



5784 | 2023-2024

Congregation Beth Am Youth Education Parent Handbook

Your Youth Education Team!



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Beth Am Clergy & Staff

Cantor Jaime Shpall, Cantor
Rabbi Jonathan Prosnit, Associate Rabbi
Rabbi Heath Watenmaker, Associate Rabbi
Rabbi Sarah Weissman, Associate Rabbi

Pati Ortiz, Interim Executive Director
Jhonatan Azurdia, Facilities Supervisor
Jaime Castaneda, Custodian
Orlando Dejesus, Custodian
Mandy Eisner, Director of Development
Emily McCrone, Orchard Coordinator
Emily Osterman, Operations Manager
Gustavo Pantoja, Custodian

Bria Silbert, Rabbis' & Executive Director's Support

Talia Turkenitz, Accounting Specialist
Liz Vaisben, Communications Manager
Karen Wilkinson, Accounting Manager

Beth Am Youth Ed Curricular Vision



Beth Am offers Jewish wisdom and tradition as a foundation and a springboard from which to live meaningful, joyful, and purposeful lives. In our Youth Education programs, students connect beyond themselves to the richness of heritage, tradition, and peoplehood. Throughout their journeys, the Beth Am community nourishes our students with deep relationships and a strong sense of belonging.

Sunday Program & Hagigah Curricular Themes

- **PreK** – Little Jewish Explorers
- **Kindergarten** – Symbols
- **1st Grade** – Holidays
- **2nd Grade** – Community
- **3rd Grade** – Genesis and Exodus
- **4th Grade** – Tanakh: Torah, Prophets and writings
- **5th Grade** – Israel

Hagigah's curricular themes **rotate each year** and are woven into both class content and the original plays, musicals and movies. Since the program involves 2nd-5th grade students, the curriculum is based on elements pulled from 2nd-5th grade Sunday Program curricular themes.

6th-7th Grade Program Curricular Themes

- **6th Grade** – Jewish Values in Action, a Critical Read of Torah
- **7th Grade** – A Critical Read of Torah, Holocaust and Human Behavior

8th-12th Grade Program Curricular Themes

8th-12th Grade Teen Nights involve a **rotating curriculum** every 4-5 weeks, covering themes like social justice, preparing for adulthood, and Jewish history.

Hebrew

Hebrew learning at Beth Am follows a “sound-to-print” approach, introducing the sounds of Hebrew early, by integrating it in Hebrew-rich Youth Education programs for all our Pre-K through 5th graders. Once they have an aural and oral foundation in Hebrew, students learn to read Hebrew starting in 5th grade or have the option to start earlier in our Hebrew enrichment programs. 6th and 7th Grade students learn Hebrew in small groups by level, providing an intimate and accelerated environment to learn or reinforce reading skills and explore the meanings of our prayers and key **t’filah** vocabulary, prior to beginning preparations for their B’nei Mitzvah.

BETH AM BRIT



OUR COMMUNITY NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS



Beth Am Youth Education Brit

Kavod • כבוד • Respect

כבוד

Kavod
for
Self

- We are kind to ourselves and open to growth
- We make safe and thoughtful choices
- We show we are fully present and engaged by actively participating
- We ask for help when needed
- We listen to and take care of our bodies

כבוד

Kavod
for
Others

- We show care for others through our words and actions
- We treat one another with kindness and honor
- We include and stand up for each other
- We offer any help we can give to others
- We always ask permission before entering someone else's space or touching them

כבוד

Kavod
for
Space

- We protect our campus by keeping it clean
- We understand Beth Am's ritual spaces and objects to be sacred
- We treat our indoor and outdoor areas with care
- We keep our spaces safe for ourselves and others
- We are aware of our impact on the environment

Policies, Practices, and Procedures



The Education Office

The Education Office will be open from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. during Sunday programs and from 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. during Wednesday programs. A staff member will be present at those times in the Education Office to answer the phone and help with early student pickup, medical emergencies, and/or other situations that may arise.

Lost and Found

Most lost Youth Education items end up in the Education Office. Feel free to check out the Lost and Found bin and/or contact a member of the Youth Ed team if your child has lost something on campus. We highly **recommend that you label all of your child(ren)'s items so they are easier to identify and return.**

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

We work hard to maintain a safe and secure environment for our students. Please help us by following these policies so that we can be certain when your children are on or off campus.

For the health, safety and security of our students, your child **MUST** be picked up from the Ed Office (if leaving early) or their designated Pick Up Spot (if leaving after their programs end). **DO NOT encourage your child to meet you anywhere else on campus.**

Sunday Drop Off

- **PreK-4th Grade Students** can be dropped off directly at the Drop Off spot (the stairs by Chapel/BATY Lounge) **OR** (for PreK-2nd grade) can be walked to t'filah by their parent/guardian or (3rd-4th grade) walked to their classroom by their parent/guardian.
- **5th-7th Grade Students** can be dropped off at the lower campus Drop Off Spot **OR** walked to their classroom by their parent/guardian.

Sunday Pick Up

- **PreK-5th Grade Students** can be picked up at the Pick Up spot (the stairs by the Conference Room/Beth Am Admin Office) or (for 3rd-5th grade) can be picked up directly from t'filah.
 - If you plan to pick up your 3rd-5th grade child **directly from t'filah**, please be sure to **notify your child's teacher before you leave.**
 - If you park in the parking lot rather than using the car line, you must meet your child **at the Pick Up Spot.**
- **6th-7th Grade/Beit Midrash Students** can be picked up at the lower campus Pick Up Spot.
 - If you park in the parking lot rather than using the car line, you must meet your child **at the Pick Up Spot.**

Wednesday Drop Off

- **Hagigah Students** can be dropped off directly at the PreK-5th grade Pick Up spot **OR** walked to the Social Hall by their parent/guardian.
- **8th-12th Grade Students** can be dropped off at the lower campus Drop Off Spot **OR** can park in the parking lot and walk to the Beit Kehillah.

Wednesday Pick Up

- **Hagigah Students** can be picked up from the PreK-5th grade Pick Up spot **OR** picked up by their parent/guardian directly from t'filah in the Sanctuary.
- **8th-12th Grade Students** can be picked up at the lower campus Pick Up spot if they did not drive themselves/are not carpooling.

Appendix A shows a full map of campus, designating the Drop Off and Pick Up spots as well as the location of t'filah.

If someone other than your child's parent/guardian will be picking them up from programs, please email us at youthed@betham.org ahead of time.

What if I have children in both PreK-5th grade and 6th-7th/Beit Midrash?

Email a member of the Education Team! We will inform the appropriate PreK-5th grade teacher that a sibling (or siblings) will be joining their student for pick up, and you can pick up all of your children at the **PreK-5th Grade Pick Up** area.

Can a younger sibling stay until 12:30 p.m.?

Yes! Email us at youthed@betham.org! We offer **childcare at the playground** from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for students whose older siblings have programs that run until 12:30 p.m.

What if my child walks/bikes home?

Email a member of the Education Team **every week** that your child will be doing so. Your child will need to "sign out" at their Pick Up spot with a member of the Youth Ed team (Sarah, Alex or Lauren) before they leave campus, where they will be given a permission slip to show our campus security guard upon exiting Beth Am.

Student Early Pickup Procedures

Parents can only pick up students early from class by first going to the Ed Office. You will sign your child(ren) out using the **"Sign-Out Clipboard."** The Ed Office staff will use the walkie talkies to radio that a student needs to come to the Ed Office and they will come to meet you.

WHAT IF I KNOW IN ADVANCE THAT I'LL NEED TO PICK UP MY CHILD EARLY?

Email us at youthed@betham.org and we'll have your child ready and waiting in the Ed Office to meet you!

Where do I park to pick up my child early?

There are two designated parking spots at the top of the hill by the Education Office that you are welcome to park in if you are picking your child up early from programs.

Student Late Pickup Procedures

If you know you will be late (over 15 minutes) picking up your child(ren), please call the Education Office to let the staff know (650-493-4665). Your child will wait for you in the Education Office and you should pick them up directly from there.

Any child who has not been picked up within 15 minutes of the designated pick up time will be escorted to the Education Office. Either a staff person or the child will call parents/guardians directly. If we cannot get in contact with a parent/guardian, we will call the additional people listed on your child's registration form.

Teen Night late arrival/early leave policy

Our priority is keeping everyone safe and knowing who is on site and in our programs. When 8th-12th grade students arrive on campus for Wednesday Teen Night, they must sign in on the sheet in the Beit Kehillah prior to picking up their nametag.

Prior to leaving campus, teens must sign out. Their signing out serves as an indication that they have parental and/or guardian consent to leave campus early.

Attendance

Regular attendance helps your child(ren) not only to deepen their Judaic knowledge, but to connect with their cohort and our Beth Am community. We encourage students to attend programs as often as possible.

If your child misses more than three program dates in a row without any prior notice, you will be contacted by a program director.

Tzedakah

Our primary reason for collecting Tzedakah is to teach a Jewish value—we give to those who need it **because it's the right thing to do, not just because we want to.** Each classroom will receive a Tzedakah box at the start of the school year.

We encourage you to send your child with a little bit of Tzedakah each week. The act of giving matters more than the amount! **At the end of each month, each class's Tzedakah will be donated to the fund that Beth Am has chosen for the month.**

Classroom Guests

Students are not permitted to bring friends or other guests with them to programs without prior approval from a member of the Youth Ed Team and shared emergency contact information.

Snacks

Please send your PreK-5th grade child to programs with a snack and water. There is a water bottle refill station located in the hallway leading to the Sanctuary and Social Hall. Each class has time built in for a break and snack. Beth Am's classrooms are nut-free, so please keep this in mind when packing snacks.

6th and 7th grade students will receive a hearty snack each week during their *hafsakah* (recess), but we encourage you to still send water with your child. Feel free to send your child with additional nut-free snacks.

8th-12th graders receive dinner from 6:30-7:00 p.m. as part of their Teen Night programming.

If you would like to **bring in a treat for your child's class**, please email youthed@betham.org first so we can make sure that any student food allergies and/or dietary restrictions are covered.

Campus Cell Phone Policy

Student cell phones are permitted on campus but should be powered off and put away during all program times, including *hafsakah* (recess). Cell phones **are not allowed** to be used in the classroom space except for learning activities that are directed by a teacher.

If you have an urgent message for your child, please call the Ed Office and a member of the Ed Team will relay the message.

Permission to Treat

As part of the Youth Education program registration form, you either gave or did not give permission for Beth Am to treat your child/ren in the case of an emergency or the need for medical treatment. Below is the full text of the **Release of Liability & Parental Consent for Medical Treatment of a Minor**:

In the event of an emergency or need for medical treatment, and I cannot be reached, I authorize Beth Am's staff to act in loco parentis, and to consent to any medical treatment and/or hospitalization deemed necessary for my child(ren). I understand and agree that I will be responsible for the cost of such medical treatment. In addition, I do hereby authorize representatives of Congregation Beth Am as agents for the undersigned to consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical or surgical diagnoses or treatment and hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under the general or special supervision of, any physician or surgeon licensed under the provisions of the California Medical Practice Act, whether such examination, diagnoses or treatment is rendered at a physician's office or at a government licensed hospital. It is understood that this authorization is given in advance of any specific examination, diagnosis, treatment, or hospital care being required, and is given to provide authority and power on any and all such examinations, diagnoses, treatment or hospital care which the aforementioned physician, in the exercise of his/her best judgment may deem advisable. This authorization is given pursuant to the provisions of California Family Code 6910.

COMMUNICATION

Weekly Newsletter

Every week, you will receive an email from the Youth Education team with general program updates and events that are happening in the community.

Teacher Emails

All PreK-7th grade teachers will send a weekly update to their class after programs, focusing on what the class did in that session as well as some follow up items, such as dinner table topics.

If you notice that you are not receiving these weekly recap emails, please get in touch with a member of the Youth Ed team.

Parent Resource Page

Looking for the yearly calendar? How about tuition information or daily schedules? All of this information is located on the registration resource section of the Beth Am website: betham.org/youth-ed-registration

Inclusion

Beth Am's Youth Education strives to be a community where each child feels safe, welcomed and valued. For children who might need accommodations, our educators, together with our Inclusion Specialist, work with parents/guardians, students and teachers to make sure that each child has the tools they need to be successful.

If you shared notes on your child's registration form related to Inclusion, you will be contacted at the beginning of the school year by our Inclusion Specialist. Should you wish to share additional information about your child, please don't hesitate to reach out to Sarah Lauing Cohen (sarah_lauing@betham.org) at any time throughout the school year.

In addition to classroom support, we also have a robust selection of tools used by our classroom teachers, including fidgets, wiggle cushions, timers, and stretchy chair bands.

If a student needs some time away from their class, we also offer a quiet, calm space for students with activities like music and coloring.

Appendix A: Campus Map

