

**TYNER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK**

2024-2025 • 5784-5785



**5725 Walnut Lake Road • West Bloomfield, MI 48323
248-661-5725 • temple-israel.org**

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A MESSAGE TO OUR FAMILIES

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Tyner Religious School at Temple Israel! We are very proud of our large school which draws families all over Metro Detroit. We strive to provide the tools for our students to participate actively as Reform Jews in their own homes as well as within the greater Jewish community.

Your decision to involve your children in our Religious School is an important one. Participating in our educational program grounds you in a community that shares and supports your beliefs, practices, and spiritual pursuits. Through our many programs, students will investigate the stories of their origins and imagine what that means for their future; they will question God and search for the sacred in the ordinary; and they will grapple with moral responsibility. Through our many unique programs, we are committed to educating your children with great spirit and innovative techniques.

As we continue to strive toward educational advancement, we will be exploring new ways to create meaningful Jewish experiences for our families.

I am looking forward to getting to know each of you throughout the school year. We, the education staff, are here to serve as guides and resources for you. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions, concerns, or just to say hello.

We hope you will find Temple Israel to be an engaging, stimulating place for your entire family!

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Arianna Gordon

Director of Education & Lifelong Learning

agordon@temple-israel.org

248-661-5725

TYNER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL STAFF

Our Temple Israel Tyner Religious School staff is always available to answer questions or to be of help. Please call us at 248-661-5725.

Rabbi Arianna Gordon, RJE

Director, Education & Lifelong Learning

agordon@temple-israel.org

I am a true Michigander - I was born and raised in Huntington Woods. I graduated from Brandeis University before going on to Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion to become a Rabbi and earn my Master's in Jewish Education. I spent three years working in Cleveland as Religious School Director at The Temple - Tifereth Israel before returning to Detroit and to Temple Israel. I am looking forward to a phenomenal year of learning, with lots of exciting and meaningful Jewish education experiences!

Heidi Pevos

Assistant Religious School Director and Madrichim Coordinator

hpevos@temple-israel.org

I am thrilled to be a full-time member of the Temple Israel team! I started at Temple as a sub and Judaica/Hebrew teacher in 2010 and took on the Assistant Director role in August of 2022. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Illinois State University and an Associate's degree in Graphic Design from The Art Institute of Michigan. I have over twenty years of teaching experience, from preschool through middle school. I look forward to working with our marvelous Madrichim and planning more fantastic family programs!

Lisa Kaplan

Assistant to Rabbi Gordon

lkaplan@temple-israel.org

I joined the staff at Temple Israel in 2012, and have been busy coordinating religious school registration, classes and events, and our adult education program. I began my career as a CPA with a BBA from the University of Michigan. In later years, I earned a Professional Teaching Certificate in History, Social Studies, and Economics and studied at the Florence Melton School of Adult Jewish Learning. I enjoyed teaching at all levels, while raising my family, and then moved into the administrative offices. I am delighted to be part of the Tyner team, and to be working in our education office!

Rochelle Morais

Special Education Coordinator

rmorais@temple-israel.org

I am so excited to be at Tyner Religious School as the Special Education Coordinator. I have my Master's degree in Special Education K-12. I have certification in the areas of Cognitive and Learning Disabilities. I have a particular interest in the area of reading disabilities, and I am trained in Phonics First, an Orton Gillingham reading program designed for students who have reading disabilities. When not at work, I enjoy needlepoint, Israeli dancing, horseback riding and of course hanging out with my four kids and our dog.

TYNER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL START DATES

PK – 6th grade

Sunday classes begin September 8, 2024

9:30 – 11:30 am

Temple Israel

4 – 6th grade Hebrew

In addition to Sunday mornings, your child will be meeting with a Hebrew teacher. Your child's tutor will reach out to you regarding a start date/time.

7 – 12th grades

Monday classes begin September 9, 2024

6:00-6:30 pm – Dinner

6:30-7:30 pm – Classes

Temple Israel

SCHOOL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

By enrolling your child in Religious School you are demonstrating that you want to provide them with the opportunity to participate in Judaism, learn about our culture, religion, the Hebrew language, and to contribute to the Jewish community. To achieve these goals, consistent attendance and commitment on your part is vital. Regular attendance supports an atmosphere of mutual respect for fellow students, teachers, administrators, and the learning process. It promotes a feeling of community and encourages personal responsibility. Through consistent attendance, students build the skills and knowledge-base necessary to achieve the goals of Jewish education. Regular attendance gives your child time to master the skills and material that form the basis for becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah and for adult participation in Jewish life.

At Temple Israel, we believe that at least 75% attendance is necessary to comfortably achieve our educational goals. Students with poor attendance or who are chronically tardy may require spring/summer tutoring at your expense. If there are issues affecting attendance, please contact our Religious School administrator to discuss the situation and make arrangements.

CELL PHONES

Cell phone calls and texting will not be permitted during class time. Our teachers may take away a student's cell phone during class if it proves to be a distraction. Please do not send your child a text message or call them on their cell phone. If you need to reach your child during class, please call the Religious School office, and we will relay the message.

DISCIPLINE

Appropriate school behavior is expected of all students. Behavior must be respectful of school and Temple property, personnel, and procedures. Temple Israel Tyner Religious School reflects the value of "Kavod La'Briot" - respect and honor of every human being. There will be no tolerance for bullying, ridicule, or teasing. Behavior that disrupts the school's physical, social or educational environment will call for disciplinary procedures.

The Director of Education or the appropriate supervisor will notify parents of any significant disciplinary action. This may result in a conference between parent, teacher, student and the Director of Education or the appropriate supervisor before the student may return to the classroom. In the event of recurring problems, the student will not be permitted back to school without a parent present.

DRESS CODE

Regular school attire is appropriate. Clothing should represent modest appearance. Students may be asked to change, if necessary, or be sent home. Students who will be on the Bimah are asked to wear clothes appropriate for the sanctuary.

GUESTS

If your overnight guest must attend with your child, please call the school office so that accommodations can be made. A pass from the office must be obtained before class begins.

OBSERVATIONS

If you wish to visit or sit in on your child's class, please call the Religious School office, in advance, to make your request. We welcome parents to observe their child's class.

TZEDAKAH

Learning about the mitzvah of Tzedakah is an integral part of our curriculum. Please reinforce the importance of Tzedakah with your child and encourage their participation. Tzedakah allocation will be determined annually by individual classes or the religious school office.

SNACKS

Due to the severe allergies of many of our students, and cross-contamination issues, there will be no organized snack time during religious school. Please do not send your child to class with food of any kind. If your child requires a snack due to a medical condition, please contact the school office to make appropriate arrangements.

Occasionally, food may be provided to students as part of a specific program. When this occurs, we will make every effort to make sure that these are free of any nut products. Though we try to be as sensitive as we can to the many food allergies, we share our classroom space, and we cannot guarantee that we are entirely nut or allergen free. Please include all your child's food allergies and restrictions on their Religious School registration form and communicate this information to their teacher.

PLACEMENT CHANGES

Classroom placement changes cannot be made on the first day of school. Changes will be considered after the start of school. However, we cannot guarantee that friendship requests will be granted due to class sizes and other related factors. We have done our best to place students in the appropriate class while maintaining class size and reviewing academic considerations. If you feel an error has been made or you are requesting an adjustment, please contact us after the first day of school.

SAFETY AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

DISMISSAL FROM TEMPLE ISRAEL

PK – 3rd grades

Please enter and exit from the Tyner entrance. Pick up your child from their classroom beginning at 11:30 am.

4 – 6th grades

Fourth through sixth grade students will be dismissed from their classrooms at 11:30 am. Students may be dropped off and picked up from the sanctuary entrance via the car line. Students may also be dropped off and picked up from their classroom.

Early dismissal

Students must bring a note to the Religious School office before school begins on that day. This is important for your child's safety and security. Please arrive ten minutes prior to the time you need to retrieve your child. An adult must come into the school office and sign out the student for the day. Students will then meet you or their designated adult (over 18 years old) in the Religious School office. Please do not go directly to the classroom. Please note: Your child will only be released to those names indicated on their emergency contact form. Please keep this information up to date.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please exercise extreme caution in our driveways and parking lot. Our school children often move quickly and are not always careful when crossing to and from the building. We ask that you please obey all posted signs and slow down. Your patience is appreciated. Local law enforcement officers will be present to coordinate traffic flow. Please follow their directions.

EMERGENCY ALERTS

Communication is an important component of our emergency plan. In the event of a weather-related emergency, fire, police activity or non-scheduled school closure, we will contact you with pertinent information. As part of our communication strategy, we have implemented an automated text messaging system. Please look for an email to sign up to receive text messages. If we must cancel school, you will receive a text message and an email with details of the alert.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of serious inclement weather, you will receive a text message through ShulCloud detailing the closure of school. Please also check the Temple Israel Facebook page for updates.

If school is already in session, and we have decided to close, please enter through the Tyner entrance. Parents should then go to the office to sign out their children. Staff will escort children to the office for pickup. Parents should not go directly to their child's classroom if there is a need for early dismissal.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

It is crucial that we have current phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and emergency contact information. Please update your Temple Israel account if there are any changes during the year. You may also update your information by contacting Lisa Kaplan in the Religious School Office at 248-661-5725 or lkaplan@temple-israel.org. We must always be able to reach a parent or emergency contact.

ACADEMICS

PK – 6th GRADE JUDAICA

Grades PK through 6th grade classes meet on Sunday mornings for learning focused on Jewish values, holidays, Torah stories, and Tikkun Olam. The second hour of our morning focuses on a school wide curriculum topic. Regular family education events will enhance our program.

4 – 6th GRADE HEBREW

Virtual 1:1 Hebrew tutoring will be offered throughout the week based on individually selected and convenient times. Tutoring sessions are 25-30 minutes in length. Tutors are provided through Temple Israel only. Families and tutors will arrange a mutually agreed upon date and time.

GRADE-LEVEL CURRICULUM

Pre-K/KINDERGARTEN

Students will begin their Jewish journey with an introduction to the concept of “being Jewish” and having a Jewish identity. They will develop a connection to the Temple and Religious School, through the theme of “Where am I Jewish?”

Students will build the foundations of Jewish life and practice by exploring the integral role Judaism plays in their lives. Students will learn about holidays, the synagogue, Jewish symbols, and Israel.

1st GRADE

Students continue learning about Jewish holidays and begin to learn about Jewish values. Learning about tzedakah, keeping Kosher, and Israel are important topics covered, as we focus on “How am I Jewish.”

Birkat Hayeladim (Consecration): First graders and their families are invited to celebrate the beginning of their formal Jewish Education with study, song and a special blessing from our clergy.

2nd GRADE

Students study the significance of Hebrew names, creating a Jewish home, and being a part of a Jewish community. Students continue to make personal connections to their Temple and their Jewish community in Michigan, as they discuss “What does Jewish mean to me?”

3rd GRADE

The focus for third grade is “God and Me.” Students explore different views of God through lessons on “God Shopping.” Some of these views include God as the Ruler of the Universe and God as a Watchmaker. Students will reflect at the end of the year and see how their view of God has evolved. Third grade also explores Jewish values including betzelem elohim (We are created in the image of God) and koach hadibbur (the power of speech).

4th GRADE

Jewish values are studied more deeply in fourth grade. Fourth grade students explore values vs. commandments, kindness, compassion, health and self-care (shmirat haguf), and achrayut (responsibility). In addition, fourth grade students begin 1:1 Hebrew lessons on a weekly basis.

5th GRADE

Through the theme of “Cycles of My Jewish Life,” fifth grade students learn about Jewish ritual objects, the Jewish calendar, and lifecycle events. Bris/Baby namings, Religious School lifecycle events (consecration, confirmation, graduation, Bar/Bat Mitzvah), Jewish weddings, and Jewish funerals are some of the topics covered.

6th GRADE

Students learn about the timeline of Jewish history by studying great Jewish communities and individuals, the role of communal experience in Jewish history, and the importance of our ethical principals in modern daily life. Biblical history, Rabbinic history, immigration, and American Jewish history are some of the topics covered.

7th and 8th GRADE

Classes meet Monday nights at Temple Israel. Students learn about Jewish identity, Holocaust, Israel, Tikkun Olam, and involvement in the community.

9 - 12th GRADE

Classes meet Mondays at Temple Israel. ROOTS is Temple Israel's experiential learning program that encourages community-building, leadership skills, development of Jewish identity, and a deep connection to Jewish life. They will learn and connect in ways that are personally meaningful and Jewishly significant, getting to know their peers and clergy in formal and informal settings. Tenth grade students prepare for a special Confirmation service, held on Erev Shavuot. Twelfth graders participate in a beautiful service led by members of the graduating class at the end of the year.

MADRICHIM

The Madrichim (classroom assistants or student shadows) Program is open to our 8th – 12th grade students. Our Madrichim work on Sundays helping in our classrooms and/or being shadows for our students with special needs. Students in this program spend their 8th grade year training and receive classroom placements the second half of the year. Beginning in 9th grade, students are assigned a placement and qualify for a stipend or service hours. Students must be approved to participate in this program. If you would like more information, please contact Heidi Pevos at hpevos@temple-israel.org.

BAR AND BAT MITZVAH

Bar and Bat Mitzvah scheduling is coordinated by Marla Bednarsh. If you have any questions about Bar and Bat Mitzvah dates, tutoring, rehearsals, or mitzvah projects, you may reach Marla at mbednarsh@temple-israel.org.

TYNER RELIGIOUS SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

Sunday	8:30 am – 12:15 pm
Monday	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Thursday	8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Friday	8:30 am – 2:30 pm

