

OHEV SHALOM OF BUCKS COUNTY RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

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PARENT HANDBOOK

5769-5770

2009-2010



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OUR SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM

Ohev Shalom provides formal Jewish education for children in Kindergarten through tenth grade. The course of study offered at Ohev Shalom provides our students with academic and experiential knowledge of Jewish tradition, culture, prayer, history and Torah. The primary goals of our school are fluency in reading Hebrew, comfort and familiarity with the *siddur* and Jewish liturgy, and a basic understanding of our prayers. The Sunday program for Gan (Kindergarten), Keshet (First Grade) and Mechina (Second Grade) is open to members' and non-members' children and meets for two and a half hours on Sunday mornings. The five-year core Religious School program (Third through Seventh Grades) is open to the children of Ohev Shalom members only, and students attend on Sunday mornings and Wednesday afternoons for just under five hours.

The Early Years (Kindergarten through Second Grade)

Gan* (Kindergarten) & Keshet (First Grade)

*garden

What are the Jewish holidays? What do they mean to us? What is the cycle of the Jewish year like? Our Gan & Keshet students receive an introduction to Judaism, the Jewish holidays and Shabbat. Students are introduced to each holiday on the Jewish calendar and the people and stories associated with them. As each holiday is celebrated, our little ones will experience the celebrations through the creation of personal ritual objects (such as Shabbat candlesticks, challah, □almud□ cup, and the havdalah spice box), tasting holiday treats, and learning the songs and music associated with each celebration. Songs, arts and crafts and stories are shared with the class as part of their Jewish learning.

Gan students meet Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

First Day of School: Sunday, September 13, 2009.

Family Sukkah Program: Tuesday, October 6, 2009, 5:00 p.m. (time subject to change).

Gan, Keshet, Mechina Tu B'Shevat Seder: Sunday, January 31, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Keshet* (First Grade)

*connection

Students are introduced to important stories from the Torah, such as Creation, Noah and the Ark, Joseph in Egypt, and Moses. Children will learn how each story in the Bible helped shape our Jewish religion and faith in God. Each holiday is celebrated with projects, songs, and a variety of activities. Hebrew letters and brief prayers are introduced in class. First grade students are given handouts with information about the holidays and their own books about Bible stories that are covered in class. These materials can be used at home to reinforce the children's learning. In 2009-2010, we will introduce the innovative Sarah and David Interactive Hebrew curriculum.

Kesher students meet Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

First Day of School: Sunday, September 13, 2009.

Family Sukkah Program: Tuesday, October 6, 2009, 5:00 p.m. (time subject to change).

Gan, Kesher, Mechina Tu B'Shevat Seder: Sunday, January 31, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Mechina* (Second Grade)

***preparatory**

The theme of second grade is exploration. The people, places, and symbols of our Jewish heritage will be the center of these students' studies throughout the year. Students begin to explore Jewish life through the synagogue, Israel, Shabbat, and Jewish ritual objects. From the talit to the kippah, from the Torah scroll and the ark to the symbols on the Seder plate, students will explore the meaning of symbols and how Jews have used them throughout all time. Each aspect of Jewish culture is examined in different projects and classroom activities. Students in second grade will also begin their formal introduction to the Hebrew language by focusing on Hebrew reading readiness. Our students will also encounter the blessing as a form of prayer as the berachot (blessings) over food are learned in class.

Mechina students meet Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

First Day of School: Sunday, September 13, 2009.

Family Sukkah Program: Tuesday, October 6, 2009, 5:00 p.m. (time subject to change).

Gan, Kesher, Mechina Tu B'Shevat Seder: Sunday, January 31, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Core Religious School Program: (Grades 3 through 7)

The Religious School curriculum is a "spiraling" curriculum in which students revisit similar areas of study each school year but on an increasingly sophisticated level and with different foci. Our goal is to grow with our students, facilitate their religious and spiritual growth and development, and share with them the joy and excitement of Jewish living.

Once students enter our core Religious School program in Kitah Aleph (Third Grade), they begin an intensive course of study, approximately half of which is dedicated to learning how to read, write and pray in Hebrew. Once Hebrew reading is introduced, the focus turns to familiarization with and, ultimately, mastery of the Friday night and Shabbat morning services. Basic prayer themes, key words and chants associated with each prayer are learned. The long-term goal of our Hebrew and tefilah (prayer) curriculum is to enable our students to walk into any Conservative synagogue and follow or even lead a service. In addition to the Friday night and Shabbat morning services, students study the other central prayers associated with holidays, life cycle events, and home rituals.

Students will develop their Hebrew skills partly through their study of Shabbat prayers, through which they will learn the structure of the siddur and meaning of the central prayers in both the Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services. Each week students in Kitah Aleph through Hei study specific tefilot.

Familiarity with the siddur (prayerbook) and Hebrew reading skills are further reinforced through participation in synagogue services. Each class, Bet through Hei, leads various Shabbat and holiday services, and the Aleph class has a Friday evening Consecration celebration when they receive their first prayer books. In addition, students must attend a required number of services and take turns leading prayers in the weekly Junior Congregation Shabbat service.

The study of Torah is also of utmost importance as our students examine and discuss the following questions: What is the Torah? What is the Bible? What do these ancient books mean to Jews today? What do they mean to me? Students will study the lives of our patriarchs and matriarchs and the formation of the people Israel. Through this history, our students begin to study the centrality of the State of Israel in Jewish life.

As each Jewish holiday approaches, themes and practices are introduced and reviewed in an age-appropriate progression. Students express this knowledge through song, dance, arts and crafts, and drama. Students are expected to participate in special school events that enhance the celebration of the Jewish holidays and allow them to relay what they have learned to their peers.

An important component of the religious school curriculum is the study of mitzvot (commandments). Students will focus on learning what a mitzvah is and what it means to be commanded. Each year students will study different types of ׀almud׀h associated with different aspects of Jewish life. Furthermore, every year of Religious School students collect tzedakah (social justice through giving) to donate to various funds of their own choosing. Various acts of tzedakah and gemilut hasadim (acts of lovingkindness) are also performed throughout the year.

Third through Seventh Grades meet Sundays, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and Wednesdays, 4:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. beginning Sunday, September 13.

Aleph (Third Grade)

Hebrew/Liturgy: The Hebrew language is introduced in an individually paced program focusing on reading, with a secondary concentration on vocabulary and writing. A highlight of the year is when the children receive their first siddurim (prayerbooks) in a special synagogue-wide ceremony. Selected Shabbat blessings and prayers are introduced in class and reinforced through a CD, prepared by Cantor Frimark, with all of the tefilot (prayers) that students need to learn in Kitah Aleph & Kitah Bet.

Judaica: Four areas are covered during the year in Kitah Aleph: Torah, □almud□h, chagim (holidays), and tefilot (prayers). Students begin work on studying the stories and events in the Torah. As each holiday approaches, the children learn the central themes and values expressed in that holiday, as well as the festival's berachot (blessings), ritual objects, and symbols. The Aleph class also starts to explore the meanings of the blessings that are recited during the holiday. During the course of the year there are also family programs that help reinforce the children's classroom experiences.

Kitah Aleph Welcome Shabbat: Friday evening, October 30, 2009

Kitah Aleph Parents' Wimple Workshop: Sunday, November 8, 2009

Kitah Aleph Consecration Ceremony: Friday evening, April 23, 2010

Bet (Fourth Grade)

Hebrew/Liturgy: The Bet class begins the year reviewing their Hebrew reading and writing. Students utilize a Hebrew language program that focuses on siddur Hebrew and they delve into such topics as the importance and meaning of prayer. The Bet students continue work on the Friday night service until understanding and mastery of the service is achieved. Our Kitah Bet students also engage in a tefilah unit focusing specifically on the *Shema U'virchoteha* (the *Shema* and its surrounding blessings).

Judaica: During the course of the year, Kitah Bet learns a variety of subjects including the Siddur, the synagogue, and tzedakah (charity). They also continue to study the Bible as they encounter the characters found in the Prophets and Writings such as Samson, Deborah, David, Ruth, and Esther. As the Bet class learns more about our Biblical ancestors, the children also begin to investigate their own family history and present their work to their classmates. Kitah Bet also engages in a year long study of the land and people of Israel for the first time where they explore the geography, history, and people of the land.

Kitah Bet Family Workshop Date: Sunday, December 6, 2009

Kitah Bet Shabbat Service – Friday evening, May 14, 2010

Gimel (Fifth Grade)

Hebrew/Liturgy: After briefly reviewing the previous year's work, Gimel students begin an in-depth study of the Saturday morning service. To aid in their more advanced study of tefilah, all students receive and utilize a special CD prepared by the Cantor for Kitot Gimel, Dalet and Hei. The students also continue to learn the Jewish way to pray and the customs surrounding prayer.

Judaica: Students learn about the milestones of Jewish life such as birth, naming ceremonies, beginning Jewish education, marriage, and death and mourning rituals. Kitah Gimel, for the first time, will explore Jewish history from the beginning of the

Middle Ages and will travel from the creation of the *Talmud*, to the times of Rashi, to the Jewish communities of Spain and Europe. Kitah Gimel students will investigate and learn how these events, though in the distant past, have shaped Judaism as we know it today. In addition to learning about Jewish history in other parts of the world, our students will explore the development of the American Jewish community and examine its place within contemporary world Jewry.

Kitah Gimel Family Workshop Date: Sunday, March 14, 2010

Kitah Gimel Shabbat Service: Friday evening, January 22, 2010

Kitah Dalet (Sixth Grade) & Kitah Hei (Seventh Grade):

Project Etgar - A Middle School Curriculum

One of the many wonderful academic and experiential programs our students encounter at the Ohev Shalom Religious School is *Project Etgar*. The Hebrew word “*etgar*” means challenge, and through this curriculum, created by the Jewish Theological Seminary’s Melton Center for Jewish Education, our students engage in discussion and activities centered around □almud Torah (the study of Torah), tefilah (Prayer), and Jewish concepts and values. At the Ohev Shalom Religious School we are honored to have been one of the original fifteen Religious Schools chosen to partake in this advanced curriculum.

Project Etgar is a student-centered middle school curriculum. Students work in groups, exploring primary texts and talking about issues that affect their daily lives and how they relate to Judaism’s basic values.

Project Etgar is an exciting, field-tested sixth- and seventh-grade curriculum designed to facilitate students’ search for answers to real-life questions through the lens of Conservative Judaism. Based upon 4MAT, an educational model that engages students in active learning while considering their individual learning styles, Project Etgar is a comprehensive educational program that:

- Offers text-based and experiential learning opportunities;
- Engages students in making personal and communal choices; and
- Gives students a new lens for exploring Judaism’s core values.

Students of middle school age face particular challenges in their Jewish studies. Project Etgar takes into account the specific developmental needs of this age group and is being piloted in supplementary schools. The units are intended to connect students’ lives to the wisdom of Jewish tradition through multi-sensory experience and study. The content of study in Project Etgar is wide-ranging, including units on friendship, the mitzvah of bikkur cholim (visiting the sick) and kashrut.

The Project Etgar Tefilah (prayer) curriculum follows the same 4MAT curricular model. Students explore not only the meaning and nusach (chanting) of specific prayers, but

also encounter the history and feelings surrounding our ancestors when these prayers were written.

In addition to their studies through Project Etgar, students in Kitah Dalet & Kitah Hei also learn and review grade-appropriate tefilot to assist them in preparing for b'nai mitzvah and create future service leaders.

Dalet (Sixth Grade)

Through Project Etgar, students in Kitah Dalet will begin the year by exploring the *Sifrei Kodesh* (holy texts) in Judaism. Students will use texts such as the Torah, Tanach, Mishnah, Talmud, and Shulchan Aruch to see what they have to say about topics relevant in our lives today. Kitah Dalet will discuss concepts such as friendship, Kashrut, and the treatment of animals. Our students will also learn the customs, practices, and importance of the mitzvah of bikkur cholim (visiting the sick).

Dalet and Hei Bnai Mitzvah Project Fair: Sunday, November 15, 2009

Kitah Dalet Family Workshop Dates: Sunday, January 24, 2010

Kitah Dalet Shabbat Service and Dinner: Friday, March 12, 2010

Hei (Seventh Grade)

We are products of history. What happens today is history tomorrow: the cycle is ongoing. The political and social realities of the Diaspora combined with the Jewish communities' value of *K'lal Yisrael* have influenced our past and continue to mold who we are. The Kitah Hei Project Etgar units allow students to examine some of the issues and responses, to trace the development of Jewish laws and practices, and see how our responsibility toward our own people has been such a crucial element in our survival. Topics that Kitah Hei will focus on will include pidyon shevuim (the mitzvah of redeeming captives), Zionism, and the development of the Siddur.

Dalet and Hei Bnai Mitzvah Project Fair: Sunday, November 15, 2009

Kitah Hei Class Trip to U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sunday, February 21, 2010

Kitah Hei Shabbat Service and Luncheon: Saturday morning, April 17, 2010

Kitah Hei Aliyah Ceremony: Sunday, May 16, 2010

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Service Attendance Requirement (Revised for 2009-2010)

We cannot teach about Jewish prayer in a vacuum! Our Religious School utilizes a prayer-based Hebrew/Tefilah curriculum and attendance at Shabbat, holiday and weekday services helps to enhance and reinforce what is taught in class. Our service attendance requirement, therefore, is an integral part of our academic program.

Please note that the service attendance requirements have been revised for the 2009-2010 school year. These revisions are intended to assure that by the time they become b'nai mitzvah our students will have become intimately familiar with the Shabbat morning service in which they will participate. In addition, these new requirements acknowledge the value of participating in services in other movements and in styles different from that of Ohev Shalom. At the same time, these revisions serve to deepen our students' connection with worship in our congregation and, in particular, with the joy of our family-friendly Friday night services.

Gan, Keshet, Mechina:

Students in **Gan, Keshet, and Mechina** are required to attend a minimum of 4 Shabbat (either Friday night or Shabbat morning) services at Ohev Shalom throughout the year.

Kitah Aleph, Kitah Bet, Kitah Gimel:

Students in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Grades are required to attend a minimum of 12 services throughout the year. At least 4 of these services MUST be Shabbat morning services at Ohev Shalom in either the Main Sanctuary service or Junior Congregation. *All other services may be a combination of Friday night, holiday (excluding Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur), or weekday services.* Up to 2 services attended in other synagogues may apply toward the fulfillment of the service attendance requirement as long as the student submits to his or her teacher or the school office a signed, a written note from a parent specifying the date of the service and the synagogue attended.

Kitah Dalet, Kitah Hei:

Students in the Sixth and Seventh Grades are required to attend a minimum of 14 Shabbat services throughout the year. At least 6 of these services MUST be Shabbat morning services at Ohev Shalom in either the Main Sanctuary service (for Dalet or Hei) or Junior Congregation (for Dalet only). All other services may be a combination of Friday night, holiday (excluding Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur), or weekday services. Up to 4 services attended in other synagogues may apply toward the fulfillment of the service attendance requirement as long as the student submits to his or her teacher or the school office a signed, a written note from a parent specifying the date of the service and the synagogue attended.

Junior Congregation (Revised for 2009-2010)

Junior Congregation meets on Shabbat mornings from 10:30 a.m. -11:45 a.m. for children in Gan through Kitah Dalet. In 2009-2010 each student in Kitah Aleph through Kitah Dalet will be assigned certain weeks in which they are required to lead certain prayers that they have learned or are currently learning in school. These assignments will be sent home and emailed well in advance of the given dates so that families can make the necessary arrangements to allow their children to fulfill this requirement.

PARENTS: PLEASE MAKE AN EXTRA EFFORT TO ATTEND JUNIOR

CONGREGATION ON THE WEEKS WHEN YOUR CHILD IS LEADING PART(S) OF THE SERVICE.

Also, PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL STUDENTS ARE INVITED & ENCOURAGED TO JOIN US EACH WEEK REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE LEADING PARTS OF THE SERVICE.

Kitah Hei students who have begun bar/bat mitzvah training are asked to attend services in the Main Sanctuary on a regular basis.

New in 2009-2010!

The Koach* Club

*strength (The numerical equivalent of the letters Chaf and Het that make up the word Koach equal 28.)

To promote a commitment to attending religious services and to reward those students who go above and beyond in displaying their dedication to attending services, Rabbi Perlstein will sponsor a trip to a theme park, Broadway play or other special adventure for all students who attend 28 or more services between the first and last day of the school year. Students must document their achievement by submitting service slips or parental notices for each of the services they attended.

Honor Roll and Special Recognition (Revised for 2009-2010)

Ohev Shalom recognizes that students may excel in many different ways in Religious School academically, non-academically, and in attendance and celebrates that excellence. Those students who exhibit excellence in their studies, in their effort, attitude and citizenship, and/or in their above-average attendance will be included in the Honor Roll at the end of each marking period.

Excellence will be determined based on a combination of at least two of the following criteria:

- The majority of a student's academic grades are "Demonstrates Strength" or "Outstanding;"
- The majority of a student's non-academic grades are "Demonstrates Strength" or "Outstanding;"
- School attendance in the respective marking period is at least 75% class attendance;
- Service attendance exceeds more than half of the student's respective service attendance requirement for the first marking period or more than the total service attendance requirement for the second marking period.

The final determination for being included on the Honor Roll rests with the Director of Congregational Learning in consultation with the student's teachers.

Students with perfect attendance at the end of the year, become members of the Koach Club, or make a significant and unusual contribution to the Religious School, Ohev Shalom or the community-at-large will receive Special Recognition.

Students who display flagrant disregard for the well being of other people or their property or otherwise behave in ways that are disruptive, unethical, or harmful to the community will not normally be considered for Honor Roll or other special recognition.

"Mentsch Tickets"

To encourage and reward positive contributions in the classroom or throughout the school, teachers and administrators may on occasion give students slips of paper called "mentsch tickets." "Mentsch tickets" are pieces of paper that congratulate the recipient on a job well done. Students should collect their tickets and redeem them 10 at a time for snacks at the P.T.O. snack sale before school each Wednesday. 10 tickets are equivalent to \$1.

Hebrew High School

Our Hebrew High School program meets on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. and is available to all students in Eighth through Tenth grades. For further information about the Ohev Shalom Hebrew High School, please contact the Director of Congregational Learning at (215) 322-9597.

Student and Family Information

In addition to the regular registration form, the Religious School requires submission of the following forms or information at the start of each new school year in order to best serve and care for your child(ren):

- Emergency contact information;
- Personal health information;
- Information about individual learning styles;
- Secular school IEPs where applicable.

If any of this information changes during the year, please notify the Religious School Office.

Back To School Night

Thursday, October 22, 7:15 p.m.

Please join us at Back to School Night to catch a glimpse of your child's Religious School experience at Ohev Shalom! Learn about the school overall and then meet your child(ren)'s teacher(s) to hear about the curriculum and future plans for that class.

The Parent-School Connection

We actively encourage parents to become involved in their child's religious education. Parents are welcome to visit their child(ren)'s classes throughout the year upon arrangement with their child(ren)'s teacher(s). Parents should also expect to be asked to assist with school functions on occasion. **Volunteerism in the school is always greatly appreciated by students, teachers, administrators and other parents.**

Please contact the school should you have any questions, comments or concerns during the school year by phone at (215) 322-9597. You may also contact Rabbi Aronson, the Director of Congregational Learning, at daronson@ohev.org.

Individual teachers also invite you to speak with them or write them with your concerns.

Derekh eretz, treating individuals courteously and respectfully, is something that we strive to teach in our Religious School. Parents can help model this important Jewish value for their children in their interactions with teachers, administrators and each other. (See the section on "Derekh Eretz" below.)

In communicating with the faculty or administration of the Religious School over matters that may upset or disappoint them, parents are asked to remember that well-intentioned people occasionally make mistakes and that the best way to solve a disagreement is through civil discourse. Public humiliation, gossip and libelous speech constitute major violations of Jewish law and, though tempting at times, should be avoided at all costs.

Parent-Teacher-Organization (P.T.O)

The P.T.O is the fundraising and parent-education arm of our Religious School. Once your children are registered you, as parents, are automatically members of the P.T.O. Through the efforts of this group, greatly needed funds are raised to purchase special equipment and to enhance school programming. In addition, the P.T.O. sponsors educational programs on parenting, child development and more. We urge you to help when you are called upon and to support the P.T.O.'s programs.

The P.T.O. also supports the Religious School by facilitating volunteerism among parents. Parents serve as room parents, classroom aides, snack salespeople, workers at

the Purim carnival and Chanukah celebration, and in many other capacities. *Volunteering in the school will help connect you to your child's Jewish education.* Therefore, please watch out for P.T.O. information and help out when you can!

Family Workshops

At least one family program is scheduled per grade level each year. These sessions are normally during school hours and provide opportunities for parents and children to learn together. The dates for each workshop are on the school calendar and listed in the curriculum section of this handbook . These workshops are mandatory for all students, and we actively encourage you to attend with your child(ren).

"Your Turn to Learn" Weekly E-newsletter

In order to help parents stay engaged with their child(ren)'s Jewish education, each week the Director of Congregational Learning sends out a report on the previous week's activities, thanks volunteers, provides important information, recognizes student achievement in their lives beyond Ohev Shalom, and announces upcoming events.

Please inform Rabbi Aronson when your child is doing something special in his or her life that you'd like others to know about or if your child has achieved something special through academics, sports, arts, etc. He will be sure to recognize your child in the weekly "Your Turn to Learn."

The newsletter also contains a "quiz" called Your Turn to Learn. The quiz is made up of questions written by students based on what they learn in the classroom each week. Please take particular note of the questions that come from your child(ren)'s class(es) and invite your child(ren) to discuss the answers with you. This is one way to get beyond "nothing" when you ask your child(ren) "what did you do today?"

PLEASE BE SURE TO OPEN ALL EMAIL THAT COMES FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL AND OHEV SHALOM SO THAT YOU DON'T MISS IMPORTANT INFORMATION. OHEV SHALOM AND THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ARE COMMITTED TO REDUCING OUR USE OF PAPER, MAKING EMAIL AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT MEANS OF COMMUNICATING WITH YOU.

Homework

Teachers in grades Aleph through Hei may give a TOTAL of one hour of homework per week.

Late and Early Arrival

Students are expected to arrive on time unless prior arrangements have been made with the school office. Teachers are instructed to begin their lessons promptly at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and 9:00 a.m. on Sundays.

Late Arrivals

Students, who arrive to class 15 or more minutes late, must be accompanied by a parent or other adult to the Religious School Office before going to class and the parent/adult must sign the student in.

Early Arrivals

Because of varied schedules, some students may need to arrive at school earlier than others. On Wednesdays students are permitted to arrive beginning at 3:30 p.m. – once all the pre-school children have left – to do homework and quietly spend time with their peers. If any student needs to arrive earlier than 3:30 p.m., please notify the Director of Congregational Learning in advance, and he will make special arrangements for your child.

Dismissal

We want our school to be a safe environment for our children. If someone other than an Ohev Shalom parent needs to pick up your child, please inform the office. **Only those authorized to pick-up a child from school will be allowed to leave with that child. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE TO THIS RULE.**

Early Dismissal

IF A PARENT OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE PERSON IS PICKING UP A STUDENT EARLY, THE PARENT MUST PHYSICALLY COME INTO THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL OFFICE AND SIGN THE STUDENT OUT. The office MUST always know when a student has left the building before dismissal, and having someone come into the office to sign the student out is the most effective way for us to get that information. In addition, for the safety of our students, no student will be allowed to stand alone outside the building awaiting a ride.

If you know in advance that you need to pick your child up early, please send a note to the child's teacher informing him/her that the student needs to leave early. This way the teacher can send the student to the office with an aide at the proper time and the class will not be disrupted. **EVEN WITH A NOTE, THE PARENT MUST STILL COME IN TO SIGN THE STUDENT OUT.**

Students are not permitted to use their cell phones during class. Therefore, **DO NOT TEXT OR CALL YOUR CHILD ON A CELLPHONE TO LET HIM/HER KNOW THAT YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY OR THAT YOU HAVE ARRIVED.** Rather, please call ahead to the school office – (215) 322-9597 – and ask us to forward a message to

your child. We will be happy to ask the teacher to dismiss the student and allow the student to wait for you in the office or in lobby.

Please note that we are happy to speak with all coaches, play directors, band leaders, etc. to explain the importance of attending our full Religious School program. Over the years, we have found these members of the community to be very understanding and cooperative.

Parking Lot Procedure

The following procedures must be followed to ensure the safety your children, to ensure fairness to all the parents patiently waiting in line, and to facilitate a speedy and orderly process for parents to pick up and drop off their children. Please read carefully.

1. Form two lines when pulling into the parking lot and move as close to the vehicle in front of you as possible. We must make room for a lot of vehicles and avoid a back-up on 2nd Street Pike.

2. DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR UNATTENDED TO PICK UP A CHILD, UNLESS YOU'VE PARKED IN A DESIGNATED PARKING SPACE. Leaving your car unattended in the line blocks the flow of traffic for all those cars behind you. If you do park in a parking space, please wait to back out until the car line has thinned out and then enter the line going with the flow of traffic.

3. The cars at the front of the lines must not begin moving until all children are safely in their cars and drivers are given the OK signal from the teachers on duty to move. Drivers who begin pulling out of line as soon as their passengers get to their cars, put the children still looking for their rides in danger.

4. If you arrive to pick up your children after the car line has begun to move, please line up at the back of the line and pick up your children under the canopy. Please do not leave your car and walk up to the canopy to get your child. Once the car line begins to move, children are instructed to wait until a parent drives up under the canopy. The children are supervised by teachers and are safer there.

5. DO NOT MAKE U-TURNS TO LEAVE THE LOT IN FRONT OF CARS THAT HAVE BEEN PATIENTLY WAITING TO LEAVE! U-turns are not only dangerous to children still trying to find their cars, but also are discourteous to parents who are cooperating and following dismissal rules.

6. Do not ask your children to meet you outside of our parking lot. We are responsible for their safety and will not allow them to walk out of the parking lot unsupervised.

7. DO NOT CALL TO YOUR CHILD TO COME TO YOUR CAR WHEN THE VEHICLES ARE ALREADY MOVING! Children who cannot find their cars are asked

to get back to the school entrance under the canopy and wait for their ride to come around. At no time will a student be allowed to run to a car once the line is moving.

8. DO NOT MAKE LEFT TURNS OUT OF THE PARKING LOT DURING DISMISSAL TIMES! There is a light at the cut through road next to the Township Library, which makes it easy to make a right turn out of our parking lot and get to where you want to go. Turn left at the light at Upper Holland Road and turn left onto the Township Complex, which will bring you to a light at the intersection of Route 332.

9. All of our teachers put themselves at risk by supervising dismissal after school lets out. Please cooperate with them and be courteous.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience with dismissal. Your children's safety is a priority to all of us.

Attendance Policy

Our school cannot function without students! Please have your child here for all scheduled classes and events. Students **may not miss more than 25% of classes during the school year** to be included on the Honor Roll. Students who miss school are responsible for contacting a classmate to get the class work and any homework given. Our synagogue directory can provide you with the necessary information.

Students who miss an excessive number of class sessions (25% or more) may receive an 'I' (Incomplete) for the course, or year, and will be asked to satisfactorily complete work missed.

Derech Eretz and Discipline

Derech Eretz literally means "the way of the world" and connotes the proper way to behave as individuals and as Jews. This include good manners, respect for people, and norms of good behavior.

At Ohev Shalom we expect our students to behave with a strong sense of Derech Eretz:

- ✧ Treating one another with respect and kindness;
- ✧ Treating our teachers and staff with respect;
- ✧ Respect of sacred texts that we will be studying;
- ✧ Maintaining the property and physical space in as good or better condition than when it was entered; and
- ✧ Being prepared for class with a notebook, pen, homework, and kippah out of respect for the learning environment in which we immerse ourselves.

Our Religious School is a Jewish School that upholds Jewish values. The school must be a place where students, teachers and families feel safe and supported. We expect that

students, teachers and families will honor each other and act with dignity and respect at all times.

Teachers and students will work at the beginning of the year to create a classroom code of conduct that will serve as the guiding principles for behavior and personal discipline in the classroom. A student who is unable to abide by their classroom rules will be asked to meet with the teacher and discuss solutions for any problems or issues that might arise. If the situation continues, the Director of Congregational Learning will meet with the student and parents.

The Religious School is eager to involve parents in all stages of the disciplinary process. We hope that parents will join us as partners in their child's education!

Cell Phone Policy (new in 2009-2010)

Cell phones are an incredible convenience and often a lot of fun to play with. Moreover, in our society cell phones have become virtually essential for a variety of reasons. However, use of cell phones in an instructional setting are highly distracting and disruptive to the learning environment. Therefore, **CELL PHONE USE DURING CLASSES, ASSEMBLIES, SERVICES OR OTHER SCHOOL-RELATED FUNCTIONS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF THE TEACHER.** Phones may be used and students may check for messages before and after school hours and during breaks between classes ONLY.

Teachers have been instructed to follow the following procedure:

- First violation of the year – The teacher will warn the student and ask him/her to put the phone away.
- Second violation of the year – The teacher will take the phone away, turn it off, and hold it at the front of the room until the end of school that day.
- Third violation of the year – The teacher will take the phone away, turn it off and require a parent or guardian to pick it up at his/her convenience. The phone will be kept in a secure place by the Director of Congregational Learning until the parent or guardian comes to pick it up.

Parents, you can help prevent your child's cell phone from being confiscated by not calling or texting your child during school hours. If you MUST contact your child, please phone the office at 215-322-9597 and someone will gladly convey your message to your child in a timely manner. Alternatively, you may arrange with your child to have him/her turn the phone completely off during school functions but to have him/her check the phone at each permissible opportunity.

Kashrut/Food in School/Snack Time

All food brought into Ohev Shalom must be **Kosher Dairy or Parve**. This means it must be in a sealed package marked with a registered trademark kosher insignia or in its

natural state (e.g. apples, oranges, etc). All snacks sold here at Ohev Shalom correspond with these Kashrut requirements.

Please make sure that your **child's allergy information** is on file as we may give out food on special class occasions. Every effort is made to ensure that all foods served by the Religious School are nut-free.

Our **P.T.O.** runs a snack sale on Wednesdays from 3:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Children are welcome to buy snacks, including kosher pizza, at that time. A complete list of all snacks and costs will be sent out to all Religious School families early in the school year. If your child is unable to arrive during the designated snack time, you may send in a kosher dairy snack for him/her.

On Sundays, our United Synagogue Youth chapter sells bagels if it does not have a scheduled program. All proceeds from those sales go to tzedakah.

Books and Materials for Class

Textbooks and other educational materials will be distributed throughout the year. The cost of these books is included in the school tuition. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to bring these books to class. **Students will be charged for any textbook or supplementary media, such as a CD, that needs to be replaced.**

Textbooks and CDs that accompany the textbooks must be returned in good condition at the end of the school year. This does not include workbooks or other books in which students are expected to write.

Students should also bring a pen/pencil, notebook, kippah (see below), a donation to tzedakah and any class assignments. From time to time, a teacher might also request by email or by a note home that a child bring in something special for a class session. Please also check "Your Turn to Learn" for this information.

Siddurim (Prayer books)

After learning to read Hebrew, the Aleph class receives a Siddur in a ceremony that takes place during a Friday evening service. From this point onward, students are required to take care of their Siddur and bring it to school for class.

Kippot (Skullcaps or Yarmulkes)

Male students are required and female students are encouraged to wear a kippah when at Ohev Shalom as a traditional sign of respect and devotion to God. It is strongly recommended that each student bring his or her own kippah. Extras are available at the school office.

Emergency School Closing

In case of inclement weather or other emergencies, the Ohev Shalom Religious School closing number is #1167 on KYW News Radio/TV (1060AM). Every effort will be made, when possible, to keep you informed on the synagogue website (www.ohev.org), and the school answering machines. In the event of inclement weather, please check the TV, radio and website first, before calling the school, if you are not sure.

Student Progress Reports

Twice each year, the religious school mails Progress Reports to all students in Gan (Kindergarten) through Kitah Hei (Seventh Grade). Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's progress at any time during the year with their child's teacher or the Director of Congregational Learning.

Tutoring and Enrichment

Special tutoring is available at Ohev Shalom Religious School for remediation as well as enrichment. Students are generally recommended by their classroom teacher to participate in this program. A parent may also submit a request to have a child tutored. All final decisions for tutoring and enrichment, however, will be determined by the Director of Congregational Learning in consultation with the parties involved.

Health and Safety

If it becomes clear that a student is not feeling well during school hours, every effort will be made to contact a parent. If a child requires prescribed medication during school hours, parents are required to contact the Religious School Office. We will not distribute any medication without a parent's or doctor's written permission. **Please make sure that we are informed of any allergies and pertinent health information – including diagnoses of learning differences, ADHD, or other emotional or psychological conditions -- so that we can best accommodate your child's needs.**

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal policy from our schools (not applicable to 8th grade students who are becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah during the year) follows:

- If a child is withdrawn prior to attending the first class, the family is entitled to a 100% credit in tuition.
- If a child is withdrawn during the first 2 weeks (inclusive), the family is entitled to a 75% credit in tuition.
- If a child is withdrawn during weeks 3 or 4 (inclusive), the family is entitled to a 25% credit in tuition.
- After four (4) weeks, no credit will be provided.
- The Finance Committee will review special situations.
- Report cards will be held back for students whose parents are delinquent in paying dues.
- No refund will be provided if a student is expelled for any reason from Religious School or Hebrew High School.