

B'NAI  ISRAEL

# PARENT HANDBOOK

Talmud Torah  
and  
Youth Programs  
2017–2018/5778

6301 Montrose Road, Rockville, MD 20852  
301-816-5576 | [www.bnaiisraelcong.org](http://www.bnaiisraelcong.org)

# B'nai Israel Talmud Torah

## MISSION STATEMENT

B'nai Israel Talmud Torah aims to foster a positive sense of Jewish identity by engaging children in an exploration of Jewish texts, history, practices and beliefs that are meaningful in the present and will be the foundation for a lifetime of participation in Jewish community.

We strive to:

- Develop a positive sense of Jewish identity and community
- Provide a framework for living as an observant Conservative Jew
- Develop skills, ideas and values of Jewish life
- Teach students to utilize texts such as the *Tanakh*, the Siddur, and Rabbinic writings for personal enrichment
- Develop a personal system of ethics founded on Jewish tradition and history
- Encourage questions and curiosity into the nature of being and living Jewishly

We have an integrated curriculum in the following areas:

*T'fillah* (prayer) and Synagogue Skills Modern Hebrew  
Holidays and Customs  
*Mitzvot*, Jewish Values and Culture  
Hebrew Language  
Israel  
History and *Tanakh*

## Who's Who at B'nai Israel Talmud Torah

Naomi Resnick, Vice President for Youth and Education  
Marjorie Cohen, Co-Chair, Talmud Torah Committee  
Stephanie Holzman, Co-Chair, Talmud Torah Committee

Moshe Ben-Lev, Education Director  
301-816-5574, [Moshebl@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:Moshebl@bnaiisraelcong.org)

Rabbi Penina Alexander, Assistant Principal  
301-816-5566, [peninaa@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:peninaa@bnaiisraelcong.org)

Arielle Katzel, Family Engagement Coordinator  
301-816-5567, [ariellek@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:ariellek@bnaiisraelcong.org)

Samantha Berenson, Youth Director  
240-221-2504, [Samanthab@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:Samanthab@bnaiisraelcong.org)

Jennifer Cohen, Education Communications Coordinator  
240-221-2508, [Jenniferc@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:Jenniferc@bnaiisraelcong.org)

Leydi Solano, Talmud Torah Assistant  
301-816-5576, [Leydis@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:Leydis@bnaiisraelcong.org)

## **POLICIES, PROCEDURES & PROGRAMS**

*School policies are designed to meet the needs of our students while ensuring their safety. Please read this information, and share the appropriate sections with your children.*

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

- Primary Grades (Grades K-2): Sundays (9:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.)
- Intermediate Grades (Grades 3-6): Sundays(9:00am-12:15pm); Tuesdays (4:30pm-6:15pm)
- Upper Grades (Grades 7-10): Tuesdays (6:30pm-8:30pm)

### **B'NAI MITZVAH**

The B'nai Mitzvah experience is made up of different components, including:

- Private lessons with the cantors
- Shabbat services
- Family education programs
- Parent classes and workshops

Becoming a B'nai Mitzvah is contingent upon completion of five years of Jewish education in Grades 3-7 (enrollment in our Talmud Torah program or Jewish Day School). Children whose B'nai Mitzvah dates fall before the end of the school year are expected to regularly attend classes through the end of the school year.

### **BLUMBERG-ZALIS FAMILY LIBRARY & CHOD MEDIA CENTER**

Primary students frequently visit the library as part of class time. Students in Grades 3–10 can use the Blumberg-Zalis Family Library for research purposes under the supervision of their classroom teachers.

### **CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

All cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and out of sight during instructional times. In some cases, teachers may collect cell phones at the beginning of class and return them at the end.

### **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND HOMEWORK**

Home assignments help reinforce classroom learning and are an important part of the learning process. Each week, students from 3-6<sup>th</sup> grade may receive short assignments that will be due the following class session.

It helps students who have been absent to make up missed classwork so they don't fall behind. Teachers will assist you and your child to ensure that each child keeps up.

### **CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is crucial to a successful learning experience. A minimum requirement of an 80% level of classroom attendance is expected at each grade level. Parents are asked to call the office if a student misses more than one consecutive class session.

If a student falls below the minimum level of attendance during the first report card period, a staff member will contact the parents so that they can work together towards better attendance.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Most School-Home communications are carried out through email. We ask that every family provide us with a valid email address. Teachers send a weekly or bi-weekly email update reporting on material covered and homework assignments. The Education & Youth Department sends a weekly newsletter, *Kesher*, on Thursdays throughout the school year. The Synagogue's website ([www.bnaiisraelcong.org](http://www.bnaiisraelcong.org)) is an excellent source of information of events organized by the congregation.

To speak with a teacher or an administrator, please call the Talmud Torah office at 301-816-5576. We will be glad to set up a telephone and/or in-person conference. You can also contact your child's teacher(s) by emailing them.

In cases of separation/divorce, it is our policy to keep all parents informed of a student's progress and school activities unless legally prohibited to do so.

### *DEREKH ERETZ* – STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are involved in religious education in a religious setting. *Kavod* (respect, honor) is the principle policy of our school. Students are expected to show respect for the Rabbi, Cantor, Director of Education, faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, and other students. Self-respect is the key to honoring others and receiving honor from others. Students' actions should reflect the values and ethics of Judaism.

*Derekh Eretz*, translated as way of the land, implies that Judaism has high standards for how we act and interact. In Torah we find commandments governing human interaction - *mitzvot ben adam l'chavero* ("commandments between one human being and another").

If there is a behavior issue, the student receives two warnings. If the behavior does not improve, the teacher will contact a parent. The teacher may choose to contact the parent earlier if they feel it necessary. If the behavior persists, the student and teacher devise a behavior contract that includes an addendum specifying agreed-upon behavioral changes. Continued disruptive or inappropriate behavior will result in suspension. The student and parent will meet with the teacher and Director of Education before the suspension is activated. A suspended student will be permitted to return to school only after the student and parent come to an agreement with the teacher(s) and the Director of Education. The student is responsible for all work missed.

Any student whose behavior seriously disrupts class will be suspended and required to wait in the Education office until picked up by a parent or guardian. A student found displaying conduct dangerous to him/herself or others or destroying and removing property will be subject to immediate suspension.

Any physical violence, obscene and lewd language and behavior will result in immediate removal of a student.

### DRESS CODE

Boys must wear *kipot* during Talmud Torah. Girls also are encouraged to wear *kipot*. Dress clothes should be worn on Shabbat and holidays to enhance the spirit of these special days.

### DROP OFF & PICK-UP

- Students in Grades K-2 must be picked up in the classroom by a parent (or other authorized adult) or an older sibling.
- Grades 3-10 students may be dropped off curbside in the designated area. For security purposes, parking or stopping alongside the building in non-designated areas (i.e., the fire lane or in the handicapped spaces) is strictly forbidden. All cars must be parked in the parking lot.
- Adults **must** escort children to cars. Children may not walk in the parking lot unattended.
- For safety reasons, do not use your cell phone while driving or walking in B'nai Israel's parking lot.

**If you are delayed, please call the school office and leave a message (301-816-5576).**

A staff person will remain on duty until all children are picked up.

## EARLY SIGN OUT/LATE ARRIVALS

Interrupting class sessions to excuse students early compromises the educational continuity of class work for all students. To create a better classroom environment and decrease the number of disruptions in the classroom, the B'nai Israel Talmud Torah Committee instituted the following early dismissal guidelines. Should you find that early dismissal is still necessary, please follow this procedure:

- a. If possible, send your child to school with a signed note indicating the need for the early dismissal request.
- b. During the last hour of the day, in order to minimize disruptions, we ask parents to pick their children up ***ONLY*** at specified times: Sunday mornings at 11:15 or 11:45, Tuesday afternoons at 5:15 or 5:45 pm. The office will contact the classroom and have the student sent to the office for early dismissal.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A child will be released only to pre-authorized individuals. The names of ALL pre-authorized individuals must be on file in the office or you must send a note or email authorizing pickup.

If a student arrives late, they should report to the office before joining their class.

## FINANCIAL AID

B'nai Israel is committed to ensuring that as many students as possible are able to participate in our education and youth programs. Please contact David Rothenberg, Executive Director, for more information.

## FIRE EMERGENCY AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire emergency instructions are posted in each classroom. Fire and lockdown drills are scheduled during the school year.

## KASHRUT AND FOOD

The Talmud Torah follows the Conservative Movement's guidelines for Kashrut. Any questions in this area will be referred to the Rabbis.

Nut-free kosher snacks are provided for K-6 students. Alternative snacks are available for other allergy/medical needs.

## MEDICATION & ACCIDENT POLICY

We are bound by Maryland State Regulations in regards to medication. All prescription medications must be brought to school in the original container with the child's name, date, authorization label, and dosage instructions clearly affixed by the pharmacy. An adult must hand deliver the medication with written instructions, and a signed, dated release form to the Education Director, Louis Nagel. B'nai Israel personnel will not administer medication of any kind unless all of these regulations are met.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted immediately in case of accident or injury. If these individuals cannot be reached, the names listed as emergency contacts in our database will be called. Therefore, it is imperative that all emergency information be kept current. Your information can be updated via your Chaverweb online account.

## KULAM (Hebrew Tutoring) and KITAH LIMMUD (Inclusion Program)

Sometimes a child cannot function in a regular classroom because of physical, emotional or other learning challenges. In such cases the school will work with the family to provide assistance that meets the needs of the child. In some cases, students who are unable to learn in a mainstream classroom setting may be tutored in our *Kitah Limmud* (Inclusion Class) with teachers who can offer more individualized attention and instruction that meets the learning styles of each student. This program is exclusively geared towards 3<sup>rd</sup>-

6<sup>th</sup> grade students on Sundays and Tuesdays. For more information, contact Education Director Moshe Ben-Lev.

## TALLIT & TEFILLIN

The practice of putting on *tallit* and *tefillin* for *davening* are coming-of-age *mitzvot* generally assumed upon becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year, we begin instruction and practice in putting on *tallit* and *tefillin*.

## VISITORS

All visitors must sign in with the security guard at the entrance to the Lenkin Education and Activities Center. **Under no circumstances are unauthorized visitors permitted in the building.** Students are allowed to have a visitor in class only with advance approval from the Education Director.

## WEATHER EMERGENCY POLICIES

**SMS and Email Messages:** Our primary means of informing parents of school closures under emergency conditions is through an **instant messaging system** implemented in 2013. Tests of the system are conducted early in the school year. No sign-up is necessary. **Emails** are also sent announcing Talmud Torah closings. The email distribution lists are set up using the email addresses in your Chaverweb online account. In addition:

**Sundays:** Please call the school office (301-816-5576), check your email and check the website at [www.bnaiisraelcong.org](http://www.bnaiisraelcong.org).

**Tuesdays/Wednesdays:** When Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, have an early dismissal, or cancel after school activities due to inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, the Talmud Torah is also closed. In addition, whenever possible, the school telephone line (301-816-5576) will have updated information.

**Youth Activities:** When Talmud Torah is cancelled, youth programs for that day are also cancelled. Any other time, parents can confirm that a program is being held by calling the Youth Director at 240-221-2515.

## MADRICHIM (Classroom Assistants)

This rewarding program enables 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders to assist in our classrooms. Participants receive extensive training through our Upper Grades program in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. After receiving training, they join teachers in classrooms as helpers in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

# SHABBAT & HOLIDAY YOUTH SERVICES

*Shabbat* service attendance is a crucial part of the Talmud Torah curriculum. It is one criteria for our accreditation as a USCJ Framework for Excellence School and allows B'nai Israel to offer a two-day 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade school model.

Our *Shabbat* morning Junior Congregation services reinforce and enhance the material taught in the classrooms. Participation in these services strengthen and support student Hebrew language and *T'fillah* (prayer) skills. These are teaching services designed to help participants become comfortable with all aspects of the *Shabbat* morning service. We encourage parents to come *daven* and learn with their children.

Most Saturday mornings from 10:30am to 11:45am. Junior Congregation runs throughout the school year for grades K-6. Twice per month, grades K-2 meet for a Mini-Minyan Service while students in grades 3-6 remain in Junior Congregation. Once per month we offer a Teen Minyan Shabbat service for grades 7-12. This service is organized during Upper Grades class time on Tuesday evenings. Our Youth Director,

Sam Berenson, works with the teens to create each teen-run service. Consult the Talmud Torah calendar for information about grade specific Shabbat morning programs. All youth services join the rest of the congregation in the Dweck Sanctuary for the conclusion of services.

Parents of all K-6 students are asked to assist by ushering at either Mini-Minyan or Junior Congregation at least once during the year. A Sign Up Genius is used for families to select their preferred date online. Families who do not select a date will be assigned one. If you are unable to usher on your selected date, please use the Sign Up Genius to switch dates with another family.

Over the course of the school year, students in Grades K-2 are required to attend 5 Shabbat morning Mini-Minyan services, and students in Grades 3-6 are required to attend 10 Shabbat morning Mini-Minyan/Junior Congregation services. At the beginning of the school year, stickers with student names on them are available outside Hayman Chapel on Shabbat mornings for students to use to label a card with their name and track their attendance. These cards are kept at the synagogue.

Students in Grades K-2 may receive credit for Shabbat morning attendance at other synagogues for up to a maximum of 2 of the required 5 attendances. Students in Grades 3-6 may receive credit for Shabbat morning attendance at other synagogues for up to a maximum of 3 of the required 10 attendances. Parents are asked to include the name of the synagogue next to the date on the Shabbat attendance record form.

Friday night services are also important. *Erev Shabbat* services start every Friday evening at 6:15 p.m. All students are encouraged to attend 2 Friday night services during the course of the school year. This is **in addition** to the Shabbat morning service requirement.

### **Gold Kippah Honor Society**

B'nai Israel's Gold *Kippah* Honor Society recognizes students for their achievement of proficiency in various prayers. Students mark mastery of each prayer with a sticker on their personal Gold *Kippah* cards. Special recognition is awarded at four levels: Blue *Kippah*, Bronze *Kippah*, Silver *Kippah*, and Gold *Kippah*. In addition to receiving an appropriately colored *kippah* and having their names listed in B'nai Israel's Scroll, students will also be honored in front of the full congregation at Education Shabbat (January) or Summer Sendoff Shabbat (June). Students completing the Gold level have their names inscribed on a plaque in the Goldberg Youth Chapel. Gold Kippah Honor Society sound files on the website and *Chug* sessions (the half hour before Junior Congregation/Mini-Minyan services) provide additional prayer mastery support for students. Please see the end of this handbook for a sample Gold Kippah Card with grade levels added.

### **Shabbat Family Programs**

Shabbat Magic Opening – September 9, 2017

Tailgate Shabbat – November 11, 2017

Education Shabbat – Saturday, January 27, 2018

Pajama Shabbat & Potluck Dinner – Friday, January 19, 2018

Summer Send-Off Shabbat – June 9, 2018

### **Grade Shabbatot:**

(These take place on Saturday mornings unless otherwise noted.)

Kindergarten – March 7, 2015, March 3rd 2018;

1st grade – November 4th, 2017; February 10th (with breakfast before!) 2018

2nd Grade – December 2nd, 2017; March 17th, 2018

3rd Grade – December 9th, 2017; March 3rd, 2018, April 7th, 2018

4th Grade – October 21, 2017; February 10th 2018; April 24th 2018

5th Grade – November 11, 2017; January 6th, 2018; May 19th 2018

6th Grade – October 14th, 2017; May 12th 2018  
7th Grade – October 7th 2017  
All Grades – Education Shabbat – January 27th, 2018

## Friday Night Live

USY Friday Night Live is a special *Kabbalat Shabbat* service held at the home of a B'nai Israel teen. B'nai Israel teens will lead parts of the service, have interactive discussions, and participate in other *Shabbat* activities. Dinner and games will follow services.

## HOLIDAY FAMILY PROGRAMS

All Holiday Youth & Family programs are listed on our Google Calendars as well as in the weekly *Kesher* newsletter and on the B'nai Israel website. If you have not received an email with the links for the Google calendar or are not receiving *Kesher*, please email [jenniferc@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:jenniferc@bnaiisraelcong.org).

## FAMILY EDUCATION

Family Education programming is an integral part of B'nai Israel's education program. Programs are offered during the school year. Typically, these are events where parents and children come together to learn, share, and get to know one another. These programs are offered to all B'nai Israel families.

*Special thanks to the Berman family for establishing the Dolye and I. Wolford Berman Educational Initiative Grant which sustains many of our Family Education programs.*

## Family Education Programs by Grade

*All dates for this year's programs are listed in the Google calendar and on the B'nai Israel website. Most programs are held during Talmud Torah class hours.*

### **Kindergarten: B'nai Torah Ceremony and Brunch**

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Symonim (Jewish Symbols)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: A Trip to Eretz Yisrael!**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: The Siddur Scavenger Hunt**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Welcome to Hebrew and get a *Milon* (dictionary)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Learn Hebrew with your 3<sup>rd</sup> Grader**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: Hagigat Siddur Service and Shabbat Dinner**

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Havdalah under the Stars**

*This program takes place at the Howard B. Owens Science Center in Lanham, Maryland.*

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Shoreshim (Roots)**

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade: B'nai Mitzvah Institute**

**8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Navigating Our Lives Teen Family Education Program**

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth Director, Sam Berenson ([samanthab@bnaiisraelcong.org](mailto:samanthab@bnaiisraelcong.org), 240-221-2515)

We view informal education as an important aspect of the overall Jewish education of our students (both our Talmud Torah and Day School students). Our Youth Director, Sam Berenson, is delighted to provide you with information about these programs:

### **Bonim** (Grades K-2)

*Bonim* is our youth group for students in grades K-2. As our youngest youth group, our goal is to help “build” (as the name means) friendships and a comfort level within our congregation. This energetic group meets once a month, either in the synagogue building or off-site.

### **Machar** (Grades 3-5)

*Machar* is our youth group for students in grades 3-5. Our goal is to prepare these students for *machar* - tomorrow! This group meets on a monthly basis for social, community service, and building friendships.

### **Kadima** (Grades 6-8)

*Kadima* offers middle school students social and leadership opportunities similar to USY. Members meet once or twice a month for activities, including opportunities to meet other teens, at events held with other synagogue chapters in Seaboard Region.

### **USY** (Grades 9-12)

United Synagogue Youth (USY) offers Jewish teens the opportunity to develop leadership skills as well as lasting friendships through a variety of Judaic, social, educational, and athletic programs.

## **Fifth and Sixth Grade *Shabbaton***

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders join Rabbi Berkowitz, Sam Berenson, and Moshe Ben-Lev at the Pearlstone Conference & Retreat Center for a weekend full of fun, games and interactive discussions as well as opportunities to meet other B’nai Israel students. (Formerly known as the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade *Kallah*)

## **Talmud Torah Curriculum**

Through a social emotional approach to education, our Talmud Torah engages children through many modalities including art, dance, music, drama, and text. Students explore Jewish traditions through Hebrew language, Torah, rituals, history, and *Middot* (values). By teaching and modeling Jewish practice and learning, our goal is to inspire and motivate every child and family to continue exploring their own connections with all that is Jewish.

Children in our Primary Grades (K-2) and Intermediate Grades (3-6) meet on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Intermediate Grades also meet on Tuesdays from 4:30 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. Upper Grades (7-10) meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. with dinner served from 7:20 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

### **Knesset**

This intermediate school track (grades 4-6) places students with exceptional Hebrew skills in an accelerated, enriched T’fillah-Hebrew program.

### **On-level Hebrew**

The on-level Hebrew program for 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders elevates skills and creates confidence as students progress through our T’fillah-Hebrew program.

## **Teacher Professional Development**

Using a cluster grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, we are teaming up with other congregations to expand our workshops as well as offer mandatory monthly trainings for our faculty to meet the new Talmud Torah teaching expectations.

## **Primary Grades**

K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students will focus on creating *chaverim* (friends) while learning about topics like Jewish traditions, values, history, and Israel. Creating *kehillah* (community) is achieved through experiential programs like our new DISC STEAM ( ) Israel program for K-1<sup>st</sup> grade and twice monthly *Huggim* (arts-based workshops) which include: art, *Rikud* (Israeli dance), drama, and music.

In the primary grades, children explore various dimensions of the holidays, experience traditional and contemporary Jewish music, participate in a children's *minyan* and are introduced to the Hebrew language.

We have adopted a thematic approach to each grade's program. Additionally, each grade is assigned *mitzvot* (Jewish values) based on the teachings of our sages. Each class participates in hands-on experiences related to these *mitzvot*. Children also learn about *tzedakah* and collect money for a charitable organization.

The *aleph bet* is introduced in Kindergarten through vocabulary terms connected to holidays and other aspects of the curriculum. First graders begin developing Hebrew reading skills. The focus is on building a vocabulary related to holidays, *mitzvot* and everyday expressions. Second grade focuses on letter and vowel recognition that will enable our children to progress in the intermediate grades. Children begin to develop a repertoire of prayers through experiential learning by attending a weekly service during class and on Shabbat.

## **GAN (Kindergarten)**

*Haggim* (holidays) are a major part of the kindergarten curriculum. Jewish holidays and festivals are taught and celebrated. Students learn about the Jewish calendar as it relates to the secular world. Shabbat is strongly emphasized and *Brachot* (blessings) and basic *tefillah* (prayer) is taught and modeled in the classroom. Jewish values stemming from *mitzvot* such as *Tzedakah*, *Gemilut Hesed* (acts of loving kindness) and *Derekh Eretz* (treating others as you wish to be treated) are taught. Using DISC- STEAM (Discovering Israel through STEAM Careers) kindergarten students learn about Israel through experiential projects.

## **KITAH ALEPH (1<sup>st</sup> Grade)**

Students will study Torah and continue learning about the *Haggim* in more detail. By reinforcing Jewish values and ethics, children will learn about the customs, symbols and foods related to the holidays and festivals. Students will be introduced to Torah stories from ethical viewpoints. The text is designed to have students relate key points of Torah study to their daily lives. We teach *Mitzvot* (commandments) which is the cornerstone of our SEL (Social Emotional Learning) program. Students learn about and model *middot* as a living, everyday experience. *Huggim* will include *rikud*, drama, music and art. These *huggim* will connect students to their Judaism through self-expression. Using DISC- STEAM (Discovering Israel through STEAM Careers) first grade students learn about Israel through experiential projects. Students will learn to read the Hebrew letters and vowels as well as selected basic words.

## **KITAH BET (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade students will continue to look at Torah, especially *Bereshit* (Genesis) and *Sh'mot* (Exodus). These stories are the basis for understanding the unique relationship between G-d and *Am Yisrael* (the Jewish people). We complete the introduction to the *middot* (values) that began in kindergarten, with references to *Midrash*, *Mishnah*, *Talmud*, and other sources. Concepts include: *Tzedakah*, *Tikkun Olam* (healing the world), and *Mitzvot* (commandments). Holidays and festivals are an essential part of learning about Jewish ritual practice, customs, culture, and history. In Kitah Bet we complete the acquisition of the *Aleph Bet* and vowels and move towards basic word structure. Our aim is to prepare our students for the transition to a two day per week program where Hebrew plays a larger part in the curriculum.

## **Intermediate Grades 3-6**

In the intermediate grades the exploration of Hebrew and Judaic's advances to a higher level. Students choose twice monthly *Chuggim* (art-based workshops). Jewish history and *Tanaach* take center stage as students participate in more experiential programming that guides them in finding their own Conservative Jewish path.

### ***Tefillah-Hebrew***

The Tefillah-Hebrew program builds on the progress of previous years as students develop fluency, familiarity and understanding of particular prayers and the organization of services. In addition, we introduce Modern Hebrew to both stimulate Hebrew learning and connect students with the Modern Jewish State. In the fourth grade we introduce the Knesset track for Hebrew students only, who have demonstrated exceptional Hebrew skills.

This year we have incorporated our *Shabbat Magic*, "Gold Kippah" program into our curriculum. This will enable students to become more familiar with our services and master the prayers that are a foundation of our weekly Jewish practice. *Please see below for a list of Gold Kippah prayers by grade.*

## **KITAH GIMEL (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)**

*Derekh Eretz (Menschlichkeit/Common Courtesy)*

The unifying theme in the third grade is *derekh eretz*—civility or common courtesy. Torah stories, Israel, and holidays are approached as sources of Jewish ethics and values. The Tefillah-Hebrew curriculum aims to develop prayer reading skills, while Modern Hebrew builds Hebrew reading fluency and vocabulary building.

## **KITAH DALED (4<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

*Kedoshim Tihiyu (Holiness)*

This program of studies is divided into separate pieces, Tanach/Prophets, Holidays, The Jewish life cycle, and Tefillah/Hebrew. The theme, Kedoshim Tihiyu (Holiness) is displayed in our teaching of the Prophets and the holidays. The study of tefillah is a traditional avenue for experiencing and exploring this concept. Modern Hebrew is a means to raising the level of Hebrew reading as students also acquire a wider vocabulary that links tefillah to Ivrit. Lastly, we explore our theme in depth as we approach the Jewish life cycle which will include learning about Judaism's approach to; Brit Milah/Brit Bat, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Marriage, and the end of life.

### **KITAH HEY (5th Grade)**

*Ometz Lev* (Individual Courage)

While this program of studies is divided into separate components, 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple period: from Hellenism to the Diaspora, Israel Studies and Tefillah/Modern Hebrew, it is important to consider these topics as part of an overall theme, *Ometz Lev* (Individual Courage). Combining Modern Hebrew and Tefillah, students are able to make the connection between traditional Hebrew through prayers and Ivrit, the language of our Modern country, Israel.

### **KITAH VAV (6th Grade)**

*Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof* (Pursuing Justice)

The Biblical charge to the Jewish people, “*Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof*” (“justice, justice you shall pursue”) is the foundational principle of our sixth graders’ exploration of *Parshat HaShavuah* (the weekly Torah portion), the Prophets, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple period and exile, as well as Tefillah and Modern Hebrew. Students are inspired by the prophets of antiquity and modern heroes to work toward a better world. Hebrew takes on a new meaning as they are introduced to Ivrit for emerging teens who can connect Israel to such traditional practices as *tefillin*.

### **KITAH LIMMUD (for 3-6 grade)**

*Kitah Limmud* is for students with multiple learning issues. These include; physical, intellectual, and emotional needs. Our specially trained staff of teachers and madrichim create individualized lessons that mirror our grade curriculum but are taught with the individual needs of each student in mind. For those interested in learning more, please call the Education Office.

## **UPPER GRADES- GRADES 7-10**

The Talmud Torah Upper Grades program inspires teens to lead lives as identified, committed Jews with broad Jewish knowledge. We approach contemporary issues from the perspective of a Jewish ethical and moral framework, identification with the State of Israel, promote peer engagement, Jewish *Hadrachah* (leadership), and work with students to create a meaningful and relevant means of engagement.

We engage our students through interactive discussion based classes, guest speakers, field trips and special programs, and a teaching staff chosen for their subject matter expertise and ability to relate to teens.

The sessions are divided thus:

6:30-7:20: Core class

7:20-7:45: Dinner

7:45-8:30: Elective classes

Our program consists of semester-long core courses during the first hour and a variety of elective classes from September through December and January through May 2018. Some of the elective classes are aimed at teaching certain skills such as “*Madrichim 101*” which trains our 8<sup>th</sup> graders to become Madrichim (classroom assistants) in Talmud Torah. Other classes are geared towards a combination of studies that meet the needs of different learning interests and styles. Each class enables teens to explore Jewish avenues of interest.

The tenth grade Confirmation program will meet on Sunday mornings. Students will have an option of being a part of our Madrichim (classroom aide) program prior to classes which will take place from 11:00-12:15. The year will culminate with a special service with the entire congregation on the first evening of Shavuot (Tuesday, May 30).

## **COURSE OF STUDY**

### ***KITAH ZAYIN (7th Grade )***

Comparative Judaism (Core Fall)

Holocaust Studies (Core Spring)

#### Electives:

**La'asot Tikkun Olam: Social Action Projects.** Students will learn about the concepts of *Middot*, Jewish values and then take part in a variety of social action opportunities.

**Jewish Stories** – Students will look at the Jewish short story, folk tales, midrashim and more!

### ***KITAH HET (8th Grade)***

World Jewry (Core Fall)

The *Real* Israel (Core Spring)

#### Electives:

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade ONLY: Madrichim 101** - Students who wish to become *madrichim* (classroom assistants) will take this course where they will acquire the skills that are required to work with children in our K-6<sup>th</sup> grade Talmud Torah. We aim to place all graduates in classrooms in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Jewish Women** – Students will learn about the amazing women of Judaism who have contributed in every walk of life. This includes a critical look at *Tanakh* (Rabbinic teachings) and the rise of Jewish Feminism.

**What is Spirituality?** – Students will take a journey through the many teachings on Jewish spirituality and look at the importance of leading a spiritual life.

### ***KITAH TET (9th Grade)***

Hot Topics (Contemporary Issues) (Core Fall)

Jewish *Hadrachah* (Leadership) Training (Core Spring)

#### Electives:

**Jewish Women** – Students will learn about the amazing women of Judaism who have contributed in every walk of life. This includes a critical look at *Tanakh* (Rabbinic teachings) and the rise of Jewish Feminism.

**What is Spirituality?** – Students will take a journey through the many teachings on Jewish spirituality and look at the importance of leading a spiritual life.

## **Upper School Family Programs**

### **OPENING DAY PARENT/TEEN ORIENTATION**

Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Parents are invited to join their teens for an opening dinner and program that will explore the relevance of Judaism in the lives of our teens.

### **HOLOCAUST SPEAKER**

Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Parents and teens will explore the Holocaust experience through the eyes of a Holocaust survivor. Following the discussion, we will continue learning more about this painful part of our heritage.

### **TEEN RETREAT AT CAPITAL CAMPS**

Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> (leaving after Shabbat)

8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teens are invited to join our education/youth staff for a retreat aimed at beginning a process of redesigning our teen engagement program.

### **CHANUKAH PROGRAM**

Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Teen families are invited to join us on the last candle lighting of Chanukah for dinner and a special program aimed at looking at the themes of; freedom, human rights, and *tzedek*, justice, these cornerstones of Chanukah's teachings.

### **TEENS - FACING CHALLENGES IN YOUR DAILY LIVES**

Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

6:30-8:30 p.m.

JSSA (Jewish Social Service Agency) will join parents and teens to discuss mental health issues and how to identify the signs of depression etc. so that teens can both advocate for each other and get the help that is needed to continue on a path of healthy living.

### **START THE CONVERSATION!**

Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Working in partnership with JCRC (Jewish Community Relations Council) and CESJDS, 10-12<sup>th</sup> graders will have a unique opportunity to discover the thorny issues of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism on college campus. We will look at ways to counter the issues and live a vibrant Jewish life.

### **MADRICHIM**

Our *Madrachim* (teaching assistants) are teens from 8-12<sup>th</sup> grade who through an extensive training

program (an elective class in the fall semester of 8<sup>th</sup> grade year) assist teachers in classrooms from K-6<sup>th</sup> grade both in Hebrew and Judaic studies. They are paired with teachers on Sundays and Tuesdays.

Throughout the year, our madrichim meet to discuss, learn and celebrate their amazing contribution to our community.

# B'nai Israel Congregation Gold Kippah Honor Society

(Revised 8/2017)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Blue Kippah (K-3rd Grade)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Modeh Ani
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mah Tovu (1st line)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ohr Hadash
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shema (1st line)
- \_\_\_\_\_ S'fatai Tiftah
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mah Nishtana
- \_\_\_\_\_ L'kha Dodi
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shalom Aleikhem
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shabbat Blessings  
Nerot, Hagafen, Yadayim,  
Hamotzi
- \_\_\_\_\_ Food blessings  
Mezonot, Adamah, Etz,  
Sh'hakol
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brachot: La'asok b'divrei  
Torah, Shehekheyanu, Kol  
Shofar, Layshev B'Sukkah,  
Netilat Lulav

## Bronze Kippah (4th/5th Grade)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Halleluyah-Psalm 150
- \_\_\_\_\_ Barkhu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shema and V'Ahavta
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mi-Khamokha
- \_\_\_\_\_ Avot
- \_\_\_\_\_ G'vurot
- \_\_\_\_\_ Veshamru
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yotzer Ohr
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sim Shalom
- \_\_\_\_\_ Oseh Shalom
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friday Evening  
Kiddush
- \_\_\_\_\_ Havdalah Blessings

## Silver Kippah (5th/6th Grade)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ma'ariv Aravim (read Hebrew, chant ending)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adon Olam
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brakhah for Tallit
- \_\_\_\_\_ Brakhot for Tefillin
- \_\_\_\_\_ Birkhot Hashahar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Barukh She'amar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shalom Rav
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shabbat Shaharit Kedushah
- \_\_\_\_\_ Etz Hayim He
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ein Keloheinu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Aleinu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ahavah Rabbah
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ashrei (verses Aleph-Vav)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Birkat Hamazon
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hatikvah

## Gold Kippah (6th Grade)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ahavat Olam
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hashkiveinu (read Hebrew, chant ending)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hatzi Kaddish
- \_\_\_\_\_ Vay'khulu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Magen Avot
- \_\_\_\_\_ Kaddish Shalem
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ashrei (entire)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shokhen Ad through Yishtabah
- \_\_\_\_\_ El Adon
- \_\_\_\_\_ Modim Anahnu Lakh (Read)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Torah Brakhot
- \_\_\_\_\_ Haftarah Brakhot
- \_\_\_\_\_ Y'hal'lu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mizmor L'David
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shabbat Musaf Kedushah
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yism'hu
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ein Kamokha