



**Temple Ner Tamid  
Religious School**

***Parent Handbook  
Grades K-6***

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Director of Education**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Welcome** to the Temple Ner Tamid Religious School. We are delighted that your family has chosen to take part of its Jewish journey with us. Our program begins in kindergarten and continues on through the completion of high school. Along the way our students pass a variety of milestones that we celebrate together: Consecration, B'nai Mitzvah, Confirmation, and finally graduation from religious school in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

We are dedicated to creating a warm, caring Jewish community and instilling a love of Judaism in our students. We feel that the mark of a successful Jewish educational experience is not a score on a test but rather how it influences the way we choose to live our lives.

This handbook contains the answers to many of the questions you might have about our religious school. Since regular communication between parents and teachers provides the cornerstone for success we look forward to your on-going input during the year. Working together we can provide the best Jewish educational experience possible for your child. The doorway to Jewish education is always open. We are pleased that you have chosen to learn with us.

Iris Schwartz Ed.D.  
Director of Education



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

At Temple Ner Tamid, we strive to unite family, synagogue and school to develop in members of all ages an enduring Jewish Identity and a life-long love of Jewish learning.

By offering opportunities for group learning and innovative experiential education, the Temple seeks to impart the fundamental skills of Jewish living and ritual; an understanding of Jewish history and values; a love of Torah and Israel; a familiarity with the Hebrew language and our liturgy; and a passion for Jewish life that finds fulfillment in the spiritual and belonging to the community.

Our families have arrived from many different backgrounds. Together we strive to foster the development of individuals and families who identify with Israel and the Jewish people, and who pursue social justice and the improvement of our world as individuals and through community action. Our educational programs are designed to help congregants of all generations discover their own personally meaningful path through Jewish life; and find support, strength and identity not only in family, but in the larger communities of synagogue, Israel, and the Jewish people.

## PROGRAM VALUES AND GOALS

Temple Ner Tamid's Religious School is designed to instill a love and understanding of Judaism in our students by providing a rich and varied Jewish learning experience. Our goal is to have Judaism be the lens through which our students come to see the world and walk in it. We aspire to meet the changing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Jewish learner and to provide educational opportunities that address the needs of the whole person. We seek to connect students and parents with the on-going life of the Jewish people and to strengthen their attachment to Judaism intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Our goals are to provide learners with an understanding of the Jewish past, the tools necessary to fully participate in the Jewish present, while being inspired and empowered to participate in the creation of a Jewish future including a life committed to tikkun olam, the repair of the world.

In support of the general educational goals designated by the Union for Reform Judaism we strive to provide the kinds of experiences that will enable the members of the Ner Tamid community to be:

- Jews who affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves inseparably to their people by word and deed;
- Jews who bear witness to the BRIT (the covenant between God and the Jewish people) by embracing Torah through the study and observance of *MITZVOT* (commandments);
- Jews who affirm their historic bond to *ERETZ YISRAEL* (the land of Israel);
- Jews who cherish and study Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people;
- Jews who value and practice *TEFILAH* (prayer);
- Jews who further the cause of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing *TZEDEK* (righteousness), *MISHPAT* (justice), and *CHESED* (loving deeds);
- Jews who celebrate Shabbat, festivals and ceremonies marking significant occasions in our lives
- Jews who esteem their own person and the person of others; their own family and the family of others; their own community and the community of others;
- Jews who express their kinship with *K'LAL YISRAEL* by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world;
- Jews who support and participate in the life of the synagogue

Such Jews will strengthen the fabric of Jewish life and ensure the future of Judaism and the Jewish people.

# RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CURRICULUM

## Building Jewish Identity, the Core of Our Curriculum

*“Teach your children in the way they should go  
and when they are old they will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6*

At Temple Ner Tamid we believe that Jewish education is a lifelong journey that challenges and inspires us every step of the way. Our religious school offers classes and programming for kindergarteners through 12<sup>th</sup> graders which incorporates multiple opportunities for families to learn and experience Judaism together while creating Jewish memories.

Jewish identity development is at the very core of our curriculum. We strive to prepare our students to be active members of the Jewish community and hope to inspire a lifelong love of Jewish learning and an enduring dedication to Jewish life.

### KINDERGARTEN

Five year olds explore the meanings and symbols of Shabbat and Jewish holidays, become acquainted with the Hebrew aleph bet and gain a beginning understanding of mitzvot such as tzedaka and how we treat other people.

### FIRST GRADE

First graders are introduced to the core areas of Jewish life including the themes of family, synagogue, holidays, values and Hebrew reading readiness.

### SECOND GRADE

Second graders begin to build a better understanding of the concepts, symbols and meanings of the holidays and Jewish values and work to achieve competency in Hebrew letter and vowel recognition. A “scavenger hunt” throughout Israel to learn about the land and the people are included.

### THIRD GRADE

Third graders master the Hebrew aleph bet and learn to read a new language. They become competent participants in worship and holiday rituals. They read and discuss many of the stories of Torah which bring to life the men and women from whom we learn basic Jewish ethical values. We celebrate the more significant commitment our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and their families make to Jewish education with a communal Shabbat dinner and special program when each student has the opportunity to share the story of his/her Hebrew name with the congregation.





## SOME OF THE SPECIAL WAYS WE LEARN BY DOING

### Synagogue Design Project

Fourth grade is all about the Jewish community. As a culmination of their studies and trip to the Eldridge Street Synagogue, 4<sup>th</sup> graders join together as teams of architects to use their knowledge to design and create model synagogues based on their year of learning.



### B'nai Mitzvah Initiative

Sixth graders and their parents will participate in a pilot program by Moving Traditions to implement a new social-emotional-learning based curriculum. We are excited to join a network of fifty other groups nationwide to test this new way of learning about the b'nai mitzvah experience that includes some Sunday morning classes for students during religious school hours and two special parent/child workshops that will take place during the year.



# HEBREW CURRICULUM

## FIRST AND SECOND GRADES

First graders are taught the *Ha Motzi* (for the challah) and the simple *Kiddush* (for the wine/grape juice). Second graders master all of the Shabbat blessings.

## THIRD GRADE

Third graders learn the Hebrew *alef bet* and become competent participants in worship and holiday rituals. They also learn the Hanukkah blessings, the *Shehechyanu*, and the Four Questions.

## FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES



Our self-paced, child-centered approach to learning Hebrew allows each child to achieve according to his/her own ability. Students spend one hour working closely with a teacher in a small group and an additional half hour supervised by a mentor practicing reading, chanting and reviewing lessons.

Most of the Hebrew program materials and practice work will be available at home on-line. Students will be able to get instant feedback and results while teachers can monitor each student's progress.

Students sign a learning brit (contract) which details their learning responsibilities for each prayer.

Tefillot (prayers) required to be completed prior to b'nai mitzvah:

- *Barchu* and *Yotzer*
- *Maariv Aravim*
- Torah Blessings
- Torah Service
- *Avot V'Imahot*
- *G'vurot*
- *Sh'ma* and *V'ahavta*
- *Aleinu*
- *Kiddush* (full version)
- *Haftarah* Blessings
- *Kaddish* and *Chatzi Kaddish*

## Monday Hebrew Drop-In Center

All students who have regularly scheduled Hebrew classes are invited to make an appointment to "drop-in" for small group tutoring on Monday afternoons to strengthen their Hebrew skills.



## PARENT AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

### Jewish Family Journeys

This ongoing program offers an alternative to regular religious school classes for families with children in kindergarten. JFJ features parallel learning, experiential opportunities, trips, Shabbat dinners, holiday celebrations, and family projects.

Our theme, “*A Trip through the Jewish Year*” focuses on the history, meaning, traditions, customs, communal and home observances of the Jewish holidays and holy days. Trips, Shabbat and holiday celebrations and projects enhance the experience. Enrollment is limited and optional.

A second and third year of Jewish Family Journeys is also offered. The theme for year two is “What 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jewish Families Want to Know” with classes taught by Rabbi Kushner. Our year three families learn more about *Torah/Avodah/Gemilut Chasadim* with Cantor Greenberg. Family activities, holiday celebrations and projects are part of these programs.



### WOW! - Words of Wisdom

This is a home-based family education program for children in grades 2 through 6. WOW engages parents and children in learning together. The end result will be the mastery of 18 different Hebrew words or phrases each year that are part of the basic vocabulary of Jewish life.



## Sunday Family Tefillah

We affirm our sense of belonging through our shared past and through our communal experience of worship, study and celebration. Led by Rabbi Steven Kushner and Cantor Meredith Greenberg, all Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students join together in communal prayer and song each Sunday morning from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Parents and others are encouraged to participate in this inspiring experience.



## Mitzvah Day

The last day of religious school is generally devoted to a school-wide family mitzvah day. Past projects have included making dolls and blankets for a local hospital, emergency bags for children in foster care, cooking for a local soup kitchen, gardening for a community project and more.

## Jewish Giraffe Project

The mitzvot related to *gemilut chasadim* (acts of loving kindness), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) and *tzedaka*, (righteousness) are emphasized in our school. The Jewish Giraffe, someone who sticks his/her neck out to help others, is the logo that unifies all the efforts we make in our school community to bring wholeness to the world. As "Jewish Giraffes," students and their families can share in a variety of opportunities throughout the year to help others.



## SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

### CLASS TRIPS

Trips are generally curriculum related and are intended to be learning and community-building experiences for the children. **Trips are not usually family programs.** Parents interested in being a trip chaperone are asked to speak to the Education Director early in the school year. There will be an additional cost for each trip to cover expenses and need-based scholarships are available.



### Tzedaka

An important aspect of our tradition is tzedaka (righteousness). We are obligated as Jews to help others. Each week students are asked to bring in a small sum of money, preferably from their personal allowance, which will be used to help others. After learning about a variety of agencies, classes decide where to make their donations. We encourage every student's participation to the extent that he/she is able. Often classes take on large scale mitzvah projects to raise tzedaka for a particular cause.



### Madrichim

All 8<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in the Confirmation program and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders who have been Confirmed can volunteer in our religious school as teacher aides and office assistants. Madrichim develop valuable skills and build self-esteem. They demonstrate a serious commitment to Jewish life and serve as role models for our religious school community. We are proud of their dedication to Judaism and to our school.

# UPPER SCHOOL PROGRAM

## SEVENTH GRADE

Seventh graders prepare for b'nai mitzvah and begin to take on more responsibility in the Jewish community. This is also the year when students transition into our upper school program.

### Required Core Courses

#### *Why Be Jewish?*

During the fall semester seventh graders explore the many varied components of Jewish identity and wrestle with how they personally define who they are as a Jew. This experientially-based class challenges students to examine what they believe, how they behave, and what kind of relationships they have with our heritage, God, others, and the world in which we live, triggering critical thinking on an individual basis about how to answer the question “Why be Jewish?”

#### *Coming of Age During the Holocaust, Coming of Age Now*

All seventh graders will take a spring semester core class devoted to the study of the Holocaust. Students will use their analytical skills to learn about the Holocaust using primary source materials. Critical facts and thoughtful questions will be used to frame class discussions. Videos, guest speakers and a parent/student trip to the Museum of Jewish Heritage will enhance the learning experience.

### Electives

Seventh graders choose one elective each semester from a variety of courses focusing on topics such as ethics and values, Jewish identity, Israeli films, politics, technology and more.

### Hebrew

A fall semester elective class is offered for seventh graders to polish Hebrew skills. Tutoring is available on Mondays for those students who want to work on their Hebrew competency in a small group environment. Participation is by appointment. Please call the office.

## B'NAI MITZVAH REQUIREMENTS

- ✧ A student is eligible to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah any time after his/her thirteenth birthday. Students must have completed four (4) consecutive years of religious training, which implies beginning school in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration.
- ✧ Students must be enrolled in Religious School and attend class regularly.
- ✧ Students must be fluent in the Shabbat morning service.
- ✧ Students must attend a minimum of two (2) Shabbat services per month during the year prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. **Each time a student attends services either on Friday or Saturday.**
- ✧ Approximately seven (7) months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah students will begin study of their Torah and Haftarah portions. The Cantor will also furnish each student with a CD recording.
- ✧ Students will meet once a week with the Cantor and will be expected to complete all assignments. Lessons cancelled for reasons other than illness will not be made up.
- ✧ Students must actively participate in **Project V'ahavta & the Tikkun Olam Project**. The Cantor will meet with each family to get the project started at the one-year evaluation meeting.

*Please refer to the B'nai Mitzvah Handbook for further information.*

## Pre-Confirmation

Our 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade Pre-Confirmation program challenges students to think about how Judaism fits into my life and how do I fit my life into Judaism? Students find that Jewish guidelines are available for the moral and ethical dilemmas facing them today. As well, students find that Judaism is a way of life and not something to just discuss in a classroom. A variety of mitzvah and social action projects and trips including participation in a 4 day social action seminar in Washington D.C. are included.



## Confirmation

Our 10<sup>th</sup> grade course **What Does It Mean to Be a Jew?** is taught by Rabbi Kushner. Discussion focuses on “What does it mean to be a Jew?” Even more, *why* are we Jews? Must we believe in God? Do we have choices? How do we decide? A trip to Amsterdam is a highlight of the year.



## Limmud

11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders continue to wrestle with issues pertaining to what it means to be a Jewish teenager in a progressively-evolving Jewish world. Areas explored include the uniqueness, challenges, and excitement of growing up as a Jew in America. What role does my religion play in high school? What role will my religion play in college? And, perhaps most importantly, what role will Judaism play in my life as an adult? An 8 day trip to continue to help rebuild New Orleans is the culmination of our religious school program.



# ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

## ADMISSION POLICY

The Religious School welcomes all children of Temple members including any child of an interfaith marriage provided the student does not receive concurrent education in a faith other than Judaism. Temple Ner Tamid regards the enrollment of a child as an expression of intent to raise that child solely in the Jewish religion. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Rabbi before registering a child for school.

## TUITION POLICY

Students are enrolled in religious school by submitting the online registration and session request form by the designated date. Families of students who were enrolled the previous year and are entering grades 1-7 in the fall are automatically billed for the upcoming school year. Students in grades 8-12 as well as new students are billed after their online registration is received. Please note that we are unable to offer any tuition rebates or refunds after registration is submitted, even if children withdraw from school at a later date as programming and staffing decisions are made prior to the start of school based on registration.

There is a special temple membership and tuition policy for graduates of Shoresh, our synagogue's preschool. Please contact the VP of Membership for details.

## POLICIES OF CONDUCT AND PARTICIPATION

### Attendance

Regular and consistent attendance is vital to your child's growth and the progress of his/her class. Encouraging regular attendance at religious school makes a positive statement to your child about the importance of Jewish education. Attendance is an essential aspect of learning. The Education Committee will schedule a meeting with parents and students **who are absent more than four (4) times a semester** to determine the course of action that will best address the situation. Students absent from class are responsible for the work covered in class and all assigned homework.

Please remember that religious school is not merely an extra-curricular activity like soccer, cheerleading or baseball. If we expect our children to value Judaism and remain active members of the Jewish community for their entire lives, we must all make Jewish education a priority. Religious School should not have to compete with other activities worthy of our time but less essential for the development of our youngsters.

### Lateness

All class sessions begin punctually. **Students are expected to be at the Temple at least five (5) minutes before class sessions.** Even a few class minutes missed may take away from your child's learning and late arrivals tend to contribute to disruptions in class.

## Shabbat Attendance

At Temple Ner Tamid there is a strong partnership between home, school and temple. Our collective goal is to teach our children how to live as Jews. While in the classroom we can teach children about prayer and about belonging to a community, this can never replace actively joining a community in prayer on a regular basis. Further, regular Shabbat attendance reinforces the Hebrew that students learn in class. It is our expectation that religious school students regularly attend Shabbat services either Friday night or Saturday morning with an adult family member.

The Shabbat service attendance goals for the school year are as follows:

- ✧ First graders = **1**
- ✧ Second graders = **2**
- ✧ Third graders = **3**
- ✧ Fourth graders = **4**
- ✧ Fifth graders = **5**
- ✧ Sixth graders = **6**
- ✧ Students in their Bar/Bat Mitzvah year **must** attend services a minimum of **twice (2) per month.**



## CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

In order for Jewish education to be effective, there must be mutual respect and cooperation between teachers and students. Teachers are expected to treat all students with dignity and respect. Likewise, students are expected to follow the clear guidelines for classroom conduct that their teachers set. Every attempt is made to ensure that the Temple Ner Tamid Religious School is a safe environment where our students may learn, develop and enhance their Jewish identity. Each classroom has standards and rules to assist in creating a healthy school climate. Teachers will manage problems related to discipline in the classroom following the discipline policy as outlined below.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. The teacher will establish classroom guidelines with the students at the start of the school year. If a student does not follow these guidelines or the *Code of Conduct*, the teacher will discuss consequences with the student.
2. If a problem persists or cannot be immediately resolved in the classroom, the student will be sent to the Education Director's office where the problem will be discussed and the *Code of Conduct* reviewed.
3. If the student is sent to the Education Director's office, the parent(s) of the student may be notified of the problem. They may be asked to meet with the teacher and/or the Director.
4. If a problem continues with a student one or more of the following actions may be taken:
  - a. A meeting will be held with the parent(s).
  - b. A parent will be requested to accompany the student to class for a period of time.
  - c. Suspension from religious school for a set period of time (make-up work required).
  - d. Dismissal. An Education Committee representative, the Education Director and the President of the congregation will make a decision for dismissal.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

We believe that religious school is an integral part of our children's education and should be treated as a serious commitment by the entire family. **Therefore, we require all registered students and their parents to read, sign and return the *Code of Conduct* document that is included in the registration packet.**

***“Where there is no Torah, there is no proper conduct; where there is no proper conduct, there is no Torah.”*** (Ethics of the Fathers 3:21)

- I will not disrupt the class with extra talking or joking and will behave properly so that we can all learn as much as possible from the teachers and from each other.
- I will behave in a respectful manner during services in the sanctuary and outside of the sanctuary.
- I will respect Temple property.

***“Who is wise? One who learns from all people.”*** (Ethics of the Fathers 4:1)

- I will participate fully in all class activities to the best of my ability.
- I will be seated and ready to work when class starts.
- I will give religious school my full attention.
- I will act as a positive role model for others.

***“Learning begins with listening.”*** (Noah Ben Shea, The Word)

- I will show respect for others by listening in class to the teachers and fellow students as well as to others at Temple Ner Tamid.
- I will speak to others with respect at all times.

***“Say not, ‘When I have leisure I will study.’ Perhaps you will have no leisure.”***  
(Ethics of the Fathers 2:3)

- I will take religious school seriously and complete all assigned homework in a timely manner.

## Cell Phones

Students are **required** to keep cell phones **OFF** during religious school hours. If that proves too difficult for a student the phone will be placed on the teacher's desk and returned at the end of class. Should you and your child need to make contact you can reach each other through the religious school office at (973) 338-1500 ext. 6.

## Classroom Visitors

The time our children spend in class is very limited and very precious. Bringing visitors to class can prove to be disruptive. **Permission must be obtained in advance from the Education Director before any enrolled student may bring a friend to class.** The Director will review behavior expectations and school rules before a visitor will be allowed to attend a class.

## Homework – A Family Project

The education of a Jewish child has always been the responsibility of both a child's parents and the Jewish community. Please check that any homework assignment he/she has received is completed including **making sure that your child spends at least 15 minutes between class sessions reviewing each Hebrew lesson.**



## Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent at mid-year and at the end of school. Please contact the teacher or the Education Director regarding any questions about your child's work. Regular contact throughout the school year will help us to provide the best learning experience we can for your child.

## Texts and Supplies

The religious school supplies textbooks and workbooks to our students for use in class. Teachers will send home a list of other supplies your child will need during the year.

## Snacks

Please respect the temple's kashrut policy and remember to send only dairy or pareve (non-meat) snacks/food to religious school with your child. Wednesday afternoon students who come to religious school right after public school are encouraged to bring a healthy snack from home to enjoy right before class begins here.

## Allergies

Recognizing that food allergies are a serious health issue for many children, we endeavor to provide a **nut-sensitive environment** for our students. When the religious school provides snacks in the classroom, we will strive to exclude nuts, nut products and any product that states "manufactured or processed on equipment that processes nuts" or may contain traces of peanuts/nuts. Some bakery items (bagels, cookies, etc.) might however be made in facilities that are not nut-free.

**Please note: The Temple is NOT a nut-free building.** The guidelines above pertain to religious school classes and school events. There are Temple events, including events in the classrooms (outside of school hours), to which congregants or caterers bring in food that may include nuts.

## School Closings

In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, the following procedures will be in effect:

- ◆ If the Montclair public school district has closed due to inclement weather, the Temple Ner Tamid Religious School will be closed.
- ◆ The Religious School will close during a mid-week session when the Montclair public schools cancel their after school activities due to inclement weather.
- ◆ If the Religious School will be closed on a Sunday, a message will be placed on the temple's main voicemail by 7:30 a.m. that morning.
- ◆ Religious School closing information will also be posted on the temple website at [www.nertamid.org](http://www.nertamid.org).

## CLASS SCHEDULE

**Religious School Begins:**

**Sunday, September 10, 2017** for grades K through 6

**Monday, September 11, 2017** for Monday Hebrew classes

**Wednesday, September 13, 2017** for grades 7 through 12

**Religious School Ends:**

**Monday, May 7, 2018** for Monday Hebrew classes

**Wednesday, May 9, 2018** for grades 7, 8, 9 and 11, 12

*Grade 10 continues to meet until Confirmation ceremony on Friday, May 18*

**Sunday, May 13, 2018** for grades K through 6

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>DAYS</b>	<b>SESSIONS/CLASS HOURS</b>
Kindergarten (JFJ), Grades 1, 2	Sunday	<b>(S2)</b> 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Grade 3	Sunday & Wednesday	<b>(S1)</b> 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. <b>(W1)</b> 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. <b>OR</b> <b>(S1)</b> 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. <b>(W3)</b> 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. <b>OR</b> <b>(S2)</b> 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. <b>(W3)</b> 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Grade 4, 5, 6	Sunday	<b>(S1)</b> 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. <b>(S2)</b> 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
	<b>AND</b>  Monday  <b>OR</b>  Wednesday	<b>AND</b>  <b>(M1)</b> 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Grade 5) <b>(M2)</b> 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (Grade 4) <b>(M3)</b> 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. (Grade 6) <b>OR</b> <b>(W1)</b> 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. <b>(W2)</b> 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. <b>(W3)</b> 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Grades 7, 8, 9	Wednesday	6:45 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Grades 10, 11, 12	Wednesday	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

# CARPOOL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

## Drop-off:

Children may ONLY be dropped off at the temple entrance facing the parking lot.

## Wednesday Afternoon Dismissal Procedure:



Please note the rules and procedures for picking children up from religious school on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. We want all of our students to get home safely:

- ➡ Parents/Caregivers must park in the temple lot and walk into the building.
- ➡ All children must be picked up by an adult.
- ➡ No child will be permitted to wait outside for a parent.

## Dismissal at Other Times

- ⇒ Cars are to proceed up the entrance ramp to the parking lot and form a single line with the **first car stopping PAST the temple entrance**. Children will be loaded into cars, 3 to 4 cars at a time. **Once loaded, cars are to make the entire loop around the parking lot to the exit**. Cars **MUST** make a right turn onto Broad Street upon exiting the parking lot.
- ⇒ Do not park in front of the temple's parking lot entrance or leave your car unattended anywhere on the entrance ramp.
- ⇒ Please observe the **NO STANDING** sign.
- ⇒ If your child is not waiting for you outside, please park your car and go inside the building to find your child. **DO NOT HOLD UP THE ENTIRE LINE OF CARS BY WAITING FOR YOUR CHILD AT THE ENTRANCE CURB.**
- ⇒ Parents may park their cars either in an available space in the parking lot or on Broad Street (no double parking please) and walk into the temple to pick up their children.
- ⇒ No child will be permitted to run across the parking lot to meet a parent.
- ⇒ No child will be permitted to use the Broad Street exit for dismissal unless accompanied by an adult.

## **Early Pick-up**

Children will not be released early from school unless accompanied by a parent or other adult previously designated by their parents. **Parents must report to the Temple office and sign the Early Dismissal Log.** Religious school personnel will then go to the classroom and bring the student back to the office for early dismissal.

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

Your child is with us for only a few hours each week. Our partnership must be a solid one in order for your child to get as much as possible from the religious school experience.

The following suggestions are offered for your consideration:

- Make formal religious education relevant to your child by celebrating Shabbat and holidays at home and at the synagogue. Celebrate Shabbat by lighting candles and reciting the blessings over the wine and challah. Attend services regularly.
- Instill in your child a positive attitude toward religious school by helping with homework and making sure school attendance is a priority.
- Participate in all Family Education programs and Words of Wisdom. Teach by example!
- Encourage your child to discuss what he/she has studied with you. Let your child know that Jewish education is important to you.
- Make sure your child practices Hebrew between class sessions.
- Have Jewish ceremonial objects and Jewish books in your house. Use a Jewish calendar.
- Discuss current events of Jewish interest at home. Help your child become aware of the larger Jewish community by drawing attention to articles, newscasts, special events, movies, etc. that are appropriate.
- Help your child understand the importance of mitzvot: remind him/her to bring money for tzedaka to class, share with your child the times you give tzedaka to worthy organizations, contribute canned goods to our Mazon box, visit the sick, be a good neighbor, etc.
- Enrich your child's religious school experience by sharing information about your child's special needs with the Education Director and your child's teacher(s).
- In every way possible let your child know that you are proud to be Jewish.
- Please discuss any aspect of our program with the Education Director or our teacher(s). We want to make sure our program meets your needs and also provide support to our families.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

The Jewish education that is offered to the students enrolled in Temple Ner Tamid's religious school reflects the core educational values of our congregation. First and foremost we value our students. They represent the next link in an unbroken chain of Jewish continuity that has spanned generations. We share with their families the responsibility of teaching them that Judaism is a way of life. Judaism does not begin or end when our students enter or leave the temple building. Rather, they enter the temple building to learn how Judaism and the teachings of Torah are resources and guides for all they do. They enter the temple building to be part of a larger Jewish community. They enter the temple building to affirm their Jewish identity.

We value Jewish identity. A strong Jewish identity is based on knowledge and competence in the skills necessary to fully participate in the life of the community. Our students learn the "how-tos" of Jewish life, which includes full participation in the worship service, holidays and other life cycle events. Jewish identity is also rooted in knowledge of our shared history and identification with the State of Israel. We share the vision of Israel as a Jewish nation and have a commitment to Israel's future. Our students connect to Israel through an examination of history and a look at the modern state. They learn many different answers to the question, "What's an Israel?"

The word Israel means "one who struggles with God." We strive to create opportunities for our students to struggle with their personal relationships with God through involvement in discussion, worship, mitzvot, and as a safe haven for asking questions. We try to create an environment in our school where students feel free to ask about what is most important to them. Our students are taught to question Judaism and its teachings in order to find meaning for themselves in our traditions. Judaism is our light for life's road, wherever that path may lead.

The religious school experience would not be complete without family. Our students do not live in a vacuum. Families are involved in all aspects of our religious school program. Each family's Jewish journey is unique and special yet made of the same threads of connection. We are partners in the weaving of these threads with our religious school families.

Last and perhaps most important is our dedication to building and sustaining a strong Jewish community. We believe that Jewish values and traditions have much to contribute to making our world a better place, and that ensuring a vibrant Jewish future is important for the Jewish people and for society as a whole.

