special learning needs and for whom participation in the regular Hebrew program is not possible. These students must be identified through regular public or private school processes and must be receiving special assistance at school.
3. When a family is not able to bring their child to Hebrew Classes online or in-person on Sunday or Wednesday.
4. We offer 1-on-1 Hebrew lessons either online or in-person. There is an additional fee for this class and it is not encouraged if you can make it to Wednesday classes.

All arrangements for private tutoring must be made with the Torah School Office.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Hebrew Progress Reports will be sent home at the end of each semester for 3rd to 6th grade. If you are interested on updates of your children's learning in other classes feel free to contact the Torah School office or your child's teacher.

Conferences may be initiated either by the parent or the teacher. We request that conferences occur before or after school. If necessary, the teacher may contact the parent by telephone.

BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a joyous and very meaningful life cycle event. Our school tries to enhance its meaning by providing worthwhile training. We equip the student to participate in the Shabbat Morning Service during which s/he will become Bar/Bat Mitzvah. But most importantly, we try to guide the student to become a responsible participant in the life of the Jewish people.

1. To qualify for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, your student must be registered for 5th grade in Torah School and have satisfactory performance in Hebrew. Withdrawal of your student from 5th grade, or failure to register and complete 6th and 7th grade will result in forfeiture of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date .
2. The student will study privately with a Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor starting six months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Rabbi Devorah or Rabbi Benj will meet with each student several times during the last months of study to prepare their d'var Torah.
3. The student will commit to a Mitzvah project during the period of Bar/Bat Mitzvah study.
4. Regular attendance and co leading of the service at Shabbat Morning Services during the six months of Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation is required. Services start at 10:30 a.m. Saturday.
5. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is **strongly** encouraged to commit to continuing his/her Jewish education at Community Jewish High, here at Temple Emanu-El, at least through Kabbalat Torah (Confirmation) in 12th grade.
6. Special arrangements for Bar/Bat Mitzvah may be made for children with special educational needs. This will be dealt with on an individual basis. Please contact Rabbi Benj or Star Laddon for more information.

More detailed information is found in our **BAR/BAT MITZVAH HANDBOOK**.

COMMUNITY JEWISH HIGH

All students entering the Kabbalat Torah program must satisfactorily complete all requirements of Community Jewish High classes in which they must enroll.

For further information call 616-697-6001 x 115 and speak with Beth Klareich, Director, Community Jewish High.

KABBALAT TORAH PROGRAM

Kabbalat Torah (Confirmation), one of the newest life cycle ceremonies, was instituted less than 200 years ago in Germany. The first Confirmation ceremony in America was held in 1846. The significance of Kabbalat Torah is that it is not enough to be born a Jew or to choose Judaism as a one time event. Many times in our lives it is important to study and reflect on our beliefs and our history and to reaffirm our faith. Bar/Bat Mitzvah is one such time and Kabbalat Torah is another. It occurs at a time when a young person is beginning to make life decisions. What better time to reflect on the life lessons that Judaism teaches?

Kabbalat Torah takes place in the 12th grade year. To participate, a student must have successfully attended courses at Community Jewish High throughout High School. As a Kabbalat Torah Class student, your child will have the opportunity to go on a trip with Rabbi Devorah where they will learn and participate in a service project and have an amazing adventure!

TUITION

Tuition is due at the time of registration. A late registration fee of \$100 per class may apply for students registered after the registration deadline. All tuition fees must be paid in full by August 31, 2023 or set up for monthly auto debit. Contact Shaun Copans, Executive Director at scopans@teesd.org for all school related financial questions you may have.

Kindergarten Tuition: \$695 per student.

1st & 2nd Grade Tuition: \$900 per student.

7th Grade Tuition: \$950 per student.

3rd thru 6th Grade Tuition: \$1595 per student.

The above tuition fee helps covers the cost of teachers, staff, texts and materials. The Temple graciously covers the shortfall.

Security Fee: \$200 per family

This fee helps cover the cost of the Armed Security Guard during Torah School Hours. The Temple graciously covers the shortfall.

Education Partnership Program Fee: \$25 per Family

This fee helps the Torah School Parent Committee provide teacher gifts and festivities during Teacher Appreciation week and community building programs the TS Parent Committee may plan during the school year.

In order for your child to be registered for Torah School, all dues and school fees from the previous school year must be paid in full.

In the event that it is necessary for a student to drop out of Torah School, fees will be refunded only if the withdrawal from the program occurs and is reported to the Temple during the first month of school (September 10 through October 10, 2023). Fees will be forfeited if withdrawal occurs at any other time.