

# Temple Beth Emeth

## 2024-2025 Religious School Handbook

### Mission Statement

*Temple Beth Emeth's Religious School strives to provide a caring and creative environment that respects, engages and motivates our students to develop a strong sense of community and love being Jewish.*

### Core values

Jewish values provide a moral compass for living life Jewishly.

Jewish identity is to be appreciated and celebrated.

All people are created in the image of God and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Every Jew is a link in the chain of Jewish continuity.

We teach to give our learners the skills they need to lead a meaningful life.

Parents, educators, clergy and our temple family must work in concert to teach, support and inspire our learners.

### Goals for our students

Have hands-on experience & appreciation for the Jewish holidays.

Master Hebrew skills of reading Hebrew letters, vowels and understanding basic Hebrew words.

Learn basic prayers so that students will feel confident and comfortable when attending Shabbat services.

Students will understand the responsibilities and privileges that we have as Jews.

Discover & explore the Torah (Bible), the incredible history of the Jewish people and see its relevance in our today's world.

To equip our students with an education and a feeling for Judaism's beautiful teachings, traditions, practices and historical lessons so that they are better equipped to face the moral challenges of today's society.

*Unfortunately school cannot ensure that every student will make a commitment to living life Jewishly, though this is indeed our hope. Our program will make this more likely but the ultimate determinant of your child's commitment to Judaism can be measured by the guidance, support and encouragement they receive from you, their parents and their community.*      **We can't build Jewish lives in 90 minutes a week.**

## **Our Objectives**

Students will attend 80% of the scheduled school days.

Students will complete homework and assignments on time and to the best of their ability.

Students will display respect for each other, our teachers, clergy and TBE's community.

Parents and children will participate in Shabbat services, co-curricular activities, special events, holiday celebrations/services.

Students will advance through our Hebrew program and master Hebrew letters and vowels.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of Jewish values.

Students and families will build connections with each other.

## **Calendar: classes and school events**

*The school calendar can be viewed online at: <https://www.tbemtsinai.org/calendar/>  
The school will contact parents via email if there are any changes or cancellations.*

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Our building is locked at all times to maintain a secure environment. The safety of your child is our prime concern. For this reason, every parent is required to sign their child in/ out when dropping off and picking up their child from religious school. This ensures we are aware of who is in the building at all times and that no child is outside the building without supervision.

Please bring your child to school on time. Latecomers miss important parts of the lesson and often have difficulty adjusting to the rhythm of the class.

If you wish to pick your student early, please send a note to your child's teacher on the day they must be dismissed early or call the principal. Parents must pick their student up at the school door.

## **Attendance**

All of our students participate in extracurricular activities including sports, music lessons, scouting, after school programs. We know that these are a special part of their lives. We need you to recognize that your child's attendance at school and participation in our events is a pivotal part of their Jewish education and experience. You have chosen our program for your child. Supporting your child and prioritizing their Jewish education shows your student that being Jewish is an important commitment. Your child will be Jewish long after they have moved onto another sport or hobby.

Every student needs to be at every class to accomplish the goals of our educational program. There is a proven direct correlation between a student's attendance and their progress, success and attitude. Simply put, children don't do as well in school when they frequently miss part of or an entire school day. It's easy to fall and most students become anxious about when they return to class. A few absences can set a student back for the remainder of the semester. A large number of absences can set a student back for the entire school year. Students with excessive absences will be required to repeat a Hebrew class in the next year.

For these reasons, we expect that your child attends 80% of our school days. This year that translates into no more than 6 unexcused absences. That may seem too few to you but if your child misses 6 classes that is the equivalent of 1 1/2 months of our 9 month school year.

If your child will not be attending a class, please call or text the principal and notify us that your child will be absent.

### **What it takes to make it all work**

#### **Respect= Kaved**

Kavod. It's the basic respect we show to each other. Teachers and students are held to the same standard. We are keenly aware that we will only achieve our education goals if there is respect and cooperation between teacher, student and parents.

Everyone has the right to a learning environment free from bullying and intimidation.

School must be a safe place that's judgment free. Each student has a right to be treated fairly and with dignity. The same applies to teachers, as the school is their workplace. It is the student's right to learn and the teacher's right to teach. No one has the right to interfere with the teaching/learning process.

#### **BEING PREPARED**

Supplies: Your student needs a small backpack/ bag. They should keep their books, folders, assignments/homework, music folder, supplies, snacks, water bottle and coins for tzedakah in their backpack/bag. They need to bring this with them to class and take it home at the end of the school day. At the end of class, they may bring home completed work or information about an upcoming event. When you are on the way home, ask them what they learned at class and if there's anything they need to show/give you.

Food: Due to student allergies and food sensitivities, we will not be providing snacks, drinks or water. (We may provide food and/or drinks as a part of school-sponsored celebrations.)

You may send your child to school with a water bottle and a small, healthy snack. Your child may keep a water bottle with them during the school day.

As a part of the school day we have a 15-minute break. During that break, your child can have their snack, play outside/indoors or relax with friends before their next lesson.

- Do not send your child with any products that contain nuts including peanuts, peanut butter, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews and pistachios.
- Do not send large and/or multiple packages of snacks.
- Do not send candy or soda.
- If you did not provide your child with a snack, we may not be able to provide one.
- Students may not share or exchange food.

Medication: Students may not bring medication of any kind, unless the school has been notified. Medications that are supplied to the school for emergency use must be packaged and labeled and include written information including the purpose for the medication, how the medication should be stored, instructions for when and how the medication is administered.

Charity: Charity (Tzedakah) is a concept that is basic to Judaism. TBE strives to develop a commitment among our students to share with others less fortunate than themselves, by making a small donation at each class. If you choose to, you can send your child a few coins to contribute. The students will have the opportunity to choose and donate to an organization at the end of the year.

What not to bring: Students should not bring electronic devices or toys to school. If your child has a cellphone, it must remain in their backpack while they are in school. Teachers keep cell phones with them for emergency purposes.

### **Practicing Hebrew.**

Students will benefit greatly by practicing their Hebrew in-between classes. Their Hebrew teacher will be giving students homework assignments. These will require 5-10 minutes to complete. We will be sending home practice reading sheets that list words in Hebrew. You will receive a “cheat” sheet that you can use to follow along (it has the correct pronunciation of each word). Please help us by helping your child...no Hebrew required!

### **Communication is key.**

Communication between parents and teachers is very important to ensure that your child has a positive and meaningful experience. Email is our primary means to send out announcements and upcoming events. School information is also listed in Temple Beth Emeth newsletter and webpage.

Please let notify us as so as possible if:

You don't use email

You do not check your email on a regular basis.

You are not receiving email

Your e-mail address has changed,

Your child expresses any concerns or is experiencing anything in class or outside of school that might affect their behavior or performance

If any numbers where you might be reached change.

### **Collaboration is essential.**

This is the key message for parents: experiencing a Jewish upbringing, learning personal moral values, and developing a sense of belonging as a Jew – these are not things which can simply be “taken in a class”. A class can teach about a Jewish Holiday – but the holiday celebration is when we connect with it, and make it part of who we are. The same is true of teaching prayers, and doing good deeds.

It is essential for children to experience Jewish holidays, community projects, Shabbat services... everything they learn about in class. Doing them together with you is what affirms their sense of belonging to your Jewish family, our temple family and the Jewish community around the world.

Your child can learn about Jewish traditions but participating in them makes a difference. Students learn with their heads but experience with their hearts and hands creates memories and builds connections that last a lifetime.

TBE's monthly Family Shabbat Service is the glue that puts all the parts together: community, friends, songs, prayers, Hebrew, Bible and traditional stories, and Jewish values. When you miss Shabbat services, it's like bringing your child to soccer practices twice a week, but missing the weekend matches!

Your family should plan on attending 9 services per school year (Sept.-May). Family Shabbat services begin earlier (at 7pm) and are 60 minutes long. They are designed to be child-friendly, engaging and give students a chance to use what they are learning.

And finally, the school and TBE's education committee are always looking for help. Parent involvement increases the success of our Hebrew School. If you have a talent, skill, or can volunteer to read Hebrew with our children, please let us know. We can't have events like our fundraisers, holiday celebrations, parties and special activities without lots of families pitching in. Please say yes when we ask for your help.

## **Being smart, safe and secure.**

### **Building Security**

All doors are kept closed and locked. Visitors are only admitted into the school by prearrangement or in emergencies. A new steel security door has been installed in the school. Other modifications are being evaluated. The temple has installed a new alarm system. Our school and the sanctuary are equipped with a panic button that can be triggered in the event of a security emergency. I have explained the panic buttons function and emphasized that children they are not to access this alarm unless they are specifically and directly instructed by a teacher. There will be severe consequences (including financial penalties imposed by the emergency service that respond) should this new alarm be triggered when there is not an emergency. We hold standard emergency and fire drills several times a year.

### **Medical Emergencies**

Minor injuries will be taken care of by your child's teacher or the school director. Should an emergency occur, a parent or an emergency contact will be notified. Teachers and administrative staff will use the emergency numbers you provided the school.

### **Weather related and emergency closings**

TBE'S School cancellation policy is NOT be LINKED with any school district's closing announcements. This means that you cannot assume that classes are canceled just because your local district has canceled school.

Decisions to cancel school due to weather conditions/predictions will be decided no later than 1:30 pm on the school day. School closing announcements will be sent via email and will be broadcast on Channel 12 and WALK 97.5.

If you are concerned about traveling to and from the school, use your best judgment.

Our students come from a number of different communities and the road conditions vary greatly. If school is open but you decide not to send your student to school, please let us know.

You will be notified of any closings due to unexpected circumstances as quickly as the situation permits. We will text or call you at the emergency number we have on file. Whenever possible, we will post a notice on the school door should you arrive at the building.

### ***DO NOT DROP YOUR CHILD AT THE SCHOOL AND DRIVE AWAY.***

Make sure there is a teacher on site and that your student has entered the building before you exit the parking lot.

# Temple Beth Emeth Religious School 2024-2025 Student and Parent Contract

Together we have read and discussed Temple Beth Emeth's 2023-2024 TBE Religious School Handbook. We agree to follow the procedures that are listed in the handbook.

I \_\_\_\_\_ the parent of \_\_\_\_\_

parent name

student name

## agree to:

- Accompany my child to the school entrance and sign my child into and out of school each day.
- Bring my student to school on time and ready to learn.
- Make a good faith effort to meet the attendance requirement by assuring that my child has no more than 6 unexcused absences.
- Understand that TBE'S School cancellation policy will NOT be LINKED with any school district's closing announcements.
- Supply my student with a small, healthy snack and a few coins for a charitable donation.
- Stay informed by reading emails and respond in a timely manner.
- Make a good faith effort to attend 9 Shabbat services during the school year (September-May) with my child.
- Give any medications my child may require to the principal along with the necessary information and instructions.
- Assist my child with their Hebrew practice, supervise their homework and help with special projects as needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to:

student name

- Arrive at school ready to learn, with my books and other materials and homework completed.
- Practice my Hebrew twice between classes.
- Leave toys, games or electronics at home.
- Respect my classmates and teacher at all times. I understand that disrespect and bullying are unacceptable and may result in me being asked to leave the classroom.

\_\_\_\_\_  
student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date