



708 Ridge Pike



Lafayette Hill, PA 19444



(610) 828-1086

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023 - 2024

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September, 2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The Early Childhood Education Center at Congregation Or Ami. The school, which was founded in 1977 with a small group of preschoolers, has grown to serve the community and surrounding areas.

This handbook, especially designed for you, will help answer your questions about the ECE Center. Please spend a few moments of your time reading carefully through the handbook and keep it as a guide to refer to throughout the year. By working as one, both the home and the school can assist your child in having a pleasant and positive educational experience.

The staff and I are looking forward to a wonderful year with you and your children. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time. Feel free to email or call me if there is anything you wish to discuss or even to just say hello.

Shalom,

*Michelle Ruder
Director*

The ECE Center at Congregation Or Ami does not discriminate with regard to learning differences, religious, national, ethnic, or racial background.

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

It is the mission of the ECE Center at Congregation Or Ami that each child will develop a passion for learning and a love of Jewish living as he or she grows socially, academically and spiritually.

Therefore, the ECE Center is dedicated to working with families to ensure that each child

- Interacts socially in positive ways
- Participates in developmentally appropriate academic activities
- Practices core Jewish values
- Is prepared to enter Kindergarten at the appropriate time

Each child will grow socially through

- A positive sense of self created in a warm, safe and nurturing environment
- An ability to interact respectfully with others and solve problems peacefully
- The appreciation of diversity in our community
- The development of independent life skills

Each child will grow academically through

- A foundation for ongoing learning based on a progressive, experiential and play-based curriculum
- Outdoor and indoor play, encompassing both gross and fine motor skills
- Opportunities to discover individual potential through academic learning and original and stimulating creative arts and sports programs
- Meaningful exploration of the world around us

Each child will grow spiritually through

- A connection to Jewish and Israeli culture, language and heritage
- The expression of core Jewish values which include Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), Tzedakah (acting justly with others), and Mitzvot (fulfilling sacred obligations)
- The encouragement of children and their families to participate in Shabbat and Jewish holiday celebrations and to involve them in the synagogue and Jewish community

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook contains important information regarding the policies and procedures for the operation of the ECE Center. Keep this book as a reference resource and refer to it throughout the school year. Please note that the information and policies contained in this handbook may be subject to change at the discretion of the Director without notice.

DIRECTORY

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ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and enrollment fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of \$50.00 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable with receipt of the contract. A \$200.00 deposit is required for half day students and a \$600.00 deposit is required for fulltime students. These deposits are applied to tuition.

****Please Note****

Full time Pre-K Students:

- **Your enrollment contract ends the Thursday prior to the start of Camp Or Ami**

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 3 months to 5 years of age.

Our process for introducing children to our program is an individual meeting with you and your child's teacher before entering our program.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Inclusion

It is the desire of the Early Childhood Center at Congregation Or Ami to offer a quality early childhood program to as many children of our synagogue and the local community as possible. Parents wishing to enroll their child who has a diagnosed or suspected disability, disorder, developmental delay or other needs in the Early Childhood Education Center are requested to have their child's case manager or therapist(s) visit our school to evaluate the school's ability to meet the prospective student's needs. We encourage openness and communication about any identified or suspected learning/developmental need. **An IEP or IFSP must be on record in the Director's office in a locked space.** Our program welcomes support teams to work in tandem with our classroom teachers to provide the best possible learning environment for children who have learning/developmental needs. The Early Childhood Education Center at Congregation Or Ami believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

If, during the school year, the lead classroom teacher and the Director feel a child's needs are not being met in the current classroom environment, our program reserves the right to require a professional screening to determine how best to help the child in his/her growth and development. It is the parents' responsibility to obtain an appropriate services team and to bear the financial burden of the services. Please note that many services are available at no charge through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

We reserve the right to terminate the enrollment of a child whose behavior, learning needs or physical needs would be better served in a different setting.

ATTENDANCE

Children must be signed in daily on their classroom attendance sheet. Please also note the time of departure and any change in transportation/pick-up.

PLEASE NOTE: Parents MUST notify the ECE Center if their child will be absent or arriving late. At times, it may be necessary to pull a staff member from a classroom due to staff illness/absence if ratios will allow. Arrival after 9:10 AM without prior notification could impact classroom ratios and create a staffing issue.

Please make every effort to arrive by 9:00 am, as this is the start of the school day. We are required by the State of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services to take prompt attendance daily by 9:15 am and appreciate your assistance in facilitating this process. If you arrive after 9:15 am, you MUST bring your child to the ECE Center Office to sign them in.

Children's attendance is based solely on the registration document on file in the ECE Center Office. If at any point an overall schedule change is required, please contact the Director.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

At the ECE Center at Congregation Or Ami we have some basic rules for the health and safety of the children. We try to arrange the environment to avoid problem situations. We tailor our expectations to fit the development levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior. Teachers receive ongoing staff training in the area of positive approaches to discipline and strategies to use with challenging behaviors. Children participate in establishing school rules and policies as appropriate. These rules are posted at the preschool. We **do** intervene; we **do not** use corporal punishment, or spanking. A child is **never** subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse. A child is **never** denied food or force fed as a form of punishment. A child is **never** punished for wetting, soiling or not using the toilet. (These are in accordance to licensing regulations.)

We encourage children to develop their own control, autonomy, management of feelings, problem solving, and find their own rewards in cooperative social behavior. The underlying goal of all discipline at the preschool is to help children develop inner self-controls to replace adult-maintained external controls. Whenever a conflict arises, we support children in finding their own solutions, while also promoting the development of self-control and empathy within each individual child. Teachers set clear, consistent limits and strive to develop close, nurturing relationships with all children enrolled.

We avoid the use of the words "no" and "don't" unless a child is in danger, and even then follow it with a reason, such as "that isn't safe" or "I can't let you hit Susan with the block because it hurts her." School rules mostly relate to health and safety. Teachers avoid ultimatums that force power struggles.

The ECE Center's approach to behavior guidance (discipline) is based on the acceptance of a wide range of children's feelings and the encouragement of self-control. Respect for each other and the environment are emphasized through the development of social skills such as turn-taking, helping and cooperation. Children are encouraged, individually and as a group, to generate possible solutions to conflicts, to predict various outcomes, and to choose alternative behaviors. We seek to balance the needs of the child for autonomy and individual attention, with the needs of the group for the consistent expectations which embrace a sense of fairness. We work as a team with other teachers and with parents. Parents are

encouraged to discuss any questions regarding classroom and behavior management with the Lead Teacher, Teacher and/or Director. We analyze possible reasons for the behavior problems and make whatever adjustments in the environment that we can. We offer choices, try to redirect activity, point out natural or logical consequences of different behaviors, help the child individually or in a group to problem solve. We give hugs and words of encouragement.

The following general behavior management strategies are frequently used in the ECE Center:

- Positive statements are made which tell the child the correct thing to do. For example: “Turn the pages carefully,” rather than “Don’t tear the book!”
- Positive redirection is used to clarify when and where a certain behavior is acceptable. i.e., “Save your running until we go outside” or “use walking feet, please” instead of “No running inside!”
- Feelings are validated, and children are guided to socially acceptable means of expressing anger and frustration, such as using words, tearing newspaper, pounding play dough or a pillow.
- The “deed” is separated from the “doer,” relaying the message that “I like and accept you unconditionally but I do not like what you did.”
- Behavior we want to see continued is reinforced. Examples of positive reinforcers include a smile, sticker charts, “thank you,” and other words of encouragement, such as “Let’s try it together.”

Sometimes a child may display individual needs that are beyond the scope of our program and/or the expertise of the teachers. If the child’s teacher and the Director feel that she/he would benefit from additional services, they will notify the parents and make recommendations (See Inclusion). Behavioral problems that result in injury to other children or adults or require excessive one-on-one staffing to prevent frequent disruptions of the group routines are responded to as outlined in the Referral Policy of the ECE Center.

Referral Meeting with Parent(s)

Parents will be notified of the situation and of all ongoing developments by either the teacher or the Director. A parent conference(s) will be scheduled as soon as possible to discuss the concerns. Parents will be given: the reason(s) for recommending additional services, a brief summary of the preschool’s observations related to the referral, and any efforts the preschool made to accommodate the child’s needs. The Director will also provide the parents with specific referrals. We will offer referrals to parents for evaluations, diagnostic and therapeutic services. It is the parent’s responsibility to share pertinent information with their child’s teacher, to follow through on the referral recommendation, and to request additional conferences with the teachers as they feel this is needed. We will work collaboratively with support services to implement a plan to meet the child’s developmental needs both at school and at home including consultation and education training if needed. Program staff makes arrangements in a language the family can understand.

BITING POLICY

Why Children Bite

There are many reasons why children may bite, whether they are fulfilling a need or coping with a challenging situation:

Experimentation and Oral Stimulation

An infant or young toddler (ages 12 to 36 months) may take an experimental bite of a caregiver or classmate. They may simply want to touch, smell and taste other people in order to learn more about their world. They may be teething or simply feel the need to bite as their oral muscles are developing. They may also be curious to see what kind of response biting incites from adults and peers.

Power and Attention

Some children experience a strong need for autonomy and control. As soon as they see the response they get from biting, the behavior is strongly reinforced. Children may bite to gain attention from adults, even if this attention is negative.

Self Defense and Outside Influences

Some children, feeling that they are endangered, bite in self-defense. They may be overwhelmed by their surroundings, and bite as a means of regaining control. Children may also be affected acutely by situations such as newly separated parents, the death of a family member, a mother returning to work, or even simply a change in daily routine.

Frustration

Toddlers are just learning the skills they need to cope with situations such as the desire for personal space or another child's toy. They are largely nonverbal and have difficulty relying on language to communicate effectively. They may also be experiencing strong emotions typical of this developmental stage and have trouble controlling intense feelings of frustration, anger, and even excitement.

What We Can Do To Prevent Biting

Understanding why children bite makes it easier for adults to form an effective action plan and to teach children positive ways to handle their feelings. We employ the following strategies to prevent biting as much as possible:

- Observe and determine the situation in which the child is likely to bite
- Watch closely when pairs that are known to conflict are playing together or near each other
- If possible, shadow the child so that we can closely monitor rising levels of frustration and either redirect the child or give appropriate alternatives
- Give the child who is the biter more individualized and positive attention so that biting is not for lack of attention
- Remind the child not to bite when he/she is calm
- Give positive reinforcement when the child is not biting and when the child is playing well
- Pick up and hold the child when he/she seems to be frustrated so that child is in safe distance from the other children
- Read books about biting to the class

- Split the children into two groups so that the children have more space

How We Address Biting

When biting occurs despite our best efforts, these are the steps we take to deal with the incident.

1. Immediately separate the children so biting will not occur in the same time frame.
2. Tell the biting child in a firm voice, “No biting”.
3. Quickly shift attention to the child who was bitten. Provide comfort and check for broken skin.
4. Say in a calm voice to the child who bit, “Look, do you see (name) crying? He is crying because you bit him/her. Biting hurts”.
5. Bring the child who bit over to the child who was bitten to provide comfort by holding an ice pack or helping to wash the wound with water.
6. Give the child who has bit appropriate alternatives to biting, offering simple words such as, “no”, “stop”, or “mine” to communicate to another child, or by suggesting banging on a drum or stamping feet to express anger.
7. Redirect both children so they can release energy as they become engaged in a constructive activity and move past the intense feelings of the incident.
8. Inform both sets of parents, through a written incident report as well as notify the Director of the biting incident. We will keep the identities of the children confidential. If the bite breaks the skin, the parents will be called by the teacher or Director.
9. We may consult with a pediatrician or a child psychologist to help the child overcome biting
10. If biting persists, we may refer a family to a specialist who will work with the biter. This referral process will be deemed appropriate by the Director of our school
11. We may temporarily modify the child’s time in the classroom. This decision will be based on frequency and severity of the biting incidents as well as the families’ willingness to cooperate with teachers and the Director. Frequency and severity are defined as the biter bites on a daily basis with no improvement after strategies are put into place.

What We Do Not Do To Address Biting

There are many suggestions for dealing with biting available in parenting books and in online forums. Some of them are highly ineffective and are not based on any best practices of child development. We do not:

- View the biting child as “bad” or shame /lecture the child as this can increase anger and fear, thus increasing chances of more biting
- Overreact when the child bites, which can cause further frustration in the child and may reinforce biting

- Put the child in time-out, which is regarded by early childhood professionals as ineffective and inappropriate for toddlers
- Ask the biting child to apologize, as it will not be genuine
- Bite the child back, as this negates our instructions to stop biting and communicates to the child that violence is an appropriate way to handle emotion.

As adults, we all experience intense feelings of anger, frustration etc. but most of us have learned to control ourselves so we do not resort to physical means. Toddlers are just learning this and need a lot of encouragement and redirection to learn how to express such feelings in socially acceptable ways. Biting is rarely malicious or premeditated; rather, it is the automatic response to anger of a toddler who is learning self-control. While biting and other typical forms of aggression are very much a part of the toddler world, we do not view it as appropriate or socially acceptable behavior and we take it very seriously. We (parents, teachers, and Director) are in frequent communication regarding any incidents of biting.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

You may send a treat to make the day special. All treats must be nut free and must be from a commercial bakery which certifies its products as such. All treats must be in a sealed container from the commercial bakery. No home baked items are permitted. **Please be aware that Dunkin Donuts products are NOT nut free and are, therefore, not permitted.** Make celebration arrangements with your child's teacher to avoid schedule conflicts. Invitations to private birthday parties may not be delivered through the school even if all students in the class are invited. Please do not bring party gifts to school. When planning your child's celebration, please be sensitive to synagogue and preschool events. Families are strongly discouraged from scheduling birthday celebrations on Shabbat (Friday evening and Saturdays).

CALENDAR

Our school calendar follows the Colonial School District calendar whenever possible. School year calendars are mailed to ECE Center parents in August. For your convenience, we have included the ECE Center Calendar for 2023-2024 (pp 38-42).

CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
0-12 months	4 to 1	8
13-18 months	5 to 1	10
19-24 months	5 to 1	10
25-36 months	6 to 1	12
3-4 year olds	10 to 1	20
4-5 year olds	10 to 1	20

Source: Department of Human Services (DHS) of Pennsylvania

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns about their child with the school director. As the school year comes to a close, the ECE Center Director meets with the teaching teams in each age group to begin to determine the children's class placements for the coming year. The Director and the teachers have spent a great deal of time with your children, observing the ebb and flow of relationships, play styles, differing temperaments and both group and individual dynamics. Their experience, professionalism, caring and affection for each and every child in the program is paramount in this process. These observations along with many other factors, help to frame the class assignments for the upcoming school year.

The Director will...

- Place each child in a nurturing and supportive classroom environment to optimally facilitate his/her growth and development
- Place each child with some classmates from the previous year (when schedules allow)
- Insure that each child has the opportunity to develop new relationships while also having the chance to reconnect with children who may not be in the same class the coming year (for example: during age group activities)
- Distribute the class lists once they are complete

The Director will not...

- Accept requests (written or oral) for teachers
- Accept requests (written or oral) for classmates
- Determine class placement of children by future elementary school, neighborhoods or family friendships
- Change class assignments by parental request

As you have trusted the Early Childhood Education Center to care for and nurture your children every day for the past year, we expect that you will also trust our judgment in placing your child with the best intentions for each individual and the group as a whole. **Please note:** Placement in a particular class does not guarantee placement in that group for the following year.

CLOTHING - "Dress to Play"

Each child needs a **clear, plastic shoebox** to store a change of seasonal and size appropriate clothing that will be kept in his/her cubby. Please send in appropriate extra clothing as the seasons change and your child grows. Help us to encourage your child's sense of independence and boost their self-esteem by dressing him/her in comfortable and easily managed play clothing. **Please do not dress toilet trained children in one piece clothing/undershirts or clothing with belts. These types of clothing adversely affect bathroom/diaper time. Additionally jumpsuits and rompers are difficult to manage during toileting and should be reserved for the weekend.**

Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Weather permitting, all students will play outdoors daily. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing and other vigorous activity, and that is appropriate for the weather. Because the children work with paint, clay and other messy materials, they should wear clothes that can be laundered easily.

- **SNEAKERS OR CLOSED TOE SHOES WITH RUBBER SOLES AND SOCKS ARE THE REQUIRED FOOTWEAR**
- Dress shoes, boots (cowboy, rain, snow, etc.), crocs or sandals are not permitted because they present a safety hazard

- Special or dressy clothes should be reserved for use elsewhere. This type of clothing often inhibits a child from taking full advantage of the program. Jewelry should remain at home.
- **Please label all clothing with your child's name. A "Sharpie" or permanent marker works well. Children often have the same clothing and are not able to identify their items.**
- Children should be sent to school in layered clothing to allow for changes in temperature
- During the winter months, children should be sent to school with hats, mittens, and warm jackets

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF

Communication is an integral part of our program. We urge frequent communication between home and school. To that end, information from school will be sent in email and hard copy. **Please be sure to check your child's school bag for notices that will generally be sent home in their "Friday Folder." Please return the folder on Monday morning or on your child's next day of attendance.** Any and all pertinent information for your child's teacher must be delivered in person by you in a written note (stapled around the handle of your child's backpack) or by email to the school office. **Teachers do not check bags daily for written communication from home.**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held 2 times per year for students enrolled in the Little Learners through Pre-K classes. Please note that the January Little Learners students will only have 1 conference in the spring. Conferences are scheduled for 15 minutes per student and designed to be an overview of a student's progress. More information will be distributed prior to the scheduled conference times.

Please be aware that you don't have to wait for conferences to discuss your child's progress. Your child's teacher will be happy to discuss your child with you at any time during the school year. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher for a mutually agreeable time. Please be sensitive to the fact that morning drop-off or afternoon pick-up is not a good time to discuss your child's progress. The teacher needs to be available to greet all children and parents at this time and provide appropriate supervision.

Please note that use of staff cell phones are permissible during emergency circumstances only. Texting with staff is not permitted. Teachers are not able to speak to parents during the school day, as that impacts staff to student ratios in the classroom. Additionally, please note that teachers do not have access to classroom email during working hours and will respond within 24-48 hours.

COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please see updated protocols in the Communicable Diseases section of the Parent Handbook.. Failure to act in accordance with the provisions listed, or with any other policy or procedure outlined by the ECE Center at Congregation Or Ami, may result in termination of services.

CREATIVE ARTS

Afternoon Creative Arts Workshops include, but are not limited to, activities such as: yoga, dance, cooking, art, sports, science, computer classes, gymnastics, language and karate.

Children enroll in age appropriate activities on a consistent basis by the semester. There is an additional cost associated with the classes. The cost per class varies according to a child's existing afternoon schedule. This program is designed to offer our children in the 3 and 4 year old classes exciting extracurricular activities in a familiar setting. Outside specialists from area programs bring their expertise to our facility.

DISCIPLINE

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving positive verbal rewards. Children are given positive alternatives or are redirected to encourage appropriate behavior. This reinforces a child's good feeling about his/her behavior and serves as an example to the other children to act in such a way as to also receive this praise. Asking a child to stop and think about his/her behavior enables that child to work at self-control. All discipline is based on age appropriate developmental expectations.

By fostering positive behavior, children will grow and develop skills that will enhance not only their childhood, but their entire lives. We do this by:

- Providing an environment and schedule to meet children's needs
- Having individual and group discussions on ways to relate to other people
- Having discussions of rules and providing guidance towards positive interaction. Involve students in creating classroom rules.
- Encouraging verbal conflict resolution rather than physical force in conflict resolution
- Use of a "thinking spot" to be employed as a last resort (child should be in close proximity to teaching staff).
- Refrain from use of the term "time out".

DONATIONS

To commemorate a simcha (celebration), to honor your child or acknowledge a memorial or life cycle event or as a thank you to honor your child's teacher(s), the ECE Center is happy to accept contributions through the School Office. In addition, should you wish to make a donation of an item for classroom use in recognition of your child's birthday or their turn as the Shabbat child, please consult our "Wishing Well" (located in the first floor hallway) OR feel free to discuss this with your child's classroom teacher or the ECE Center Director.

DROP OFF -- See HOURS OF SCHOOL

ECE CENTER COMMITTEE

This committee will work cooperatively, within the structure of the ECE Center, to enhance educational programming and policies and encourage its continued development and growth in order to support the school in achieving its greatest potential. Issues of concern may be brought to the attention of the School Director or the School Committee Chair.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

It is of utmost importance that the school has accurate records of home, work, cell and emergency contact numbers at all times.

A. Snow/Inclement Weather: In the event of an emergency school cancellation or delayed opening due to snow/inclement weather, parents will always be called via an automated call. If you do not receive a phone call, please check the additional notification announcements relating to school closings on KYW 1060 and 6ABC.

ECE Center will usually be closed if the Colonial School District schools are closed.

However, if there is a delayed opening, we may or may not follow Colonial depending on the condition of area roads and the synagogue driveway and parking lot. You will always receive a phone call if there is an exception to our regular operating hours.

B. Early Closure due to Emergency or Inclement Weather: In the event of early dismissal due to emergency or inclement weather, the school will notify parents or emergency contacts of the dismissal time. For this reason, please alert the office of any change to the phone numbers recorded on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form for your child. Upon arrival at school, look for the traffic cones to direct you to the safest entranceway.

EXTENDED HOURS- Half Day Students

Before and/or after regular class session hours are available from 7:30 A.M. - 9:00 A.M. and from 12:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. Monday through Friday on scheduled school days. Ability to stay is contingent on the space available on any particular day.

- Payment for 7:30 A.M.-9:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. is due at the time of the stay. Payment may be in the form of check (made payable to Or Ami), cash (please have exact change) or by credit card.
- Consistent stays can also be arranged contingent on the space available on any particular day.

ENRICHMENT CLASSES

Three's Enrichment is available to all children in the Three Year Old classes and meets on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 12:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. Activities are based on a planned curriculum and include lunch, music, art, fitness, language arts development, Hebrew and fitness.

- Examples of curriculum include but are not limited to:
 - Nutrition and Yoga
 - Music Appreciation
 - Kitchen Sciences
 - Transportation Exploration

Pre-K Enrichment is available to all children in Pre-K classes and meets on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 12:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. Activities are based on a planned curriculum and include lunch, music, art, fitness, language arts development, Hebrew and creative movement.

- Examples of curriculum include but are not limited to:
 - Sign Language
 - Dinosaurs
 - Countries and Cultures
 - Art and Artists

FIRST DAYS OF SCHOOL

To ease the children into the routine of school and to assist them in acclimating to separation, the children will be invited to briefly meet their teachers in the classroom with a parent or caregiver present.

When your child goes to preschool, he/she is taking a first “big step” away from complete dependence on his/her parents. He/she may need your help in adjusting.

Your child may feel uneasy in a new place with new people, worried about threatened separation from mother or father and confused by the large number of other children and noise.

During the first days of school, your child may be:

Shy and cling to you
Aggressive and will not share
Crying easily or catches a cold
Wetting frequently

Please note that these are symptoms of tension in a new situation and should disappear as he/she gets used to the children, teachers and school. Be sympathetic and understanding.

Your child needs to be given the opportunity to bond with his/her teachers and classmates.

When your child gets to school, he/she may want to stand and watch. This is OK. Watching is taking part. Although you may feel somewhat anxious about your child's new school experience please try to appear calm and positive. This attitude will reassure your child that school is a safe and fun place to be.

DO NOT put pressure on your child to conform to school routines until he/she has shown that he/she is ready. It is important to say good-bye to your child. Allow the bonding process to begin between your child and his/her teacher.

FRIDAY FOLDERS

In addition to e-mail, Friday folders are the means by which the classroom teachers, PTO and School Administration convey information to parents. **The folders are sent home in the children's backpacks on Friday and need to be returned to school on Monday mornings or your child's next day of attendance.** The use of the Friday folders is limited to PTO, school, congregational and community notices. Materials relating to private businesses or other commercial purposes may not be distributed in this way.

HEALTH

Upon entry into Preschool it is expected that every child has had a recent physical and that all immunizations are up to date. Immunization records for every student must be on file prior to the beginning of the school/camp season. Students will not be permitted to attend school/camp without current immunization records on hand. Each child's medical examination must have been completed within twelve months of the start of school for children ages 2 and up and within 6 months for children under the age of 2. If your child's check-up date extends beyond that period over the course of the school year, you will need to provide an updated health/exam form. The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services requires that a current health form be

on file for your child in order for them to attend school. Any child with an outdated form will be denied entry to class until a current form is on file.

Your child's health is a matter of great importance to us. Young children have frequent colds and other viral illness. The faculty is often faced with difficult decisions regarding whether or not a child should remain in school or return to school following an illness. We realize that these decisions may cause some upset and confusion for you.

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics offers the following guidelines. The following chart will help you understand whether or not to send your child to school and when your child may return to school following an illness. Please note that there may be differences between school policies and your pediatrician's guidance regarding return to school.

In addition to fever, the Academy suggests that a doctor should check any child with the following symptoms or signs of a possibly serious illness:

- Unusual drowsiness
- Extreme fussiness
- Persistent or excessive crying
- Wheezing
- Uncontrolled coughing
- Difficulty breathing
- Unable to play at all
- Complaining of severe pain

Children with common colds may not need to stay home from school. Usually the child has already exposed others before seeming sick. Many illnesses stop being contagious shortly after treatment is started. However, ultimately, the school decides when an acutely ill child meets the exclusion criteria listed on the accompanying chart and cannot be in school.

The following criteria will serve as our guide for excluding students with short-term illnesses from school:

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program.
2. The child has fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.
3. The child has signs or symptoms of a possible serious condition that requires immediate medical evaluation, until the child is checked by a health professional who determines that the child may be in school.
4. The child has symptoms or conditions listed on the following chart that requires exclusion as a potentially contagious illness.
5. The child has a health problem that prevents outdoor activity with his/her class. One teacher cannot remain inside to supervise one child.

The charts provided give you information listed by symptoms and then by specific conditions. They tell you the cause, when to exclude from school, when to ask for medical advice and when your child can return to school.

SICK CHILD CARE

Unfortunately, the ECE Center has **no facilities** to care for sick children, so when children become ill at school they must be taken home as soon as possible. When a child has to be isolated, he/she requires full time attention of a staff member. This means that activities in the child's class have to be curtailed until the child is picked up.

It is essential that you always make arrangements for someone to care for your child at home when necessary. We realize this can sometimes be a difficult task if you are working full time. However, **your child** will feel most comfortable in a quiet home situation when ill. **Please be sure that all telephone numbers are always updated (emergency and work).** Per DHS Regulations, families are required to update emergency contact information every 6 months in writing.

EMERGENCY CHILD CARE

In case of an emergency, the school will call you and the Whitemarsh Township Paramedics will take the child to Chestnut Hill Hospital or nearest available hospital. Your signed Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form assures that emergency care may be given if needed. We will, of course, call you immediately, and you can meet your child and the staff member at the hospital. **Please be sure that your health insurance information, telephone and emergency numbers are always kept up to date.**

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Please seriously evaluate your child's health and ability to be comfortable and happy in school when he/she complains of headache, stomach pain, or cold symptoms – without fever. Children often have no fever in the morning. Temperatures may rise as the day progresses. If the ailment is more serious, resting at home at the onset may help to prevent complications. In any event, keep the sick child home for his/her sake. We appreciate a phone call or email if your child will be absent due to illness. The number of ill students who are sent to school is surprisingly high. Please think carefully when making this decision. Your cooperation and support in this matter is greatly appreciated by the preschool staff, the other parents and myself.

COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS

Please notify the ECE Center immediately if your child contracts a communicable illness or infestation, including, but not limited to, conjunctivitis (Pink Eye); chicken pox; strep throat; hand, foot and mouth disease; pinworm; fifth disease or head lice, so that we can exercise additional control methods and notify other parents. Your child's identity is protected.

COVID-19

Classroom

For an isolated COVID exposure and exhibiting NO Symptoms:

Students may attend school, as long as they have NO symptoms of any kind that are associated with the COVID virus. Students may return and be tested on Day 5 following exposure (a home test labeled with the child's name and date). **You will need to take a picture of the labeled test and send it directly to MichelleR@or-ami.org.** This proof of a negative test will be required in order for your child to remain in school.

- If a child who has been exposed to COVID develops a runny or stuffy nose, fever, coughing, etc. at school, they will be removed from the group and be sent home for additional testing.

Household

For an ongoing COVID exposure in the child's household:

- If a member of a child's household tests positive, and the child remains symptom free, the following protocol will be followed:
 - On Day 5 the child should be tested (Day 0 is the day that symptoms developed or the family member tests positive). A home test labeled with the child's name and date may be used. **You will need to take a picture of the labeled test results and send it directly to: MichelleR@or-ami.org.**
- After Day 5, as long as there have been no additional household exposures, the child can return to school after receipt of the negative test results.
- If during the 5 day period, an additional family member develops symptoms or tests positive, but the child remains symptom free, the timeline restarts for the child (this becomes the new Day 0). Testing, as indicated above, will again be required on Day 5, with results required to be sent as indicated above.
- **If the exposed child develops symptoms of COVID, but initially tests negative via home rapid test, they should be treated as if they are positive, given the household exposure. Please see *Return Following COVID-19* below.**
- If the exposed child tests positive, please see *Return Following COVID-19* below.
- If a parent chooses not to test their child, the child must remain out of school for 10 days after the last date of household exposure and may return to school on Day 11.
- **If a child who has been exposed to COVID develops a runny or stuffy nose, fever, coughing, etc. at school, they will be removed from the group and be sent home for additional testing.**

Children who have had a positive COVID case within the past 90 days do not need to quarantine because of a direct exposure, including an ongoing household exposure.

Children under the age of 2 who are unable to mask, must quarantine for 10 days and may return on Day 11.

Return Following COVID-19

- From the date of a positive test (when the specimen is collected), a child is out of school for at least 5 days. Day 0 is the day that the child was tested or developed symptoms. The child may return to school on Day 6, so long as they are fever free and are not exhibiting any symptoms of COVID. The child **MUST** wear a KF-94, KN-94 or N95 mask at all times indoors from days 6-10 upon returning to school with the exception of while eating or napping (if applicable). Child will be separated from others during eating and sleeping until they can re-mask. If they cannot be separated during napping, they will need to be picked up at 1:00 PM.
- Children will also need to show proof of a negative test result prior to returning. A home test labeled with the child's name and date may be used. **You will need to take a picture of the labeled test results and send it directly to: MichelleR@or-ami.org.**
- Children under the age of 2 who cannot mask, cannot return to school until Day 11 from the date of the positive test.

**** The above policies will remain in effect as stated unless otherwise updated by either the CDC or the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL).**

HEALTH GUIDELINES AND ILLNESS POLICIES

SYMPTOM	WHAT YOU SEE	EXCLUDE AND/OR SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE	READMIT WHEN ALL CRITERIA LISTED ARE MET
Colds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . runny, stuffy nose . coughing . sneezing . watery eyes . fever . scratchy throat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . child looks or acts ill . child has difficulty breathing . GI symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea or stomach ache) . Symptoms accompanied by red or purple rash not associated with injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . child no longer appears ill . child has no difficulty breathing . GI symptoms are gone . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon
COVID-19	SEE SECTION ON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (Page 20)		
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . red or pink, itchy painful eyes . green or yellow discharge . crusting of eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . red or pink, itchy painful eyes . green or yellow discharge . crusting of eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . symptoms resolve . after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment
Ear Aches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever, pain . difficulty hearing . "blocked ears" . drainage from ears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . child looks or acts ill . drainage from ear . pain lasting more than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . child no longer appears ill . child has been medically evaluated and care plan is being followed . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon
Sore Throat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . scratchy, painful throat . difficulty swallowing . white patches on throat/ tonsils . spots on throat/ tonsils . red throat/ tonsils . large tonsils . enlarged lymph nodes in neck . fever, stomachache . drooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . child looks or acts ill . child is unable to swallow anything . excessive drooling . sore throat is accompanied by red or purple rash not associated with injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . able to swallow . if strep is documented, after 24 hours of antibiotic . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.

Wheezing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . difficulty breathing . whistling sound during breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . child looks or acts ill . child who has never wheezed before . difficulty breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . cleared by physician and can return to school . child no longer appears ill . child has no difficulty breathing . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon
Cold Sores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever . painful small, fluid-filled blisters on mouth, gums or on lips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate . oozing open lesions/ unable to be covered . drooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . able to participate . no drooling and no oozing sores . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon
Diaper Rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . redness, scaling, pimples, sores, cracking of skin in diaper region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Oozing lesions from skin infection (impetigo) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . if infected, 24 hours after treatment began
Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . excess of liquid in stools . three or more stools in an 8-hour period or an increased number of stools compared to the child's normal pattern, and with increased stool water and/or decreased form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . bloody or black stool . no urine output for 8 hours . abdominal pain . increased number of stools, watery or unformed stool not contained in diaper/ toilet . fever and behavior change . mucus in stools . child appears ill . Jaundice – yellow skin or eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . if not yet toilet trained, when stool is contained within diaper and stool frequency and consistency improves so child no longer has infectious diarrhea as judged by normal stools or the decision of a health professional . if toilet trained, must be accident-free for at least 24 hours . for diarrhea due to shigella, salmonella, or giardi has been cleared for readmission by the child's pediatric health provider – note required

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can return in the afternoon
Stomach Ache Abdominal Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . severe pain that causes the child to double up or scream . abdominal pain after injury . bloody or black stools . no urine output for 8 hours . refusal to eat or drink . vomiting . diarrhea . child appears ill . red or purple rash . Jaundice – yellow skin or eyes . fever and behavior change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . when pain resolves . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . abdominal pain . digested/ undigested stomach contents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . vomiting more than twice in 24 hours . no urine output in 8 hours . refusal to eat or drink . green/ bloody vomitus . abdominal pain . bloody/ black stools . headache . child appears ill . Jaundice – yellow skin or eyes . recent history of head injury . fever and behavior change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . when vomiting resolves and able to tolerate food for at least 24 hours . child is free of fever without medication and any behavioral changes . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Adenovirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever, runny nose . cough, sore throat . water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever . unable to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon

Persistent Cough		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate . Difficulty breathing . Wheeze 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever for 24 hrs. and any behavioral changes . has been seen by physician who says child may return . able to participate . physician determines child does not have pertussis (whooping cough) . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Chicken Pox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever . runny nose . cough . rash (pink bumps, blisters and scabs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . as soon as suspected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon. . when all scabs are crusted over
Coxsackievirus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Syndrome)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever, sore throat . runny nose, cough . tiny blisters in mouth, on palms of hands, and soles of feet/ sore muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate . as soon as suspected . drooling . difficulty swallowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and all symptoms, including having no open sores . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Croup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . barking cough . noisy/ difficulty breathing . hoarseness . fever . difficulty feeding . also may have cold symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate . difficulty with breathing and/ or feeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . has been seen by physician who says child may return . able to participate . breathing with little or no trouble . cough does not interfere with child's ability to participate as usual

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Fifth Disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . headache, body aches . sore throat, fever, chills, rash (on face with a slapped-cheek appearance; "lacy" pattern over body. May come and go over weeks to months) . fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever for 24 hrs. and any behavioral changes . child has been seen by physician who says child may return . able to participate . after the rash appears . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Impetigo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . red, cracking, oozing blister-like pimples or circular scaling rash . often occurs on face but may be anywhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . as soon as suspected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 24 hours after treatment is begun . no oozing sore
Influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever, chills . headache, sleepiness . muscle aches . cough, sore throat . nausea, vomiting . nasal congestion . abdominal pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . fever and behavior change . unable to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . child has been seen by physician who says child may return . able to participate . no breathing problems . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Lice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . lice (sesame seed size insects) on scalp or hair shaft . nits (eggs) deposited on hair shaft near scalp especially top of head, behind ears, nape of neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . as soon as suspected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . No live lice . all nits have been removed . continue head checks for 10-14 days to ensure no new hatching or nits

Pneumonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . cough, rapid breathing . unable to participate . fever 	. as soon as suspected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . able to participate . child is free of fever and any behavioral changes . no breathing problems . Child must be free of fever without medication for 24 hrs. before returning to school. A child's fever can rise in the afternoon.
Ringworm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Skin - reddish scaling circular patches with raised edges and central clearing OR . light or dark (non-red) patches involving the face and upper trunk OR cracking, peeling of skin between toes Scalp – redness, scaling of scalp with broken hairs or patches of hair loss 	. as soon as suspected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 24 hours after treatment is begun . oral medications given to treat scalp . cream given to treat skin

*** For any of the above illnesses, school may request medical clearance before return to school.***

HEAD LICE – PEDICULOSIS

Head lice are tiny insects that live only on people's scalp and hair. They hatch from small eggs (nits) that are firmly attached to the individual hairs near the scalp and cannot be easily moved up or down the hair (as specks of dandruff). They look like grains of sand. Nits may be found throughout the hair but are most often located at the back of the scalp, behind the ears, and at the top of the head. The eggs hatch in about 10 days, reaching adulthood in about 2 weeks. The female louse is about the size of a sesame seed, can live for 20 to 30 days, and can lay about six eggs a day.

How should you check for head lice? You usually will not see the lice, only the eggs. These are tiny, pearl gray, oval-shaped specks attached to the hair near the scalp. Look carefully, using a magnifying glass and natural light. Search for nits at the back of the neck, behind the ears, and at the top of the head.

How does a person get head lice? Anyone who has close contact with an infested person or shares personal items, such as combs, brushes, hats, clothing, bedding or towels.

If you would like more information, there is a good website on this subject – www.headlice.org.

SCHOOL POLICY REGARDING HEAD LICE

Children are discouraged from sharing hats, caps, brushes, combs, hair ribbons and such – any items that could transmit head lice.

If a child is found to have head lice during school hours, he or she will be in the school office until the parents can be contacted to pick up the child. A parent or caregiver must be available to pick up their child as soon as they are called.

Our staff will then conduct a “head check” of the infected child’s siblings and classmates in our school. Parents of these children will be notified that their children have been exposed and are encouraged to conduct their own checks in the coming weeks

If you discover that your child has a case of head lice, please contact the school office so that appropriate precautions can be taken and affected families can be notified of exposure.

Before the child can be readmitted to school, he or she must be treated with a product specifically for head lice. Family members should also be checked and treated as necessary. The child must be free of nits before returning to school.

HOLIDAYS

The ECE Center strives to honor the traditions of the children and families in the program. We celebrate Jewish holidays as noted on the calendar sent home with our students at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, we include some secular holiday instruction in our curriculum. Holiday curriculum and celebrations are handled in response to child and family input. Teachers invite families to share seasonal and holiday traditions that have personal meaning to them. Children may bring items from home and talk about their family’s special celebrations. Our goal is to ensure that children learn about various cultural traditions in developmentally appropriate and educational ways.

The secular holidays of Halloween and Valentine’s Day are not celebrated at Or Ami and will not be celebrated in school. **Please do not send Halloween treats and/or Valentine cards to be distributed in school.**

HOURS OF SCHOOL

Arrival: ECE Center part-time morning hours are from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Doors will be opened and children may be brought into their classrooms from 9:00 A.M. – 9:10 A.M. **PLEASE WAIT IN THE HALLWAY UNTIL YOUR TEACHER IS READY TO ACCEPT PART TIME STUDENTS.** Please be mindful that lingering at drop-off time is upsetting for your child and for other students.

ALL STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE AFTER 9:10 A.M. MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE OFFICE TO BE SIGNED IN.

ECE Center full time morning hours are from 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 A.M.

Please make every effort to arrive by 9:00 A.M., as this is the start of the school day. We are required by the State of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services to take prompt attendance daily by 9:15 am and appreciate your assistance in facilitating this process.

According to DHS Regulations, all students must be signed in and out on the Attendance Sheet, located outside of the classroom. We appreciate your assistance in complying with this requirement of licensing.

Departure: Our part-time dismissal time is 12:00 P.M. All students not staying for Extended Hours will be dismissed from their classroom carpet areas one-at-a-time to the proper pick-up person so named on the student's Emergency Information/Parental Consent Form.

CHILDREN WILL BE RELEASED ONLY TO THOSE LISTED ON EMERGENCY FORMS.

CHANGES TO THE FORMS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING IN PERSON. Please introduce your caregivers to our staff. The school reserves the right to retain a child until the identity of the person calling for that child has been fully established. In the event that you or your child's caregiver is late for pickup, please check on your child's location with the school office.

Please be mindful that lingering at drop-off time is upsetting for your child and for other students.

Additionally, it is important for you to pick up your child on time. A child whose ride is frequently late often experiences anxiety and worry. It is difficult for the child and for the staff who is often on their way to another class location. We understand that emergencies happen. If an emergency arises, please take the time to call the ECE Center Office. **The ECE Center reserves the right to charge a fee for consistently late pick-up.**

Right to Refuse Child Release: We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

Extreme Weather Pickup: In the event of torrential rain or icy conditions, pick-up will take place at the front entrance. A decision will be made prior to pick-up to enable staff sufficient time to escort students to the synagogue lobby. **Please look for the orange flag in the parking circle that indicates Extreme Weather pickup.** If the weather changes after a decision has been made, your understanding will be appreciated.

AT NO TIME IS PARKING PERMITTED IN THE CIRCLE. THIS AREA IS A FIRE LANE AND PARKING IS PROHIBITED BY THE FIRE MARSHAL AT ALL TIMES. OFFENDERS MAY BE TICKETED!

Escorting Children to and from the classrooms: When walking your child into or out of the school, please hold his/her hand; **cross the parking lot carefully.**

Staff Prep Time and Late Arrivals: Our staff uses the time prior to 9:00 A.M. for preparing their classrooms. **Please make every effort to arrive on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class and often difficult for the child who is arriving late.** Give a special hug and make sure that you say good-bye. Our teachers will be ready to begin the morning and give extra attention when needed. If for some reason you arrive between 9:00-9:10 A.M., please quickly say good-bye to your child at the classroom door and allow the teacher to take charge of your child's entrance. We encourage the prompt drop-off and pick-up of your child to help facilitate a

smooth school day. **In the event that you arrive after 9:10 am, please stop in the school office to sign your child in for the day and your child will be escorted to their classroom.**

*The first 5 people to email me that they have found this message, will receive a Wawa giftcard ☺
(MichelleR@or-ami.org)

ICE/SNOW DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

In the event of extreme ice and/or snow conditions we will use the front entrance for drop-off and pick-up. Staff will be present to assist between 8:55 A.M and 9:10 A.M. and again at dismissal. **Please look for the orange flag in the parking circle that indicates Extreme Weather drop-off/pick-up.** Depending on the weather, our system may require more time than you would like. However, from our experience it is the safest procedure for you and your children. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience.

LOST AND FOUND

All items that are found in or around school are placed in a container found in the first floor corridor. Please check here for any missing belongings. **Clearly label all clothing and possessions so items can be easily returned to our students when found.**

M'SIBAT SHABBAT

At the ECE Center, preparing for Shabbat is very special. Every Friday, a child from each class (beginning with the Two Year Old classes) has a turn to be the "Shabbat Child" if they attend the ECE Center on Friday. These children participate in the service by being called to the Bimah to join in the blessings over the Shabbat candles, the Kiddush and the Motzi. They assist in the opening of the Ark, and each holds a small Torah while the Sh'ma is sung. They follow the rabbi through the congregation singing Hebrew songs and carrying their Torah. These services take place every Friday morning at 11:15 AM. Parents, friends and family are invited to attend when it is their child's turn to be the Shabbat Child. The family of the Shabbat Child will also be invited to the classroom celebration of Shabbat. Your child's teacher will send notification of the day and time you are invited.

In honor of your child's Shabbat, you may want to make a donation to your child's classroom in their honor (i.e., gift card or classroom item). Please speak with your child's teacher or the ECE Center Director for suggestions or if you have any questions.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The ECE Center at Congregation Or Ami is an equal opportunity care provider. As such, we will not discriminate against any student because of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin or ethnic origin, citizenship, or any reason prohibited by law. The ECE Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or other school administered program. We will not tolerate discriminatory conduct by or against any ECE Center student or family. Or Ami is also opposed to discrimination on the basis of religion. However, we are a religious institution, and we reserve the right to ensure that Jewish individuals fill positions which are religious in nature.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- Congregation Or Ami and all programs in the synagogue building, follows a Kosher style dietary policy. When packing your child's lunch, please keep in mind **that pork products of any kind or shellfish are not permitted in the synagogue**. Additionally, meat and cheese may not be consumed together in one food item. That means that a sandwich containing meat should not also contain cheese, and that macaroni and cheese, for example, should not contain any meat products.
- **Please check the ingredients of all foods your children bring to school and make every effort to not send in any food with peanuts, tree nuts, peanut oil, or food that has been processed in a plant with other nuts or that may contain traces of nuts.**
- During Passover, we strictly observe the dietary laws of the holiday. When school is in session during Passover, do not bring in any bread or yeast products (cookies, cake, crackers, etc.). A detailed letter will be sent home as the holiday approaches.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children. Leftover food will be discarded except for foods that do not require refrigeration and/or come in a commercially-wrapped package that was never opened.

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced and Nutritional Lunch	
½ turkey sandwich Celery sticks Fruit Milk/water	Chicken strips and Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk/water
Soy butter/graham crackers Apple slices Carrot sticks Milk/water	Yogurt Crackers Sugar snap peas 100% juice

Food Allergies

Our Center is a “**food allergy aware**” facility. At the beginning of the school year, we educate teachers and staff about the risk of anaphylaxis due to food allergies. Prior to the beginning of the school year, parents of a child with food allergies will be asked to submit an individual food allergy action plan. In some cases, we may ask the food allergic child's parents to supply their allergic child's “safe” snacks.

All children with a history of food allergies will be required to supply an Epi-pen to accompany the child (in the classroom, on the playground, etc.).

Some students in our school have life-threatening allergies to all nuts. To help create a safe environment for these children, this policy prohibits nuts in The Center portion of the building during Center hours. In a school setting, cross-contamination is a great risk for food allergic children. Even a few crumbs, a smidgen of peanut butter, a stray peanut shell, or dust from nuts can set off an anaphylactic reaction.

In an effort to minimize the risk, we ask that all food brought from home by all children in The Center be nut-free. This includes birthday treats, Shabbat snacks, and cooking projects inside

the classroom. You may receive further instructions from your child's teacher. **Please check the ingredients of all foods your children bring to school and make every effort to not send in any food with peanuts, tree nuts, peanut oil, or food that has been processed in a plant with other nuts or that may contain traces of nuts.** If you have any questions or need suggestions about what to bring, please contact The Center office or your child's teacher.

Meal Time

At meal time, families are expected to pack their child's lunch in a **lunch box/paper or Ziploc bag, labeled with child's first and last name and classroom number.** All lunches are **refrigerated. DO NOT PACK AN ICE PACK IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH.** Families may also participate in the optional PTO Hot Lunch Program.

Please pack your child a drink if you would like them to have something other than water), utensils and a napkin. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. The blessing for food is said before children eat lunch or snack.

All caregivers are trained in first-aid for choking.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed "on demand" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly).
- Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- Formula must be brought to the premises in a factory-sealed container in a ready-to-feed strength or powder or concentrate. The necessary number of bottles required daily, must be brought to the Center ready to serve. Extra formula brought from home must be labeled with the child's name and will be used only in the case of an emergency. Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

Toddler Feedings

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, popcorn, thickly spread non-nut butters (ex. WOW Butter), hummus and hard candy. Please consult the American Academy of Pediatrics list of choking foods for detailed information.

Snack

A morning snack (provided by school families), including a beverage of water is served daily. Please advise the staff if your child has or develops food allergies. Each family of children in the Little Learners, 2's, 3's and 4's classes will take turns providing morning snack according to a schedule created by the classroom teachers. Prior to your turn, you will receive a snack letter which will provide more detailed information. Please follow the instructions as provided when it is your turn.

Full time students will be provided with a snack during the late afternoon hours according to an established snack menu.

The Center will provide snacks at the following times:

- A mid-morning snack, including a beverage of water will be provided between 10 am and 11 am (depending on the classroom schedule).
- An afternoon snack plus beverage will be provided to those children remaining for Late Care at approximately 3:30 P.M.

PARENT BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

This is an informal way to become acquainted with the school faculty, meet other parents, and visit the classrooms. Back to School Night is generally held toward the end of September or early October.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Parents are important too! Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's school experiences. The PTO collects nominal dues and organizes fund-raisers to support the classroom teachers, funds purchases for the school and underwrites special programs to enrich the children's preschool experience. Families who pay their dues also will receive a school-wide directory and a yearbook. Each class must be represented by at least one (1) classroom parent. The organization also includes staff and meets once per month. All parents are welcome.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Your safety and your child's safety are our most important concern! It is important that parents and others driving onto or around school grounds be mindful of the regulations, speed, parking designations, common driver courtesy, and especially THE CHILDREN. Your utmost cooperation is necessary to provide the safest walkway for children and adults. Please remember to:

- Enter and exit **SLOWLY!**. Please make sure you stay to the right of the driveway when **entering or exiting, in order to allow for on-coming traffic**
- Come to a full stop at stop signs
- **Park in designated lined spaces only. Parking in the fire lane (along the curb) is illegal!**
- Respect spaces marked for handicapped parking

Please respect synagogue property and be aware of memorial areas/gardens and restrict your child's play from areas marked with bronze plaques.

Additionally, we are aware that, after dismissal, the children enjoy playing outside together across from the main entrance. While we are glad to have the children remain on the property and socialize with each other, please take your children to the large grassy area in front of the handicapped parking spaces. The circle, surrounded by cement and right in the middle of the parking lot, poses a significant danger to your children, while the other area in front of the handicapped parking is a much larger and, more importantly, much safer alternative.

Please make every effort to ensure that your child remains in close proximity to you or another caregiver on the grassy area. Our parking lot is a busy and potentially dangerous place at the end of the school day, as ECE students are departing and congregants arrive for Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons or other appointments. At no time, should children be unattended in the parking lot area. Additionally, please note that Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code Chapter 3701.1 prohibits leaving a child under the age of 6 unattended in a motor vehicle for any length of time.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe environment for your children.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- Infants: Enough prepared bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, and at least 3 changes of clothes per day including socks. Diaper creams sent in when necessary (require a Medication Permission Form) and crib sheets sent in weekly.
- Toddlers: At least six diapers per day and at least three changes of clothes including socks. Diaper creams sent in when necessary (require a medication permission form) and crib sheets sent in weekly for fulltime students.
- Older Toddlers: At least two changes of clothes with socks or more per day if going through toilet training. Extra shoes are also helpful during toilet training.
- Preschoolers: at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes

Please label all items brought from home with your child's first AND last name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. **We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.**

Cubbies

Upon enrollment, each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and photo. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-Found Box located in the first floor hallway. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the Center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity. **This includes keychains and toys hanging from your child's backpack.**

Toys should remain at home. Toy weapons, particularly guns, war toys, Power Ranger items, and other toys that promote aggressive play are not permitted in school and will be unavailable for use in school if a child brings them in. Please assure your child that those toys are for home use and that at school, he/she has special toys and activities. If a younger child needs a special article for security, please discuss this with the teacher. Candy and gum may not be brought to school

PROGRAMS

Meaningful outside programs are brought into the school. Special Event information will be shared with parents.

REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

Parent/teacher conferences will be held for all classes twice during the school year and student progress reports will be issued at the end of the school year. **Parents are encouraged to contact teachers whenever there is a concern and/or question regarding the progress of their children.** Please call the school office or send an email/note to your child's teacher to schedule an appointment, or to request a personal phone call. Teachers will also notify parents with information regarding special problems or significant developments as soon as they arise.

Observation and Assessment of Children

The "Ages and Stages Questionnaire" is a developmental and social-emotional screening for children from one month to 5 ½ years. Highly reliable and valid, the "Ages and Stages Questionnaire" looks at strengths and trouble spots, educates parents about developmental milestones, and incorporates teachers and parents' expert knowledge about their children. It allows teaching staff to gather initial information regarding each child, which will help create the necessary curriculum framework for their group of children.

All children, within 45 days of enrollment – both new enrollment and re-registration for the school year, are observed using the "Ages and Stages Questionnaire."

Additionally, each child is observed weekly through various means, including but not limited to, anecdotal records, tally sheets, running records, photographs, and/or documentation charts.

SECURITY SYSTEM

There is a sophisticated security system at Or Ami. Having this system provides us with peace of mind with minimal inconvenience to anyone using our building. For continued security, we periodically change the access code. Each family will receive a unique code.

Use the code on the keypad. When the light turns green, you have several seconds to open the door. Should you forget the code or have any trouble with the keypad, please press the phone button by the door and speak to a staff member who will be able to let you in.

Entry into the school wing will be restricted to families of ECE Center students. Access will be granted through the use of a key fob. Should you forget your key fob, please press the phone

button by the door and speak to a staff member who will be able to let you in. If there is no response from the ECE Center Office, please head across the lobby to the Or Ami Main Office for assistance.

SENSITIVE ISSUES – DIVORCED OR SEPARATED PARENTS

The ECE Center strives to be aware of and sensitive to the families we serve. If divorced or separated parents are sharing custody and there is some way the program can help make this easier (or avoid making the situation more difficult) please let us know. Please note, that without a legal document (i.e. copy of custody settlement or restraining order) we cannot presume one parent has more or less rights than the child's other parent. Any information shared with us will be held in the highest confidence. Our primary goal is the well-being of our students and their families.

SEPARATION ISSUES

We understand that young children often have difficulty with separation. We want to reassure you that we are always ready to talk to you and comfort your child.

Always say good-bye with a kiss, hug and a wave! Be firm, but friendly about leaving. If your child whines or clings, prolonging the good-bye will only make it harder for yourself and your child.

Saying good-bye

- Be consistent
- Follow the same routine – walk in, hang up coat and school bag
- Always say good-bye

We are there to help during these transition times and help to comfort your child once you leave. We offer comforting words such as, "I know it's hard to say good-bye." Once you have gone through your good-bye routines a few times, your child will get to know what to expect and the good-byes will be less difficult. After a short period of time, your child's anxiety about you leaving ends quickly after you leave. Should this not be the case, we want you to know that we would call you to let you know how he/she is doing.

Your child will pick up on your confidence about having chosen a good place to him/her to be while you are away. Good feelings are contagious. So the first step in adjusting to saying good-bye is to be sure you are comfortable with your decision to enroll your child in our program.

Please let us know if we can be of further help. We want you to know that separation adjustment is normal and we have the experience to help you and your child ease through this transition time.

SNACKS AND LUNCH (also see Nutrition)

When sending classroom snacks and/or packing lunch for your child, thank you in advance for making sure these **DO NOT** include pork and pork products, shellfish, whole grapes (you may cut them in half), candy, popcorn, raisins and all nuts. Because we have several allergic children in our school, we are now **ALL NUT FREE**. Nuts (peanuts, cashews, almonds,

hazelnuts, coconut, etc.), peanut butter, or any other nut products are not allowed in our school. Please be aware that this also includes foods that are made in factories that process nuts or nut products.

If you are packing your child's lunch in a bento box or similar style lunch container, please do not place it into a traditional metal or cloth lunchbox. Additionally, please make sure that all items are labeled with your child's first and last name.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Throughout the school year, we look forward to sharing many wonderful and meaningful events with you and your children. We encourage your participation at these events, including the taking of photographs and video, as you desire. No doubt these photos and videos will serve as special mementos from your child's time with us for many years to come. We respectfully request your mindful consideration of the wishes of other ECE Center families and staff with regard to posting photographs and video on Facebook, on any other social networking site and anywhere online. Although we cannot require you to comply with this request, out of courtesy and respect for other ECE Center families, children and staff, we strongly urge you to seek their permission before posting photos or videos that include them on social networking sites or online.

TOILET LEARNING

The ECE Center accepts children who are still in diapers. Those who are making the transition to the toilet are encouraged to continue to wear diapers to school until they are able to communicate to their teachers that they need to use the bathroom and to wait long enough to be escorted there by a teacher. This will not only prevent embarrassment from accidents but boost confidence as the child masters this life skill.

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Most children are developmentally ready to begin toilet training between the ages of two and a half and three and a half, however each child does develop at his/her own rate. Our toilet training policy has been developed with consideration for our children and years of experience.

2 and 3-year-old students

1. Children do not need to be potty trained at any time in their 2-year-old class. We change diapers when your child has a bowel movement, and every 2 hours or when extremely wet. This is only on an appropriately disinfected changing table or changing pad. Teachers wear disposable latex gloves. Before your child is successfully trained, please use diapers **only**. Please send diapers in your child's tote bag each day or send a sleeve at a time and store them in the classroom. Pull-ups confuse some children. They often have trouble distinguishing between a pull-up and a diaper and use a pull-up as they would use a diaper.

2. **Children should be sent to school in underpants only after they have had two successful dry days in a row at home and have had a bowel movement in the toilet at home and at school.** Please be realistic about your child's ability to use the potty when sending him/her to school in underpants. It is very important that your child be able to verbalize his/her need to use the toilet in order to be successful at school. Sitting your child on the toilet to "catch him/her" does not mean that he/she is trained. Please understand that we do not have the luxury of time to "catch the moment" with your child. It is helpful to notify your teacher and discuss the toilet training experience in advance of your child's attempting to use the toilet at school. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IN UNDERWEAR UNTIL YOU HAVE HAD A DISCUSSION WITH THE ECE CENTER DIRECTOR.**

3. Occasionally children in the process of toilet training have a set back when a new baby arrives or another family event happens to upset the family routine. Please do not be discouraged. You can attempt toilet training in a few weeks when your routine is re-established.

4. Once your child is wearing underpants, your child needs to show consistency in using the bathroom at school. We understand that accidents do happen and we are prepared to deal with them in a loving way. However, if your child has more accidents than successes, we will need to reconsider whether underpants are still appropriate for school.

5. We will take newly toilet-trained children to the bathroom frequently; however do not be alarmed if they are not as successful at school as they are at home.

6. Children who are trained or who are in the process of being trained must be dressed in clothing that is easily taken on and off. Jumpsuits, overalls, onesies, belts and suspender-type clothing are not appropriate. Elastic waistbands instead of snaps and zippers are easier for your child to manage. We want your child to learn to help him/herself and the easier the clothes are to use, the quicker that will happen.

7. It is best to attempt the toilet training process over a weekend when your family has very few social engagements. This process should be stress-free and if many accidents occur, try on another weekend. When you feel your child can be successful at school, please send in a few changes of clothes and extra underpants. Please place these in a labeled plastic bag. It is very disconcerting for a child to borrow someone else's clothes.

8. The teachers and Director are available to answer questions at any time. All of us have been through this experience many times and are able to make many kinds of suggestions. Just try to make this process low-key and keep smiling.

9. We encourage children to be toilet trained in their third year.

Please note that children must be completely toilet trained and accident free for a minimum of two full weeks prior to being able to use the pool during summer camp. Should an accident occur during the summer camp season, the Director would be in contact with the family.

TOT SHABBAT SERVICES

Tot Shabbat Services are held at 6:15 P.M. - 6:45 P.M. These services are designed particularly for families with young (ages birth to 7) children. The Tot Shabbat schedule for 2023-2024 is as follows:

October 13, 2023
November 3, 2023
December 1, 2023
January 12, 2024

February 2, 2024
March 1, 2024
April 12, 2024
May 3, 2024

TRANSITION

Transition from Home to Center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between Learning Programs

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

Transition to Elementary School

Transition activities such as reading books, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.

TRANSPORTATION

Our normal procedure is to release a child only to his/her parents or to someone else who the parents have designated on the Emergency Information/Parental Consent Form. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please indicate that change on the daily attendance sheet, if that person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If that person is NOT listed on the Emergency Information/Parental Consent Form, we **MUST** have written permission to release your child. This written permission must include the date of the pickup, the name of the individual who will be picking the child up and the parent's signature. Please inform your emergency contacts or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them that they will be asked to provide identification. This measure is taken for the protection of your child and is not meant to offend.

Pennsylvania law requires that all drivers operating a passenger car, Class I and Class II truck, classic motor vehicle, antique motor vehicle or motor home shall securely fasten infants and children under 8 years of age in an approved child restraint/booster, appropriate for their age and size, when riding anywhere in the motor vehicle, including the cargo area. Please ensure that any person who will be transporting your child will be using the appropriate auto restraint.

TZEDAKAH

Our students are involved in a variety of social action projects. In each classroom, every Friday, children are encouraged to bring money to put into tzedakah cans. Participation in this mitzvah helps to reinforce the important Jewish value of helping others. Throughout the year, the collected coins and dollars are sent to various charities.

Non-perishable foods are collected every Friday to be included in the synagogue's "Caring is Sharing" program. The canned goods help to fill the cupboard of various local organizations and are then distributed to the needy in our area.

Thank you for encouraging your children to share with others through these and many other projects during the school year.

Part Time Student Calendar 2023-2024

(Subject to Change)

Updated August 4, 2023

August

- 11** Last Day of Camp Or Ami
- 31** Meet the Teacher Appointments ~ Information to Follow

September

- 5** First Day of School
Three's and Pre-K Enrichments Begin
- 15** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ Erev Rosh Hashanah
- 16** Rosh Hashanah
Rosh Hashanah Family Service at 2:30 P.M. ~ Information to Follow
- 18** PTO Fall Hot Lunch Program Begins
Fall Creative Arts Workshops Begin
- 22** PTO Fall Challah Program Begins
- 25** School Closed ~ Yom Kippur
Yom Kippur Family Service at 2:00 P.M. ~ Information to Follow
- 30** Sukkot

October

- 7** Simchat Torah
- 13** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M.
- 19** Back to School Night ~ Information to Follow
- 23** Montgomery County Association for the Blind ~ Optional Vision Screening

November

- 3** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Pre-K Classes
- 7** School Closed for Teacher In-Service
- 14 & 15** Picture Days
- 22** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 23 & 24** School Closed ~ Thanksgiving Break

December

- 1** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Three-Year-Old Classes
- 7** First Night of Chanukah
PTO Chanukah Party
- 13** Chanukah Program ~ Information to Follow
- 22** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 25 – 29** School Closed ~ Winter Break

January

- 1 School Closed ~ New Year's Day
- 2 School Resumes
- 8 - 12 Mid-Year Conferences ~ Information to Follow
- 12 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Two-Year-Old Classes
- 15 School Closed ~ Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 22 Monday Creative Arts End
Karate Belt Ceremony at 1:00 P.M.
- 24 Wednesday Creative Arts End
Dance Recital at 1:00 P.M.
- 25 Tu B'Shevat
- 26 Friday Creative Arts End
PTO Fall Hot Lunch Program Ends
PTO Fall Challah Program Ends
- 29 Spring Creative Arts Workshops Begin
Spring Hot Lunch Program Begins

February

- 2 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Pre-K Classes
PTO Spring Challah Program Begins
- 16 School Closed ~ Teacher In-Service
- 19 School Closed ~ President's Day
- 24 Pajama Havdalah at 5:30 P.M. ~ Information to Follow

March

- 1 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Three-Year-Old Classes
- 22 M'Sibat Purim Celebration ~ Come Dressed as Your Favorite Purim Character!
1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 24 Purim
- 25 - 29 School Closed ~ Spring Break

April

- 12 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Two-Year Old Classes
- 22 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ First Seder
- 23 School Closed ~ First Day of Passover
- 29 School Closed ~ Last Day of Passover

May

- 3 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. ~ Education Shabbat Honoring Our Teachers
- 13 Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel Independence Day)
- 15 Israel Independence Day Celebration (Children Only) ~ Remember to Wear Blue & White!
- 20 Monday Creative Arts End
Karate Belt Ceremony at 1:00 P.M.
- 20 - 23 End of Year Conferences ~ Information to Follow
- 24 School Closed ~ All Students
- 26 Lag B'Omer
- 27 School Closed ~ Memorial Day
- 29 Wednesday Creative Arts End
Dance Recital at 1:00 P.M.
- 31 Friday Creative Arts End
PTO Spring Challah Program Ends

June

- 5 Spring Hot Lunch Program Ends
- 6 Pre-K Closing Exercises at 9:30 A.M.
Last Day of School
12:00 P.M. Dismissal for All Part Time Students
- 14 Camp Or Ami Meet the Counselor Appointments ~ Information to Follow
- 17 First Day of Camp Or Ami
- 19 Camp Or Ami Closed ~ Juneteenth

July

- 4 & 5 Camp Or Ami Closed ~ Holiday

August

- 9 Last Day of Camp Or Ami

Full Time Student Calendar 2023-2024

(Subject to Change)

Updated August 4, 2023

August

- 11** Last Day of Camp Or Ami
- 14 – 18** ECE Center Closed ~ All Students
- 21** ECE Center Resumes ~ Full Time Students Only
- 31** ECE Center Closed ~ Meet the Teacher Appointments ~ Information to Follow

September

- 1** School Closed ~ Holiday
- 4** School Closed ~ Labor Day
- 5** First Day of School
Three's and Pre-K Enrichments Begin
- 15** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ Erev Rosh Hashanah
- 16** Rosh Hashanah
Rosh Hashanah Family Service at 2:30 P.M. ~ Information to Follow
- 18** PTO Fall Hot Lunch Program Begins
Fall Creative Arts Workshops Begin
- 22** PTO Fall Challah Program Begins
- 25** School Closed ~ Yom Kippur
Yom Kippur Family Service at 2:00 P.M. ~ Information to Follow
- 30** Sukkot

October

- 7** Simchat Torah
- 13** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M.
- 19** Back to School Night ~ Information to Follow
- 23** Montgomery County Association for the Blind ~ Optional Vision Screening

November

- 3** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Pre-K Classes
- 7** School Closed for Teacher In-Service
- 14 & 15** Picture Days
- 22** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 23 & 24** School Closed ~ Thanksgiving Break

December

- 1** Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Three-Year-Old Classes
- 7** First Night of Chanukah
PTO Chanukah Party
- 13** Chanukah Program ~ Information to Follow
- 22** 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 25** School Closed ~ Legal Holiday Observed
- 26 – 29** School Open for Full Time Students Only (No PTO Hot Lunch Program)

January

- 1 School Closed ~ New Year's Day
- 2 School Resumes
- 8 – 12 Mid-Year Conferences ~ Information to Follow
- 12 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Two-Year-Old Classes
- 15 School Closed ~ Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 22 Monday Creative Arts End
Karate Belt Ceremony at 1:00 P.M.
- 24 Wednesday Creative Arts End
Dance Recital at 1:00 P.M.
- 25 Tu B'Shevat
- 26 Friday Creative Arts End
PTO Fall Hot Lunch Program Ends
PTO Fall Challah Program Ends
- 29 Spring Creative Arts Workshops Begin
Spring Hot Lunch Program Begins

February

- 2 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Pre-K Classes
PTO Spring Challah Program Begins
- 16 School Closed for Teacher In-Service
- 19 School Closed ~ President's Day
- 24 Pajama Havdalah at 5:30 P.M. ~ Information to Follow

March

- 1 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Three-Year-Old Classes
- 22 M'Sibat Purim Celebration ~ Come Dressed as Your Favorite Purim Character!
1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ All Students
- 24 Purim
- 25 – 29 School Open for Full Time Students Only (No PTO Hot Lunch Program)

April

- 12 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. Featuring the Two-Year-Old Classes
- 22 1:00 P.M. Dismissal ~ First Seder
- 23 School Closed ~ First Day of Passover
- 29 School Closed ~ Last Day of Passover

May

- 3 Tot Shabbat at 6:15 P.M. ~ Education Shabbat Honoring Our Teachers
- 13 Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel Independence Day)
- 15 Israel Independence Day Celebration (Children Only) ~ Remember to Wear Blue & White!
- 20 Monday Creative Arts End
Karate Belt Ceremony at 1:00 P.M.
- 20 - 23 End of Year Conferences ~ Information to Follow
- 24 School Closed ~ All Students
- 26 Lag B'Omer
- 27 School Closed ~ Memorial Day
- 29 Wednesday Creative Arts End
Dance Recital at 1:00 P.M.
- 31 Friday Creative Arts Ends
PTO Spring Challah Program Ends

June

- 5 Spring Hot Lunch Program Ends
- 6 Pre-K Closing Exercises at 9:30 A.M
- 7 ECE Center Open for Full Time Students Only
- 10 & 11 ECE Center Open for Full Time Students Only
- 11 Last Day for Full Time Pre-K Students
- 12 ECE Center Closed ~ Shavuot
- 13 ECE Center Closed ~ Camp Prep
- 14 ECE Center Closed ~ Meet the Counselor Appointments ~ Information to Follow
- 17 First Day of Camp Or Ami
- 19 Camp Or Ami Closed ~ Juneteenth

July

- 4 & 5 Camp Or Ami Closed ~ Holiday

August

- 9 Last Day of Camp Or Ami
- 12 – 16 ECE Center Closed ~ All Students
- 19 – 23 ECE Center Open for Full Time Students Only
- 26 – 28 ECE Center Open for Full Time Students Only
- 29 ECE Center Closed ~ Meet the Teacher Appointments ~ Information to Follow
- 30 ECE Center Closed ~ Holiday

JEWISH VALUES

Tzedakah - charity, justice

Shalom – peace, hello, goodbye

Mitzvah – responsibility, obligation

Tikvah – hope

Talmud Torah – Jewish study

Mishpachah – family

Avodah – work, workshop

Simchah – joy

Am Yisrael – Jewish people

Halachah – traditional Jewish law

Chochmah – wisdom

Ahavah – love

Masoret – tradition

Rachamin – mercy

Cherut – freedom

Gemilut Chasadim – acts of loving-kindness

Kavod – honor, respect

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