

Congregation Gates of Heaven

# FAMILY HANDBOOK

# 2022-2023



## ***Gates Quest***

Golub Family Education Center

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## *GATES QUEST VISION*

### **18 Jewish Things a Young Jew Should Know, Care About, and Be Able to Do by Age 18**

Our conception of Jewish education goes beyond the mere acquisition of factual knowledge. Equally important, are tasks of understanding, evaluating, and relating to Jewish issues for the sake of the individual and the community. The essential elements of Judaism, such as those articulated in this framework, are open to a range of interpretations. Children need to be inducted into skills, values, attitudes, and practices that enable them to make meaning of contemporary Jewish life.

Our vision of Jewish education is to enable Jewish youth, and ultimately Jews of all ages, to understand and appreciate the core ideas, values, and practices of Judaism, so that these ideas, values, and practices may serve as resources in their lives as Jews, Americans, and human beings. They should be able to articulate the ways in which they belong to the Jewish civilization and community, while recognizing that these points of connection will likely evolve, grow, and mature over time. Our assumption is that the better equipped young Jews are along the lines the framework suggests, the more prepared they will be to become committed participants in adult Jewish life.

This framework builds on the premise that the purpose of Jewish education is both instruction (the deliberate, formalized process of handing over elements of the culture by educators to learners) and enculturation (initiation into a culture, including its attitudes, practices, and values, in addition to its knowledge and skills). For each of the 18 components of Judaism there are five dimensions of development in the learner that can be planned for, implemented, and measured:

- **KNOWLEDGE:** *Understanding it*—familiarity with core ideas, facts, terms, and chronology that are central to the Jewish experience.
- **SKILLS:** *Ability to do it*—refers to the ability to make links and create patterns out of diverse ideas and to apply them to concrete actions.
- **VALUES:** *What it means for the collective (Jewry)*—are principles or ideals that have come to be understood as lynchpins to Jewish life throughout the ages.
- **ATTITUDES:** *What it means for the individual (Jew)*—refers to what implications these understandings and values have for me the individual. How does this aspect of Jewish life affect my life?
- **PRACTICES:** *Using or doing it*—refer to actions, behaviors, and deeds that are important to Jewish life and can be performed by youths at appropriate times.

## **Gates Quest Vision**

- 1. Feel part of a chain of Jewish tradition, as both recipients and co-creators.**
- 2. Feel connected to Jews around the world.**
- 3. Have Jewish friends.**
- 4. Engage with Jewish role models and personalities.**
- 5. Participate in the *kehilla* (Jewish community).**
- 6. Regard Judaism as a relevant source of wisdom for their questions about life and its meaning.**
- 7. Appreciate tikkun olam (repairing the world) as a core Jewish value and perform acts of *G'milut Khasadim* (giving of loving-kindness).**
- 8. Care about and connect with Israel.**
- 9. Read and interpret sacred and historical texts and be able to discern Jewish core narratives (stories, sagas, events) and values within them.**
- 10. Recognize the role wrestling with God has played in Jewish life.**
- 11. Open themselves up to divinity through theology, prayer, study, or other spiritual practices.**
- 12. Understand the mutual influence of Jewish and broader culture on each other and on contemporary Jews.**
- 13. Be able to identify critical issues facing American Jewry and be motivated to act on them.**
- 14. Understand the meanings and performance of Jewish mitzvot.**
- 15. Participate in various Jewish rituals, customs, holidays, and lifecycle events, and appreciate their history and meaning.**
- 16. Comprehend and utilize Hebrew words and other Jewish terminology.**
- 17. Partake in Jewish culinary traditions.**
- 18. Experience Jewish arts and culture.**

## ATTENDANCE AND SCHEDULES

Our policies are designed to ensure each, and every student can get the most out of their religious education. Participation in the school community is a crucial element both in Jewish life and in academic progress. Arriving late and leaving early is disruptive to class. Tardy students disrupt the learning process and make it difficult for teachers and students to meet our educational goals. We ask all parents to make every effort to be on time for class.

	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Dismissal</u>
<u>Sunday Gates Quest School—Preschool – 7</u>	<u>9:30 AM</u>	<u>12:00 Noon</u>
<u>Chai School—8 – 12</u>	<u>Check our catalog for the times of our classes</u>	

## BEHAVIOR

We seek to create a warm, secure and joyful learning environment for our students so they can develop a sense of love and identification with Judaism and Congregation Gates of Heaven. To maintain a positive atmosphere, we expect mutual respect and understanding among the teachers, students and parents as well as **dignity and clarity of expectations** for classroom behavior between teachers and students.

Should disruptive or disrespectful behavior occur, they will be handled in the classroom whenever possible. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be notified if a student's behavior becomes inappropriate. Should a student need to be removed from the classroom due to inappropriate behavior he/she will be taken to the Director of Congregational Jewish Living to discuss the issue and the incident will be recorded on the student's record. If a student is sent to the office a second time, the parents will be notified and the student cannot return to the class until a conference is held with the parents, teacher and Director.

If continued behavior problems persist, a meeting with the Rabbi and Director of Congregational Jewish Living will occur. In addition, the situation may require removal of the student from the school which can jeopardize a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony or participation in Confirmation.

## FOOD POLICY AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating birthdays with Religious School friends can create special bonds. Parents who wish to celebrate their child's birthday during Religious School should contact the classroom teacher at least one week before the birthday. Teachers will inform you of any dietary or allergy issues among students. **Remember our building is nut conscious.**

Any foods brought into the school must be **prepackaged and peanut and tree-nut free**. *For prepackaged peanut and tree-nut free snacks: Always Read the Label.* Manufacturing and packaging practices may change without any warning and a product that was once peanut-free may no longer be. For an up to date list, refer to the safe snack guide website: <http://snacksafely.com/safe-snack-guide/>.

## DRESS CODE

We do not have a formal dress code but weather appropriate dress is required. We do not permit shoes with wheels or athletic cleats inside the building.

## FIELD TRIPS

In order to enhance learning, classes may be scheduled to go on field trips throughout the school year. A permission slip will be sent home describing the trip and requesting your written permission so that your child may attend. Fees for transportation and admission will be listed in the permission slip.

## HOMework

Homework assignments are integral parts of the Hebrew school learning program. Homework is assigned to reinforce concepts developed during the school day. For older grades, many assignments are in the form of Hebrew reading. Help your child to structure homework time so they can practice their Hebrew reading 2-3 times per week. Without this home reading time, children will not be able to keep up with their Hebrew reading skills. If you find that your child is having a great difficulty with an assignment, write or call the teacher explaining that the assignment was too difficult.

## PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

All families will receive a weekly email from your child's teacher which affords you the opportunity to know what is going on in class as well as a direct method to ask teachers questions. You may request a meeting with a teacher throughout the school year by contacting the teacher directly or calling the synagogue office.

## SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS AND CLOSING

If school is closed for any reason, you will receive an email no later than 7:30 am Sunday morning.

## SCHOOL AND THE TELEPHONE

Please make sure to make all necessary arrangements before your child leaves for school. Please be aware that cell phones or smart phones must be turned off in classrooms unless they are being used as part of a lesson. **No one should be texting students while they are in class.** Students will not be allowed to accept calls on their cell phones during class.

If an issue arises and a student needs to be contacted, please call/text Arnie Rotenberg's cell at **203-521-4591**.

## SNACKS

### Snacks and Food

**Snacks served will be prepackaged. If you bring food into the building for your child's class, please bring in prepacked, nut free snacks. Discuss with your child's teacher about any other allergies.**

Snacks are given to students Sunday mornings. All snacks are **peanut, and tree-nut free** based on the Snack Safely Guide and supervised by Arnie.



*The world is a work in progress and we are its workers. -Rabbi Matt*

Bringing your child to our school demonstrates your commitment to her/his Jewish education. There are also other ways to be involved in our school:

- Volunteer to help your child's class for a day, or help organize social activities with other parents
- Attend a meeting of the Lifelong Learning Committee, advising on programs and policies for our school.
- Help facilitate an extra-curricular class (Chug) from 9:30-10:00.

There are many other means to become involved. [Check out our web site.](#)

For more information, contact Arnie Rotenberg at [arotenberg@cgo.org](mailto:arotenberg@cgo.org).

## Glossary—Milon

A word about transliteration (writing one language with the letters of another)—there is no one right way to do it. And it is very hard to be consistent. We strive for consistency and the goal is for the English letters to give us a clue to what the Hebrew letter should be.

Khaf is usually spelled with a kh and Chet is usually spelled with a ch.

Adom..... Red	Hatikvah..... lit. The Hope, Israeli National Anthem
Agaddah.....Jewish stories, Midrash	
Aliya..... Emigrating to Israel	
Aliya Bet....Largest pre-state wave of aliyah	Hora'ah..... Teaching
Am Yisrael.....The Jewish People	Ivrit.....Hebrew
B'tzelem Elohim.....in the image of God	Kavanah.....Intention, focus
Beit Tefillah.....House of Prayer	Kedushah.....Holiness
Bereshit.....Genesis	Kelev.....dog
Bikur Cholim..... Comforting the sick	Kesher..... Connection
Brit Milah.....Ceremony of circumcision	Keshet..... Rainbow
Chagim.....Holidays	Kibbutz..... Collective community
Chavurah.....friendship	Kitah.....class or grade level
Chazon..... Vision	Kitah Alef.....1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
Chidush..... A new idea, insight	Kitah Bet.....2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
Da'at.....Knowledge	Kitah Gimel.....3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
Dugma Ishit.....personal example	Kitah Daled.....4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Dugma'ot..... role models	Kitah Hey.....5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Elul..... Month before Rosh Hashanah	Kitah Vav.....6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Etgar..... Challenge	Kitah Zayin.....7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Gan..... Preschool (3 & 4 yr. old's)	Kitah Chet.....8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Gan Yeladim..... Kindergarten	Kitah Tet.....9 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Gav Yashar.....Straight back	Kitah Yud.....10 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Ha'arkhah.....Evaluation	Kitah Yud Alef.....11 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Hadrakha..... Training	Kitah Yud Bet.....12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Hakhnasat Orkhim. Welcoming the Stranger	Kotel..... Western Wall
Halakhah..... Jewish Law	Lo Titen Mikhshol.... lit. Do not place an obstacle before the blind; providing access and fostering sensitivity to the handicapped.



Ma'aseh.....Action, deed  
 Madrikh..... One who shows the way (m, s)  
 Madrikhah.... One who shows the way (f, s)  
 Madrikhim....One who shows the way (m, p)  
 Madrikhot.....One who shows the way (f, p)  
 Makhberot.....Notebooks  
 Machshev.....Computer  
 Makhela..... Choir  
 Malbish Arumim..... Clothing the naked  
 Matza Miklat.....Sheltering the Homeless  
 Mazon..... Feeding the Hungry  
 Merkaz Chinuch..... Education Center  
 Midrash.....Stories written to explain the  
 Torah or other teachings; parables  
  
 Milon..... Glossary, dictionary  
 Mishnah..... Commentaries on the Torah  
 Moadim..... Seasons  
 Neshamah.....Soul  
 Nishima Amuka.....A deep breath  
 Parashah.....Weekly Torah Portion  
 Pasukim.....Biblical verses  
 Rak siddur b'yad...Only the prayer book in  
 hand  
  
 Seder; sedarim..... Passover service  
 Sefer Torah..... Torah Scroll  
 Shaliach Tzibor..... Prayer Leader  
 Shira..... Music  
 Siddur..... Prayer book  
 Sifriya.....Library  
 Tallit.....Prayer shawl  
 Tanakh..... Hebrew Bible

Tefillah.....Prayer  
 Tefillot..... Prayers, worship services  
 Terumah..... Donation  
 Teshuvah...Atonement, correcting behavior  
 Tikkun Olam..... Repairing the World  
 Tokhnit..... Program  
 Tokhnit Limudim..... Curriculum  
 Tzedakah...Charity, Justice, Righteousness  
 Yisrael.....Israel