

B.mitzvah* Timeline

The following timeline will help you prepare for your child's upcoming b.mitzvah.

If you have any questions, please contact cantorberlin@shiramipa.org

- **Choose Date Application:** In September or October of the 4th grade year parents submit the "chose b.mitzvah date" form.
- **Date Assigned:** In November or December the of 4th grade year students will receive their dates along with an overview of b.mitzvah expectations.
- **B.mitzvah Enrichment Programming:** During the 6th grade year parents and students will participate in b.mitzvah family enrichment programs and/or retreats. Some will take place during regular school hours, while others may meet on a Saturday.
- **Orientation:** During the fall and spring of each year a cohort of families will meet (in a group and on Zoom) to review the timeline from the beginning of tutoring until the b.mitzvah.
- **Tutoring: 9-10 months before the b.mitzvah** your child will begin meeting with their tutor. Our office will contact you to schedule meetings. The tutor will provide your child with the prayers they will need to learn. The student will meet with the tutor for 24-26 thirty-minute sessions. Most often these meetings happen at the same time each week, however, once tutoring begins, you can make arrangements with the tutor to accommodate changing schedules.
- **Choosing Torah Verses: 6-7 months before the b.mitzvah** you and your child will meet with Rabbi Briskin to choose which section from the weekly portion they want to learn, based on clearly marked and highlighted sections. A detailed instruction sheet is also provided. Usually the tutor will notify Rabbi Briskin or Cantor Berlin when your child is ready to receive their verses. Typically we assign 12-14 verses of Torah for a morning service and 16-18 verses for a Havdalah service. After the verses are chosen, the verses will be divided into four separate sections (called *aliyot*) and an audio recording will be made to accompany the text. The audio guide will help your child master the words and music of the Torah portion. For the first few months, your child will learn their Torah verses with their tutor. At this time, your child should also begin their mitzvah project.

- **Mitzvah Project: 6 months before the b.mitzvah** the student should begin their individual mitzvah project. The mitzvah project can be a regular volunteer opportunity (such as packing or delivering meals for JRA), or helping to coach special needs children with Miracle League, or helping children with autism with Mitzvah Circle, to name three. Or your child can do a collection for an agency that is meaningful to them, or raise money for an organization. The mitzvah project is really up to you. This part of the process is entirely self-motivated and your child will be invited to share a description of their project during the b.mitzvah service. Furthermore, grade level mitzvah projects and other tikkun olam opportunities have been incorporated into the 6th grade curriculum.
- **Cantor Meetings: 2-3 months before the b.mitzvah** the student will conclude their work with their tutor and begin working with Cantor Berlin for eight 30 minute lessons. These lesson times will be scheduled in advance. At this time, Cantor Berlin will also review Haftarah options with your child, which include learning 3-6 verses from the Haftarah (a selection from the Book of Prophets that corresponds to the Torah portion), or an alternative creative project. Please note that Haftarah is not chanted for Shabbat afternoon Havdalah b.mitzvah, however, your child will be asked to do a separate project.
- **Parent Meeting with Rabbi Briskin: 4-6 weeks before the b. mitzvah** Rabbi Briskin will invite you to schedule a meeting (at the same time he asks you to schedule meetings with your child) in order to review the b.mitzvah parent checklist and honors sheet (both of which are available on our website), and answer questions. All b.mitzvah documents are accessible on our website the b.mitzvah section under the Spiritual Growth tab.
- **Rabbi Meetings: 6-8 weeks before the b.mitzvah** Rabbi Briskin will begin to meet with your child for five 30 minute sessions as he helps your child craft their d'var Torah, the lessons from the Torah portion that your child will teach to the congregation. These lesson times will be scheduled in advance with Rabbi Briskin using his automatic scheduling program.
- **Honors: 4 weeks before the b.mitzvah** the honors sheet (found in the parent's checklist packet or online) should be completed and returned to Jodi Friedman in the main office.

- **D'var Torah Practice: 2 weeks before the b.mitzvah** your child should have completed their d'var Torah and should be practicing it out loud a few times a week.
- **Rehearsal: 7-10 days before the b.mitzvah** the entire family will have a full rehearsal with Cantor Berlin. These usually take place on Tuesday afternoons, or at a mutually convenient time for you and Cantor Berlin.
- **Friday night before the b.mitzvah** your family will join the congregation for Shabbat services (at 7:00 p.m.) and will lead the blessings over candles and wine. Additionally your child will be invited to lead a prayer or reading from another part of the service. Please note that services are periodically held on Zoom. If the b.mitzvah is on that weekend, you will be invited to lead table blessings from your home.
- **Saturday: B.mitzvah Day!** If it's a morning service, we begin at 10:15a.m. and end between 11:45a.m. and Noon (or noon and 12:15 for partners/twins). If it's an afternoon/Havdalah service, we begin at 4:30pm (regardless of the season) and end around 5:45 p.m. Mazal Tov; you've worked long and hard to get to this point. We can't wait to celebrate with you.
- **Sunday after the b.mitzvah—SLEEP!**

**We use the non-gender specific term "b.mitzvah" to refer to a group of students, rather than the gender specific "b'nai mitzvah."*