



Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

***The Mike Weiner School of
Jewish Learning***
Parent/Guardian Manual

5778
2017 – 2018

WELCOME TO OUR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Our school thrives on the involvement of our families. Through this handbook, we ask you to familiarize yourself with the policies and structure of our Religious School.

The main goals of our curriculum are:

1. To develop a love for Jewish learning and pride in Jewish identity.
2. To impart to our students the ethics and values of Judaism through Torah study and everyday living.
3. To teach our students customs, ceremonies, music and rituals regarding Shabbat and holiday observances.
4. To instill *tzedaka* as a fundamental Jewish value.
5. To teach the Hebrew language for prayer.
6. To build a bridge between our students and the State of Israel, and to forge solidarity with Jews throughout the world.

We provide a warm and friendly learning environment for our children. We believe that children who are raised to be thoughtful and committed Jews will by definition become thoughtful and committed human beings. While our school is designed to fulfill these goals, the Religious School is not the sole educator of our children. Your family also plays a major role in creating the right feeling towards learning. How successful we are depends upon your support. ***It is critical that you reinforce through consistent practice at home what the children are learning in school.***

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CO-OP

The school has always been co-operative, because we rely on volunteers to run the school and its activities. Parent participation is essential to the success of the school. We utilize Sign-up Genius for school events to facilitate the sign-up process.

SHABBAT SERVICE

Attendance and participation at Friday night Shabbat Services are a critical and necessary part of the religious school curriculum. ***It is imperative that your family attend services as regularly as possible so that you are all familiar with the prayer service.*** Services that include a child's becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah are open to the entire congregation.

CLASS TIMES & DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

Religious School meets every Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, except where noted differently on the calendar. School hours are limited, so it is important that we begin promptly.

We invite parents to join us for the opening program (roughly 45 minutes), during which the week's Judaic theme is introduced by Rabbi Dubin.

Various adult meetings and classes may take place in the building while Sunday School is in session. We encourage parents to take advantage of these community and learning opportunities.

SNACKS

Please send your child to school with a snack (no nuts please) and drink. If your child has any food allergies, please list on the Registration form as well as letting the teachers(s) know.

ABSENTEEISM AND MISSED WORK

Attendance is an essential component of a successful Jewish education. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please inform the teacher at least a week ahead of time. Your child's teacher can provide material and planned lessons to keep your child up to date.

Since we have limited time to teach your child, consistency and continuity are essential to helping your child advance. If your child falls behind due to absenteeism, we will discuss ways in which your child can complete his or her work and advance in education.

HOMEWORK

Like any new skill, the learning of Hebrew requires regular practice. Additionally, a Reform education emphasizes and assumes family involvement in a student's learning. In order to maximize the students' religious school experience, we encourage parents to discuss religious school activities with their children and work with them on any home assignments.

All students taking Hebrew will be expected to spend at least an additional 10-15 minutes several times a week reading Hebrew at home. This is necessary for fluency in Hebrew reading.

TZEDAKA

Tzedaka is an integral part of our curriculum and is collected throughout the school year. Students decide together, with the guidance of the Rabbi and teachers, where the money will be donated.

B'NAI MITZVAH

Requirements for B'nai Mitzvah preparation include the following four components:

1. Regular **attendance** at Shabbat services on Friday nights. This helps to familiarize students and their families with the service. Attending services also builds a sense of community among the classmates and with other temple members.
2. **Completion** of at least two years in our Religious School. If the student has a fall *simcha* and is in his or her second year of our school, he or she may celebrate during the year, with the understanding that religious school attendance will continue at least through the end of the year. Students who have not already completed at least one year of Religious School prior to their expected *simcha* date will be asked to wait until they have satisfied the requirement above before a public celebration will take place.
3. **Preparation** for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah service with an approved tutor should begin about a year prior to the *simcha*.
4. Development and execution of a thoughtfully prepared **tzedaka project**, to be approved by Rabbi Dubin.

BEHAVIOR

Student Expectations:

- Be prepared for class with books, pencils and required assignments.
- Show respect for teachers and classmates.
- Behave appropriately in the classroom.

Should a student be consistently disruptive in the classroom, parents will be notified by the teacher. If necessary, a conference will be arranged. The religious school reserves the right to suspend and, if necessary, remove any student who does not conform to acceptable behavior standards.

TEACHERS

Our religious school teachers are dedicated to educating your children in a warm and caring environment. With great dedication, they will challenge your children and bring the traditions and rituals of Judaism into their classroom.

COMMUNICATION

It has been our practice to send emails out regarding information about the school, upcoming events, etc. We will continue to do this, and ensure to keep everyone well informed. Please let your teacher, the Rabbi or the Education Co-Chairs if you have any questions or suggestions to help ensure the child's experience is as fulfilling as it should be.

SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event that the school has to be cancelled due to weather or some other unforeseen circumstance, we will notify you through email. Please check your email before leaving home if the current weather or forecast looks questionable.