

Congregation **B**eth **I**srael **R**eligious **S**chool

PARENT HANDBOOK



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Rabbi's Message

You Have Made a Good Choice!

As parents, we care to give our children the very best. We want them to grow healthy and strong. We want them to enjoy all the opportunities of life that we have enjoyed, if not more. We make important choices for our children, when they are very young, hoping to guide them on the right path in life. Sending your children to Religious School is one of those choices, and it is a very good one.

Yes, attending Religious School will become a big commitment of time and money. Yes, your child may complain, wishing he or she could be playing a sport or home watching TV or playing on the computer, instead of attending Religious School. But as Jewish parents, this is one of those decisions we have to help our children make.

I urge you to make Religious School attendance a priority for your child. Many activities will compete with attending Religious School. Please choose wisely among them, trying to avoid conflicts. Few of our children will become professional athletes, musicians, or dancers, but all of them will be Jewish for the rest of their lives. These precious years may be our only real chance to guide and encourage our children to become proud and learned Jews.

We often think that our children are "born Jewish," but actually, Judaism is something we all have to earn and learn. No one becomes a Jew accidentally. It takes conscious effort and commitment. What is true of our children is also true for ourselves. The mitzvah of studying Torah never ends. Help your child realize the importance of his/her Religious School education by continuing your own Jewish education! Remember, our children don't only learn by what we say to them, they learn by the examples we show them – sometimes even more!

Thank you for sending us your children! You have made a good choice!

Rabbi Nudell

Curriculum

Aims and Objectives

These aims and objectives will succeed if there is active parental participation and cooperation at all levels in the religious school. Parents will be kept informed throughout the year, but are encouraged to reach out to the school if there are any school-related issues they wish to discuss.

1. To develop a positive Jewish identity and encourage Jewish learning as a lifelong process.
2. To foster a positive feeling towards Israel as the Jewish homeland.
3. To prepare our children to participate in the American Jewish community-ultimately for them to affiliate with a synagogue and Jewish organizations.
4. To enable our children to understand and develop a positive feeling toward events of the Jewish life cycle and home observances.
5. To hone the skills needed to practice Jewish traditions of Shabbat and holidays.
6. To create an understanding of the content of the prayers, with special emphasis on Shabbat services.
7. To encourage participation in the synagogue service.
8. To acquire a knowledge of Jewish history, from Biblical to modern times.
9. To promote a positive feeling for the Hebrew language by developing oral vocabulary skills, and achieving competency in reading and decoding.
10. To further the causes of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing *tzedek* (righteousness), *mishpat* (justice) and *chesed* (deeds of lovingkindness).
11. To express kinship with *Klal Yisrael* by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world.

Gan- Kindergarten

Gan meets once a week, Sundays from 8:45-10:45am

What are the Jewish Holidays? What do they mean to us? How do we celebrate them? What is the cycle of the Jewish year like? These questions will frame the first encounters our youngest students have with their Jewish tradition. Gan students will begin their Jewish education with the foundational stories, symbols, rituals and blessings of the Jewish people, explored through musical and artistic expression, stories, hands-on activities and games.

Hebrew: The students will be introduced to basic vocabulary, including *Shabbat* and holiday related words. The students will learn to recognize the Hebrew letters.

T'fillah: The students will be introduced to the concepts of thanking G-d, including when and how we thank G-d. The students will learn basic *brachot* including *brachot* over food, and *Shabbat* and holiday related *brachot*.

Tanach: The students will be introduced to basic *Torah* stories, heroes in the *Torah* and the beginning of the Jewish people. They will explore the concepts of G-d as creator of the world, G-d and the Jewish people and how the *Torah* is a guide for our lives.

Chagim: The students will learn the basics of each Jewish holiday including *Shabbat*. They will learn the customs of how each holiday is celebrated in the home and in the synagogue.

Mitzvot: The students will explore various *mitzvot* including Tzedakah, honoring parents and *Tzar ba'alei Hayim*- being kind to animals

Kitah Alef-First Grade

Kitah Alef meets once a week, Sundays from 8:45-10:45am

Kitah Alef will explore and develop their own individual connection to the Jewish experience: What are things that Jews do that make us different from other peoples and religions? How do Jews celebrate our holidays, rituals and traditions? Young people in Kitah Alef will continue to develop new skills, building on the experiences they encountered in Gan.

Hebrew: The students will learn *Shabbat* and holiday related vocabulary and begin attaining oral language skills. Students will continue work on letter recognition.

T'fillah: The students will begin to learn simple prayer terminology. They will focus on the following prayers, *Shema*, *Modeh Ani*, *Birchot Hanehenim* (daily blessings), *Shabbat brachot* and *Shehecheyanu*.

Tanach: The students will revisit the popular stories while engaging in activities that will help the students discover how our ancestors lived.

Chagim: The students will learn about each Jewish holiday and how it is celebrated. Through a Jewish Memory Book, the students will personalize each holiday celebration.

Mitzvot: The students will focus on the *mitzvot* of *Tzedakah* and *Tikkun Olam*. They will discuss ways we can be responsible for others and ways of doing *Tzedakah*, as well as how we can make the world a better place.

Kitah Bet- Second Grade

Kitah Bet meets once a week, Sundays from 8:45-10:45am

The people, places and symbols of our Jewish heritage will be the focus of Kitah Bet students' studies as they start to answer these questions: What are the symbols and tools that we use to celebrate Jewish holidays and to live Jewish lives? What are some of the ways we act, behave and celebrate as Jews? How do different communities of Jews celebrate?

Hebrew: The students will continue to build their *Shabbat*, holiday and *Siddur* vocabulary including family, colors, body parts, weather, numbers, seasons, classroom. The students will begin working putting letters and vowels together, as well as building a sight vocabulary.

T'fillah: The students will continue to increase their *Shabbat* and Holiday vocabulary. The students will focus on the following prayers: *Shehecheyanu*, *Shalom Aleichem*, *Mah Nishtanah*, *Shema*, and the blessings for candle lighting.

Tanach: The students will delve more deeply into Bible stories and the heroes associated with them.

Chagim: The students will learn about all the Jewish holidays, including the home and communal rituals, as well as how Jews in other lands celebrate.

Mitzvot: The student will first focus on the *mitzvot* of *Ben Adam l'chavero* (how we treat each other). They will look at the biblical laws and examples and will discuss what they can do. They will discuss being a Mensch: respect for others; putting Mitzvot into action.

Kitah Gimmel 3RD GRADE

Kitah Gimmel meets Sunday 8:45am-12:00 noon and Wednesday 4:00pm-6:15pm

Kitah Gimmel students will encounter the Jewish value of *G'milut Hasadim* on a variety of levels and in different forms throughout the year. The following questions will be posed for examination and discussion: What do Jews believe? What is important to us? What are Mitzvot? What does it mean to be commanded? Can you be commanded to be a Mensch?

Hebrew: Students will intensively review letters and vowels as they continue to improve their reading fluency, transition to *Siddur* reading and, towards the end of the year, receive their own *siddur*.

T'fillah: The focus throughout the year will be on various Shabbat and weekday prayers. Blessings for each holiday will be included. Kitah Gimmel students participate in the Wednesday school-wide *Mincha/Maariv* and the Sunday morning *Shacharit* services, where they are encouraged to lead prayers with their older counterparts.

Tanach: The students will look at the major characters, themes and events in the *Torah* from Creation to the Exodus. The students will ponder, personalize and wrestle with the text.

Chagim: The students will learn the Jewish calendar, including the names of the Hebrew months, the difference between lunar and solar, and where the Jewish holidays fall out in the calendar. They will explore the traditions associated with each holiday.

Mitzvot: The main focus of Kitah Gimmel is the Mitzvah of *G'milut Hasadim*, and how this Mitzvah helps shape them as *Mensches*. The students will re-look at *Tzedakah* focussing on *Rambam's* ladder, biblical examples and practical ways of doing *Tzedakah*.

Israel: An overview of the country through a "scavenger hunt".

Kitah Dalet 4th GRADE

Kitah Dalet meets Sunday 8:45am-12:00 noon and Wednesday 4:00pm-6:15pm

Kitah Dalet students grapple with the stories of Heroes in Torah, and examine the difference between Torah and Bible. What do these ancient books mean to Jews today? What can we learn from the stories of the families in them? How can we personalize the prayers for deeper meaning?

Hebrew: Students will explore Hebrew through multi-media. Prayers will become personal through journaling, and decoding /reading practice is done as *Hevruta*. Students work through various textbooks and increase their *tefilot* fluency with a *Siddur* companion.

T'fillah: The students will focus on the Friday evening home rituals, *Shacharit* service, basic *Siddur* terms and an introduction to the *Amidah*. The students will review and learn the following prayers: Friday evening home rituals, *Shalom Aleichem*, *Sim Shalom*, *Ayn Kkaylokenu*, *Baruch She-Amar*, *Amidah* (first three *brachot*) and *Brachot Hatorah*. Kitah Gimmel students participate fully in the school-wide Wednesday and Sunday *t'filah* sessions.

Tanach: The students will learn about the *Nevi'im* (prophets) and *Ketuvim* (writings). They will look at the transition from a people to a nation beginning to understand prophets and prophecy, kings, kingdoms and their problems.

Chagim: The students will focus on the *Shalosh Regalim* (*Sukkot*, *Pesach*, and *Shavuot*). They will concentrate on the following areas: ties to Jewish history and agriculture, ties to *Eretz Yisrael*, basic observances, names of the holidays and terminology. They will also focus on *Shabbat* as they prepare for their Friday evening service. They will discuss *Shabbat* as a day of rest, and as remembrance of Creation and Exodus. The students will learn the customs and observances associated with *Shabbat*.

Mitzvot: The students will focus on the *Menschlichkeit* and *Kashrut*. The Jewish relationship to food will be explored and the idea that we must acknowledge where our food comes from and be sure that mitzvot and ethics guide our food choices.

Kitah Hey- 5th GRADE

Kitah Hey meets Sunday 8:45am-12:00 noon and Wednesday 4:00pm-6:15pm

Kitah Hey students will spend their school year engaged in the study and practice of the Shabbat morning service. They will explore how prayer and prayers are integrated in the Jewish Life Cycle.

T'fillah: In addition to the prayers learned in their textbook, the students will focus on *Kriat Shema* and the *Shabbat morning service*. They will learn the following prayers, *Barechu*, , *Ahava Rabah/Ahavat Olam*, parts of *Ashrei*, *Birchot HaTorah*, *Kaddish*, and *Aleynu*.

Tanach: The students will go beyond the Torah's five books to "Na" of "TaNaCh". Their studies will be enhanced with reenactments of stories from the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings as they ask the question: What is a Hero?

Chagim: The students will focus their studies on the minor holidays, *Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim* and the spring holidays. They will learn basic observances and explore historical dating and Jewish identity and identification.

Mitzvot: The students will explore the Jewish Life Cycle. They will understand the terminology, concepts and how to make it part of their lives. They will search through their own ancestry and build their family "constellation".

Israel: Through history, the students will take a "tour" of Israel. Along the way, they will learn Hebrew words, Jewish values, intriguing information and geography.

Kitah Vav- 6TH GRADE

Kitah Vav meets Sunday 8:45am-12:00 noon and Wednesday 4:00pm-6:15pm

Kitah Vav students will explore the prayers and personalize their connection to them as they hone their skills in leading the Shabbat morning service. They encounter their own Biblical texts as they look towards their Bar/Bat mitzvah service. Students will grow to understand the responsibilities inherent in being an "adult" Jew as they decide on a personal Social Action project for the Mitzvah Fair.

Hebrew: The students will study some conversational Hebrew.

T'fillah: The students will focus on the *Amidah* and *Musaf* service. They will learn all the parts of the *Amidah*, High Holiday *Kiddush*, *Passover Kiddush* and key *brachot*, and will review *Bircat HaHaftarah* and *Bircat HaTorah*.

Tanach: The students will use the *Torah* text to study the Book of Exodus. They will be introduced to rabbinic commentary and the structure of the *Tanach*. They will ask the questions: How is Torah part of our lives? How can we make sure that the Torah's Mitzvot and values form the foundation of a rich tradition that they will want to continue? The students will have the opportunity to study with our Rabbinic Intern.

Chagim: Students will delve deeper into study of the holidays, and discover ways to personalize their celebration.

History: Through a textbook, the students will consider how their lives compare with the lives of those who came before them, how Judaism has evolved in every generation, and how the decisions of our forebears to adapt Judaism to their times and circumstances influence our own decisions today.

Mitzvot: The students will explore various Jewish values through their everyday relationships and be challenged to make decisions based on those values.

Bnai Mitzvah: Students will explore Jewish values through their everyday relationships and decision making.

Kitah Zayin- 7TH GRADE

Kitah Zayin meets Sunday 10:00am to 12:00 noon and Wednesday 4:00pm-6:15pm

Young people in Kitah Zayin approach their studies as adults, grappling with contemporary issues connected to our understanding of Judaism, tradition, authority and personal obligation as they prepare to take on the responsibilities of a Jewish adult when they become *Bar/ Bat Mitzvah*. Each student will struggle with the questions that will shape their study throughout the year. They will continue to be challenged by the notion that *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is NOT the end of studies, but the beginning of a new world of inquiry and self-led learning. They will approach their learning with the goal of connecting to the Jewish world at large; to become proud and responsible adult members of our Jewish community.

Hebrew: Students will continue to build their Hebrew vocabulary with the Israeli *Rishon* Working with Rabbi and Cantor, they will polish their skills as Torah readers and *Shlichei Tzibur* (service leaders).

T'fillah: The students will review all *tefillot* – specifically *Shabbat Shacharit* and *Musaf*. They will study the

tefillah structure and the rhythm of various services.

Chagim: The students will explore interesting aspects of the holidays, and mentor younger students from time to time.

Mitzvot/B'nai Mitzvah: Now that you've got your license, are you going to drive? The pre-*B'nai Mitzvah* students will discuss issues relevant to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, and their place in the Jewish community. They will also mentor Kitah Vav students in creating a Mitzvah Project.

History: The students will study American Jewish history and the Holocaust. They will get a picture of life in Israel in the last century through the eyes of their teacher.

Family Programs for Kitah Alef-Kitah Hey take place throughout the year. Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates.

The MACHON Institute

The MACHON Institute is designed for the post Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and encompasses grades eight through twelve. We at CBI believe strongly that it is our responsibility to transmit to the youth a strong Jewish identity as well as provide for them an opportunity to search for and inquire about the meaning of life and the relevance of Judaism. Machon meets Wednesday evenings from 6:00-7:30pm and includes a pizza dinner.

SHABBAT INFORMATION

At Congregation Beth Israel, we feel that a religious education is not simply made up of quality hours in a classroom, but of an entire range of Jewish experiences. We place a tremendous value on creating a Shabbat community with our congregants, and believe that our celebration of Shabbat can be a valuable and meaningful learning experience for all, regardless of age. For that reason, we have created various Shabbat experiences that serve to compliment our Religious School program.

The best way for a young person to develop a relationship with Judaism and the Jewish community is by active participation in synagogue life. This will also enhance a young person's fluency in Jewish ritual, prayer and Hebrew language. We encourage you to deepen your family's relationship with our congregation and become a part of our Shabbat community. These programs are designed with your child in mind, to be fun and stimulating, and to provide your entire family with an opportunity to connect with prayer on a developmentally appropriate level. We look forward to seeing you at CBI on Shabbat!

Shabbat Shalom Club

ages 2-6 (with families)

monthly, Friday evenings

6:30-7:15pm

Led by Rabbi Nudell and Cantor Axelrod

Come celebrate Shabbat with age appropriate stories and songs. Hear a story with a kid-friendly Jewish message. We will have our own *kiddush* with matzo ball soup, challah and grape juice as we learn the blessings for all of the special Shabbat rituals. We hope to provide an opportunity for children to experience a Sabbath service at an age-appropriate level, so that Shabbat becomes a beloved part of each child's week.

Junior Congregation

1st-5th grade

monthly, Shabbat mornings

10:00-11:00am

Led by Jordan Wolman Services are boring!" "Do I have to go to shul?" "Praying is stupid!" Is this a common complaint by the children in your home? Then perhaps they should come to Junior Congregation at Congregation Beth Israel! You'll never hear that complaint again! Junior Congregation is a lively service for students in grades 1st-5th. We meet monthly throughout the year while school is in session. The goal of the program is to create active, involved "*daveners*" who understand the prayers and have internalized the values these prayers represent, while at the same time, being a service that reinforces the Hebrew skills our children learn in religious school.

School Class Services:

Students in Kitah Dalet, Kitah Hey and Kitah Vav each have a Shabbat morning service where they are the leaders. This is followed by a special Kiddush luncheon. Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates.

CBI Services

Friday evening services year round at 7:30pm, and last about an hour. These services are participatory and held "in the round" in the social hall. Dress is casual and services are followed by a Oneg.

Shabbat morning services begin at 9:30am in the sanctuary. There is a lot singing and participation during the Shabbat morning service. Many congregants read *Torah* and *HafTorah* and the Rabbi gives an explanation of the weekly *Torah* reading. Services end around 11:15am and are followed by a *Kiddush*.

CBI also have morning services on Sunday mornings at 9:00am, Thursday morning at 7:00am and all holidays at 9:30am. Please watch the weekly "Shalom Way" for service updates.

YOUTH GROUP INFORMATION

Kadima and USY: Youth Programs

Kadima (6th – 8th grade) and United Synagogue Youth (9-12th grade) are the youth movements of the Conservative movement. This year, Congregation Habonim's Beth Israel's USY (SPUSY) will be sponsoring a variety of fun and exciting activities open to the youth of our congregation. At Congregation Beth Israel, Kadima and USY hold social, sports and cultural activities, movie nights, holiday activities and social action events that combine fun and Jewish living. Our chapters of Kadima and USY will also participate in activities and events which will take place with other area congregations, and regional events with the Hagalil Region (New Jersey). We invite all 6th-12th grade students to participate!

Kids Connect

Kids Connect is a Jewish youth group designed for students in 5th-10th grade (ages 10-15) who are on the autism spectrum and who otherwise would be unable to participate in a typical youth group experience. With meetings every four to six weeks, Kids Connect includes holiday celebrations, trips, social action projects and other youth group activities. All programs include peer teen support – teens in 8th-12th grade who are trained through the MetroWest Able initiative. Kids Connect is open to the community.

PJ Library

The PJ Library provides free Jewish books to all children, ages 0-8, in our community. If you have not signed up your child please do so by contacting Linda Poleyeff at LPoleyeff@thepartnershipnj.org or call 908-288-2415. Throughout the year, CBI partners with the PJ Library to provide a series of programs called "Let's Celebrate" for children 4 and under. Please watch your email and the Shalom Way for details.

All questions regarding CBI youth programs, should be directed to
Dana Brenner at cbiyouth18@gmail.com

SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR

At Congregation Beth Israel Religious School, we are concerned with the safety and well-being of every student, and we look to our students and their parents to work with us in maintaining a safe, comfortable, and productive environment. Our primary objectives in this area are:

- To ensure safety and well-being;
- To facilitate school work;
- To promote courtesy, cooperation, and respect;
- To protect property.

Many of the items that children use every day at home and outside are not suitable in the classroom environment, including cell-phones, and electronic, hand-held games. **Students who bring these items to school will be asked to drop them off either in the School Office or in a box in their classroom.**

Certain items which may be appropriate when used under parental supervision are not appropriate in a school setting. Included in this category are pocket knives, toy guns, and water guns. Even an **"x-acto knife"** that is part of an art kit or **matches** that are used in a science project should not be brought to school.

There are times when children cross the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. As part of our educational approach, we feel that the teacher must relate to each situation and each child in a way that he or she feels will best support that child and the group as a whole. In most cases, problematic behaviour will be handled by the teacher involved. The principal will assist in situations which cannot be resolved easily, and when needed, parental support will be enlisted.

On the following page of this handbook, is the Congregation Beth Israel Religious School *Kavod* Code – Code of Conduct. We ask that you read the *Kavod* Code with your child(ren) and discuss the importance of ensuring a safe and respectful school environment.

Discipline

Finding the balance between positive guidance and discipline for breaking the rules, between enforcing good behavior and setting boundaries for bad behavior, is a very difficult task. At Congregation Beth Israel, we feel that it is extremely important to promote positive interaction between students. We want our children to be considerate of others and to be responsible to one collective environment. We believe that, within the classroom, it is up to the discretion of the classroom teacher to determine what action is appropriate. If the teacher feels that teacher-student communication has proven to be ineffective, then parent conferences will be the next step. If the behavioral problem should persist and classroom routine is disrupted, in-school suspension for a minimum of one week will follow. The last step when all else has failed will be out of school suspension. We recognize that children need to test rules, their environment, the adults around them, and themselves in order to grow. However, if parents and teachers work together as adult role models, we will have more success with our youngsters. Please read and discuss this discipline plan with your child.

Congregation Beth Israel Religious School

Kavod Code

(Code of Conduct)

K	Kindness 	I behave with Kavod by treating both adults and kids with <i>kindness</i> and courtesy.
A	Awareness 	I will treat the school with Kavod by having <i>awareness</i> of my surroundings and by keeping them clean and undamaged.
V	Value No Violence 	I will <i>value no violence</i> by playing with Kavod . This means I won't hurt, bully, roughhouse or exclude anyone. Everyone can have fun together.
O	Obey 	I will act with Kavod and <i>obey</i> classroom rules and <i>Keep the Code!</i>
D	Dress 	I will <i>dress</i> with Kavod by wearing appropriate clothing.

I have read our school Kavod Code. I promise to do my very best to ***Keep the Code*** and will help other people do so.

ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Religious school represents a major investment of time and energy on the part of our students and their families. As parents, you depend on us to help make the most of this investment and we are deeply committed to this task. From experience, we know that families also play an important role in helping students to do their best and get the most out of Religious school. In this section, we provide guidelines for ensuring a student's successful participation in our program.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is the single most important factor in a child's success at Religious school. The benefits of regular attendance are not only academic, but also social. As absences increase, a student feels less connected to peers and more like an outsider in class. The other students learn not to count on his or her participation in group activities, projects, and presentations. If possible, please let the office know when your child will be absent. Make up assignments will be sent home via email.

Illness or Vacation: If parents anticipate that their child will miss more than two consecutive class sessions, they should inform the Religious School. It is our policy to call students who have not been present, to inquire after them in case they are sick, and to let them know that they are missed!

Poor Attendance: In the rare case that one of our students misses more than 15% of classes, parents will be asked to participate in a meeting with the Rabbi, Cantor and Education Director to brainstorm ways in which we can facilitate good attendance, and parents will be required to make a commitment to getting their child to school on a regular basis. Please note that if a child in the *Vav* or *Zayin* classes misses more than 15% of classes, he or she is in danger of having their *bar* or *bat mitzvah* date vacated.

Arriving Prepared:

Students who arrive at school with all the necessary books and school supplies feel confident and ready to learn. We recommend that families develop a routine that ensures that students arrive at school with everything they need (e.g. Religious school materials packed the night before and placed in a spot where they will not be forgotten.)

It is also very helpful when parents ask their children after each session what sort of preparation will be needed for the following session. In addition to communicating interest, it provides an opportunity to plan how and when the preparation will occur.

Students are expected on time unless prior arrangements have been made with the school office. Unexpected lateness creates disruption. Students who arrive 15 or more minutes late are to check in at the Religious School Office before going to class to be marked present.

Children With Special Needs

CBI is an ABLE Awarded Congregation: We have made the commitment to inclusion.

The concept of Jewish special education is one with strong halachic underpinnings. In Pirke Avot, one of our sages describes four different learners, each of whom has a specific learning style which must be addressed. Just as our Rabbis and sages had to accommodate for a diverse group of

learners, so, too, do we need to provide for children with diverse learning needs. We at Congregation Beth Israel are committed to meeting the needs of all our children. We work closely with the parents and public school to ensure that each child is taught according to his/her needs. When this is accomplished the result is positive self-esteem and Jewish continuity; to do otherwise is a risk we cannot afford to take. Please be sure to complete the Learning Profile that accompanies the Religious School Registration, and feel free to reach out to us with any concerns or issues you wish to share.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress respectfully. Please note that boys are expected to wear a *kipah* (*yarmulke*) in class. **Kipot for girls are optional but strongly encouraged.** On Shabbat and holidays, students should dress in a manner that reflects the holiness of the day. Hats are not an acceptable replacement for *kipot* in sanctuary services or during school *tefilot* sessions.

Drop Off Procedure

- A "DROP OFF" zone has been designated between the crosswalk and the path from the side parking lot.
- Students must exit vehicles on the passenger side only.
- Please do not block crosswalk.

Early Dismissal Procedure

Please go to the office first and sign your child out. Do not go to the classroom. He/she will meet you in the office.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of an emergency (e.g. fire, gas leak etc.), the Hebrew School students and staff will evacuate the building and proceed to an assembly point at Kramer Manor Park (the tennis courts) at the end of Shalom Way. They will remain there until it is safe to return to the building or until all of the students have been picked up by their parents or car pools.

In the event that all vehicular access is blocked follow the guidance of emergency personnel who will direct you to your children.

Education Fund

Weddings, birthdays, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, sympathy, special wishes, or congratulations of any kind can be acknowledged by a donation to the Education fund. Donations are used for enrichment materials that enhance our Religious School programs

Food/Kashrut

All food brought into the synagogue must conform to Congregation Beth Israel's Kashrut policy. Packaged foods must be unopened and labeled with Rabbinical supervision **OU** or **K**, or any approved hechsher (symbols certifying the product as kosher) which appears on the front. If you have questions please call the Synagogue office (908-889-1830). No food may be prepared outside and brought into the synagogue.

Religious school snacks:

Please note that we are a nut-free school: please do not bring products containing peanuts or other nuts in any form into the synagogue building. Please do not share your snacks.

We welcome Religious school students to bring a snack with them. All snacks brought into the

building must be certified kosher with one of the approved hechshers. Snacks must be dairy or vegetarian only. We encourage students to only bring healthy snacks such as cut up fruit or vegetables.

Homework

Judaism is a religion best learned through experience, not homework. However, sometimes homework is necessary, when connected to learning Hebrew, the performance of *mitzvot* (commandments), the celebration of holidays and the discussion of topics in the context of the home. We will attempt to insure that any homework given by the Religious School faculty will be connected in some way to Jewish living and practice, and should take no more than 20 minutes of any student's or family's time each week. We recognize that our students lead very busy lives and have large amounts of homework: we will make every attempt to limit homework to a reasonable amount, but encourage families to share the opportunity for practicing Jewish skills and sharing Jewish knowledge at home. **We do encourage the students to practice their Hebrew reading 5-10 minutes a day.**

Illness

If it becomes apparent that a child is not feeling well during school hours, every effort will be made to contact a parent. We will do our best to help each child who feels ill to relax and be comfortable as they wait for a parent or caregiver to arrive. We ask parents to make sure not to send children to school if they are sick.

Inclement Weather

On the rare occasion that school must be cancelled because of hazardous driving conditions, it will be announced through an email blast and a message will be left at the religious school extension (x207). If times permits it will be posted to weatherclosings.com.

Late Arrival

Late arrivals are disruptive to a class. While we realize that lateness cannot always be avoided and would prefer to have a student arrive late than not at all, we ask for the cooperation of all of our families in making an effort to keep late arrivals to a minimum.

Lost and Found

While Congregation Beth Israel cannot be held responsible for items left behind or lost at school, we make every effort to return items to their rightful owners. Parents are asked to label clothing and school items with their child's name. All lost and found items will be kept in the coat closet in a clearly marked box. At the end of each school year, remaining clothing will be donated to a clothing collection drive. Any questions concerning lost items should be directed to the synagogue office.

Office Hours

The main office at Congregation Beth Israel is open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Fridays and 8:30-12:30 on Sundays. Please feel free to call (908) 889-1830 or contact the Education Director at school@cbisp.org to make an appointment or with any questions.

Parental Involvement:

Obviously, we are thrilled when parents tell us that their child is having a great experience at school. It is also important that you tell us when there is a problem. Sometimes parents are reluctant to 'bother' us with their concerns or feel that we may not want to hear from them. In fact, your

feedback is extremely important to us, whether it is positive or negative. We cannot promise to solve every problem that arises, but we can and do promise to work on any problem that you call to our attention. In most cases, we are able to improve a problematic situation. But we need your help. Please keep in touch!

Children take their cue from their parents regarding their attitude toward Religious School and Jewish life. If you ask questions and take an interest in what goes on in Religious school, your child will care more, too. The same goes for attending school events. Children feel good about having their parents involved at school. They also feel disappointed when their parents are not among those attending a school program. In addition, we want you to know that your involvement is greatly valued by the teachers and synagogue leaders.

Parent School Communication

We actively encourage parents to become involved in their child's religious education!

Please be in regular contact with your child's teacher and the Educational Director. You may reach any member of the Religious School faculty or the Educational Director in the Religious School office at (908)889-1830. We encourage you to make an appointment to discuss your child's progress, school programs and any concerns or compliments you would like to share. We look forward to meeting with you!

HaDerech: Religious School Newsletter for Families: The Religious School will email a newsletter to all families. The newsletter will highlight programs and events going on in the school and synagogue.

Check out our Email Updates! The majority of our communications are done via email. Please make sure we have your updated email.

Religious School Committee: The Religious School Committee provides an opportunity for parents to get involved in the school through various projects and discuss issues of Jewish education and their impact on both the Religious School and the Congregation. If you are interested, please let us know by emailing school@cbisp.org.

Pick up Procedure

- There is to be no parking or waiting to pick up on either side of Shalom Way at anytime. If you plan to make a right onto to Martine Ave. as you exit, park in the lot across from the school. If you plan to make a left turn onto Martine Ave., you are encouraged to park in the lot next to the school and go down Washington Street.
- Parents will enter the building and pick up their children in the sanctuary. Enter from the double doors, find your child and receive acknowledgement from the teacher or Education Director that you have "claimed" their children. Then, exit through the doors to the Multi Purpose room.

Student Evaluation

Although a student cannot fail Judaism, we expect that each student in our school will attempt to achieve to the best of his or her ability. However, we do understand that not all students perform alike. We believe in academic achievement, and a love of learning, for the sake of learning. Therefore, we expect that our students will complete all their assignments in a thorough, studious manner, and will not treat their Jewish education any differently than their secular education. Teachers will send home a narrative of the subjects covered twice a year, but parents are welcome to be in contact with teachers throughout the year.

Telephones and Cellular Phones

A telephone is available in the Religious School office or the Synagogue office for students who need to call home before school or during school hours.

We will not permit any child to leave the building without being signed out by parent or guardian. Cell phone texts are not acceptable alternative communication. The Religious School phone number is (908) 889-1830

Tzedakah

Tzedakah is one of the most important mitzvot. As Jews, we are obligated to help one another. At Congregation Beth Israel we stress the importance of this important mitzvah not only in the giving of money, but in the giving of ourselves. Students will have an opportunity throughout the school year to participate in school wide Tzedakah projects.

During each school year, our students fulfill the *mitzvah* of giving *tzedakah* by collecting money during each session, and studying the *mitzvot* connected to the process of giving charitably. Our students will participate in the process of allocation of funds, and all collected funds are given to the chosen organizations mid year and at the end of the school year. **Please send your child with some change each session so that he or she may participate in the fulfillment of this *mitzvah*!**

We believe that the process of giving tzedakah is one in which our students should be integrally involved: this is a student directed initiative, organizations are picked by students according to their interests, and letters to the organizations which accompany the donations are written in part by students.

School Schedule

- Sunday 8:45 am – 10:45 am Gan- Kitah Bet
- Sunday 10:45am-12:00 (optional) Gan- Kitah Bet (additional fee)
- Sunday 8:45am – 12:00 pm Kitah Gimmel-Kitah Vav
- Sunday 10:00am -12:00 pm Kitah Zayin
- Wednesday 4:00pm – 6:15 pm Kitah Gimmel-Kitah Zayin
- Wednesday 6:00pm-7:30pm MACHON institute

Who's Who at Congregation Beth Israel?

Rabbi	George Nudell
Cantor	Matthew Axelrod
Executive Director	David Berkowitz
Education Director	Gail Beckman Buchbinder
School Secretary	Genevieve Isolde

2016-17 Religious School Staff

Gan (K) Mindy Schwartz- "Morah Mindy"
Kitah Alef (1st grade) Tamara Birbach- "Morah Tami"
Kitah Bet (2nd grade) Shoshana Greenblatt- "Morah Shoshana"
Kitah Gimmel (3rd grade) Lindsay Holeman- "Morah Leeba"
Yeda Fish- "Morah Yeda"
Pamela Birbach- "Morah Pam"
Kitah Dalet (4th grade) Suzi Adelson Wainer- "Morah Sarah"
Rachael Cohen- "Morah Raqueli"
Kitah Hey (5th grade) Emunah Sohn- "Morah Emunah"
Osnat Kalati- "Morah Osnat"
Kitah Vav (6th grade) Jason Siderman- "Moreh Jason"
Tali Elbaz- "Morah Tali"
Kitah Zayin (7th grade) Peter Kessel- "Moreh Pete"
Elizabeth Best- "Morah Elisheva"
Music: Shir Kalati – "Shir"
Hebrew Specialist- Dali Paul- "Morah Dali"

How to Get Things Done at Congregation Beth Israel

You may often find yourself wondering who to call for information about something specific at the synagogue. Here is a list of our departments and staff so that you will know where to direct your call.

I have a question about	Phone	Email Address	Contact Person
General questions about CBI, calendar questions, general program information, scheduling of events, yahrzeit information, services, Shabbat & holiday schedules, adult education, programming information	Ext. 202	office@cbisp.org	Office staff
Shabbat and holiday services, ritual issues, bar and bat mitzvah honors, and preparing Divrei Torah	Ext. 203	rabbi@cbisp.org	Rabbi George Nudell
Torah and haftarah reading, Bar and bat mitzvah Rehearsals, preparation for leading services,	Ext. 204	cantor@cbisp.org	Cantor Matt Axelrod
Religious school, synagogue service requirements, family support, study and preparation, tutoring, youth group information	Ext. 207	school@cbisp.org	Gail Beckman Buchbinder, Education Director
Membership, financial arrangements, Fees, building use, catering, contributions, general administrative questions, Bar/Bat Mitzvah information	Ext. 220	execdir@cbisp.org	Davida Berkowitz, Executive Director
Account information, billing, membership, fees, other financial questions	Ext. 206	accounts@cbisp.org	Stacy Margaritondo, Bookkeeping