

B'nai Chaim Religious and Hebrew School Policies- UPDATED!

Welcome to B'nai Chaim and to our Religious and Hebrew School. This booklet has been prepared in order to acquaint you with the philosophies, policies, and programs of our school. In this partnership of school and child, it is essential that the school and the families we serve know what to expect from each other.

Mission Statement:

To build a foundation of Jewish learning for the children of B'nai Chaim and to foster life long learners in an engaging and safe learning environment.

School Hours and Meeting Places

All grades from pre-school through our B'nai Mitzvah class of seventh graders will meet from 9AM until 11:30 AM on Sunday mornings at the Temple.

Our Hebrew classes meet on Sundays for our 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders and will meet from 11:45AM until 1:00PM. These students should bring a snack or light lunch to eat between Religious School and Hebrew School.

Drop Off

Please have your student here on time as we begin promptly!

Rabbi Kim Harris leads an interactive multi-generational service from 9:05 until approximately 9:40 AM, which you are invited to attend with your child. All students participate in the service by practicing and reinforcing what they learn at Religious School and Hebrew School. We encourage you to have your child arrive by 9:00 AM so they can settle in and be ready in time for the service.

Attendance: One of the most important factors in determining success is having regular attendance. We encourage you to have your child arrive promptly. We have a mandatory 85% attendance for both our Religious and Hebrew School students beginning with our third graders so that your child will meet their B'nai Mitzvah requirements. Keep in mind that our school meets between 24 and 26 sessions per year. We do not have school scheduled on secular holidays or on any three-day weekends so that families may spend more time together.

Dismissal: Be prompt! We do expect all parents to come inside the building to pick up their children to ensure the safety of all of our students.

Parent Participation: The Educational Director in conjunction with the parents will form a PTO, a Parent Teacher Organization. The PTO will consist of at least one parent representative for each class. The Room Parent will help the teacher with special classroom needs such as making phone calls, arranging special snacks, and field trips. The PTO will also form a fundraising group and we encourage other parents to join this group. Our Religious School depends on fundraising each year to help us achieve a balanced budget, and to contribute to extra supplies, books, etc.

All parents will be expected to share in the weekly clean up duties, as well as special event set ups and clean ups.

Oneg Shabbat:

Each class will participate in a Shabbat Service. The families are encouraged to gather together prior to the special class Shabbat to enjoy a Shabbat dinner together. This will be either a potluck or pizza dinner arranged by the room parents. The Oneg Shabbat will be sponsored by the participating families for that evening. **Families will be asked to bring a challah, supply treats for the Oneg, to set up the table, and to stay for clean-up.**

School Cancellation: If school needs to be cancelled due to weather conditions an e-mail will be sent out and if necessary phone calls will be made through a phone tree at least one hour before starting time. If the weather is bad on Saturday evening an e-mail blast will go out to cancel ahead of time.

Registration:

The following is required for ongoing participation in our Religious and Hebrew School:

1. Membership in good standing in Congregation B'nai Chaim. For new members, the Temple offers an optional trial period in which your child may enroll in the school for one semester before you are required to join the congregation. However, this trial period does not apply to any child in fifth grade or above.
2. Full completion of Registration Form

3. Tuition payments must be paid on time. One half of the year's tuition is due on or before the first day of class. Final payment of tuition is due on or before the first day of the second semester in January. The Temple Administrator must approve all special requests and arrangements for tuition payments. In case of need, please contact the Administrator/ President privately.

CLASSROOM STANDARDS

DISCIPLINE

The classroom atmosphere is expected to be very similar to the expectations of your child's public or private school classroom. Good behavior is an expectation in our Religious and Hebrew school classes. Our teachers look forward to spending quality time teaching, rather than disciplining.

TZEDAKAH

Tzedekah is an important aspect within our curriculum. Donations are collected weekly. This year we have again decided to have the theme of Echad once again and we will contribute the monies gathered to one charity.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Throughout the school year, students and their families will be invited to participate in holiday celebrations and in special programs. These programs are closely tied with the curriculum and your participation is strongly encouraged. Notices for all special activities will be distributed in advance. You will receive e-mail information about these events with plenty of time to plan to attend!

SHABBAT SERVICES

Each class will participate in at least one Friday evening or a Saturday morning Shabbat Service during the school year. We hope that you will make every effort to attend that special Shabbat with your child. The class depends upon everyone's participation and support. We also hope you will join us for other wonderful services listed in the B'nai Chaim calendar which is on our web page and is updated as often as needed.

MUSIC

We incorporate our music during our weekly service. Rabbi Kim along with her husband Brian, teach new songs and melodies throughout the school year. Students will learn the prayers as well as songs that are related to our holidays.

OZ'REEM PROGRAM

Our Religious School Program currently ends with your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah. To continue their growth in our Jewish community, we invite them back to be classroom aides called oz'reem. Some of our oz'reem continue to help the school throughout high school, and sometimes will substitute for our teachers and/or tutor our students in Hebrew. This is a paid position. To become an ozer or ozeret these are the requirements:

1. Must have completed a Bar or Bat Mitzvah
2. Must attend a training session at the beginning of the school year
3. Must behave appropriately and complete assigned tasks
4. Is responsible for communication with the teacher and /or the educational director.
5. Is responsible for notifying the teacher and educational director of absences before they occur.
6. Family must be a member in good standing of Congregation B'nai Chaim

B'NAI CHAIM TEEN YOUTH

Throughout the year we will encourage your child to get involved when youth group activities are planned.

Our teachers and oz'reem are very excited about helping your child/ children learn more about their Judaism. We are all dedicated to the goals of the curriculum and want your child's Religious School and Hebrew School experiences to be rich, compelling, and enjoyable. We hope that you will become familiar with our goals and curriculum so that you can supplement our efforts by taking that active role in our school and at home. Please get

involved. Become a volunteer. Ask the teacher how you can help either in class or from home. Encourage your child to bring tzedekah weekly. This is an exciting time and we are building our future generations of young Jewish children as we teach them about Jewish holidays, rituals, customs, values, Bible stories, and Hebrew. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher, the Rabbi, the Congregational President, or the Educational Director at any time with insights, questions, comments, or concerns.

Looking forward to another fabulous school year!

Rabbi Kim Harris
Susan Bergkamp, President
Michelle S. Weinberg, Director of Education *

*If you need to reach me, my personal e-mail is:
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