

# TEACHER AND MADRICHIM HANDBOOK



Eileen Hamilton

Director of Administration, Education, and Youth Engagement

[ehamilton@bnai-israel.us](mailto:ehamilton@bnai-israel.us)

504.427.0151

Congregation B'nai Israel Board of Trustees, Rabbi Block and I are so pleased that you will be teaching in the religious school this year. We are proud of our Teachers and Madrichim. Thank you for your service to the B'nai Israel community.

The following are guidelines for our school to run efficiently and smoothly.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:**

- Teachers check- in begins at 8:30 am and extends to 8:45 am. During this time, teacher mailboxes can be checked and emptied, and supplies picked up and moved to the classroom. Teachers are considered tardy after 8:45 am.
- Check- in will take place in the upstairs religious school office. Requested supplies will be on the carts or on the desk in the same room for pick up.
- Teachers can greet students personally in the lobby or classroom or other designated area no later than 8:50 am.
- Religious School begins at 9:00 am for all students. We will begin our activities at 9:00 am no matter how many students are present. Those students who arrive on time should be rewarded with the maximum time to which they are entitled.
- During the morning as classes change rooms, please be on time for all scheduled activities. Our schedule is pre-planned for the convenience of all classes. Arriving too early or too late for activities can cause schedule complications.
- Dismissal is at 11:30 am. If a student needs to leave early, please refer to the following guidelines for students leaving the school to ensure complete safety:
  - No student should be dismissed to wait outside. Therefore, parents must come into the building to pick up their children.
  - Please make sure you see the parent and make sure you are handing over custody of your student to the parent only
  - If you do not recognize or know the person picking up, please err on the side of caution and ask. Better safe than sorry.

Teachers are also expected to,

- Participate in faculty meetings and workshops, teacher and teacher orientation meeting and be in attendance on Sunday mornings.

### **Absences**

- Teachers will be paid for sessions worked. No pay will be received for missed sessions.
- Once a teacher is aware of the need to be absent, please contact the Director of Education as soon as possible.

- Please do not assume the Director of Education knows you are going to be out unless you have received a return message within 24 hours of your request, you have spoken to the Director directly, and/or you have delivered a lesson plan for your substitute to the Religious School.
- A complete and thorough lesson plan is required from teachers in the event of a planned or unplanned absence. Email the lesson plan to: ehamilton@bnai-israel.us.

Remember: It's more work to prepare for an absence and substitute than it is to be here in person.

## Lesson Plans

- A blank lesson plan is available in the religious school office and/or in your teacher notebooks. You are also welcome to use your own template created on your computer if it incorporates the same information. [CLICK HERE FOR A TEMPLATE](#)
- Lesson plans are to be handed in to the Director of Education each week. You can email or hand in a completed lesson plan before and/or after each class session.  
Teachers will be reminded to hand in lesson plans and copies are kept electronically or filed in our office.

### Attendance at special events

- Teachers are contracted for Sunday sessions. However, periodically there will be special events that involve your Religious School students throughout the year. You may find that you, too, would enjoy attending some of these events. You will also be serving as an excellent role model for your students and their families.

## Serving as a role model

While you are in the presence of students, you are a role model. Students watch your actions, your behavior, your attitude, and your dress. Please consider the following as solid guidelines while serving as a teacher:

- Think before you speak.
- Be courteous to your students, just as you expect them to be to you.
- Be open to students' ideas – even ones you had hoped not to elicit. Everyone has his/her own ideas.
- Keep in good spirits – positive attitudes are contagious.

- Dress like a teacher. All clothes must be clean and presentable and must differentiate you from your students. Shirts with collars are requested.
- Use your good judgment in all circumstances.
- **Cell phones are for emergency use only. Please do not check messages, texts, or other social media apps during class time. It's a distraction for all.**
- **If you capturing moments for photos, please do so sparingly.**

Teachers are expected to always supervise their students, even when in class with a specialist. Students should never be left unattended. We are responsible for everyone's safety at all times.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**

### Teacher check-in and mailboxes

- Each teacher has a mailbox that should be checked weekly for any important information about Religious School for that day, and for information about upcoming events.
- Be sure to leave your attendance folder in your classroom on the emergency board during the week.
- Teacher payroll cannot be processed without a completed W-4, I-9, and direct deposit form, as well as a background check. These forms are available in your teacher notebook (back pocket). Please update your forms in case of address/name, changes.

### **Attendance Procedures**

- Attendance is an important task at Religious School. It is crucial to know who is in the building. At the beginning of class, please record neatly and clearly on the attendance sheet all students who are present, absent, and who have arrived late, being sure to mark each student – do not leave blanks.
- Your attendance folder should remain with you all morning except when with the Madrich/ah who will record the attendance. In case of emergency please take your attendance sheet with you.
- Tzedakah and all other notes from home should be given to the office Madrich/ah to send to the office.

### **In Case of Emergency**

Please remain as calm as possible in case of emergency.

If leaving the building, close your classroom door and turn out the light.

Exit at the closest door.

For fire: exit the building and meet at the far end of the parking lot.

For other threats: take cover and protect yourself and others as best as possible.

If possible, go to a safe room that locks or use the door stops to add protection.

Review the emergency boards installed in the classroom. Flashlights are available in each room.

### **In case of school closings due to weather**

You will receive a text announcing the school closing. Do not reply to the text, but rather email me directly on my cell phone number to confirm the receipt.

### **Consecutive Absences**

We will work collaboratively to call and be in contact with students who are absent three times in a row. Notify the Director of Education with any information learned from the parents as this information may need to go further and require pastoral attention by our rabbi.

### **Guest Policy**

We recognize that there are times when out of town friends and relatives may want to accompany a student to Religious School. Congregation B'nai Israel can welcome guests under the following conditions:

- We are notified in advance and are provided with the guest's name and other pertinent information in case of emergency.
- Guests are asked to participate fully in our program with respect.
- No guests may attend off site field trips.

### **Medicine**

Teachers are not authorized to administer medicine. If a student must take medication during school hours, a note must be sent from home with detailed instructions and given directly to the Director of Education.

- Emergency medications such as Epi-pens and inhalers should be accompanied by clear instructions.

### **Supplies**

- School supplies are available for pick up by request and may be picked up in the morning before school begins. Please plan for all necessary supplies because of the following reasons: supply availability, restocking, and the time it takes for the

preparation of materials. Do not assume we have what you are looking for at the last minute.

- All classes will be equipped with general supplies to be kept in the room and on the supply cart. Please ask for replacement materials as yours are consumed.
- Resources upon resources are in the landing children's library area as well as in the Director's office. Please ask if you don't see something out-right.
- Creative projects are encouraged. Please request in advance any unusual or special supplies needed for such a project. Please check with the Director of Education before purchasing any supplies for which you hope to be reimbursed.

### **Audio/Visual/Technology**

- Projectors and smart TV's are available as well as laptop computers.
- It's best to bring your own computer to ensure all works properly.
- Please make sure your computer, iPad, etc. is compatible with the projectors and Smart TV's and that the correct cords are available.

### **Copying**

- Request forms for copying are available in the religious school office and in your teacher notebook.
- All copying requests made at least 3 days in advance will be in your mailbox on the date you requested.
- Please email (ehamilton@bnai-israel.us) your requests if you need some copying done in the middle of the week.
- Do not wait until Sunday morning to do your copying. You never know if the copier is in use or not working.

### **Parent Communication**

- Parents are our partners. They assist us in the educational process. Teachers are expected to write a short class overview after each class session that will be sent home as part of our weekend eblast communication.
- Parents can serve as helpful volunteers. Consider calling parents in for special events and activities.

### **Problem Areas**

- If a problem arises in your classroom, please discuss it with the Director of Education. These problems may be behavioral, or something personal you are observing about a particular student. When you share problems or issues, a solution can often be found collaboratively.

## Classroom Management

A student's valuable learning time should not be interrupted by a disruptive classmate. All students have the right to a good education. Classroom management is a very individual issue; communicate your rules and expectations clearly and early on, and then be sure to follow through. However, there are some general guidelines that should always be followed:

- No physical discipline
- No abusive or foul language should ever be used.

## Disciplinary Steps

- Each student will be given a warning if they are disrupting the class in any way. This means the disruption/behavior must make the teacher stop the lesson at hand and deal with the issue directly. Extreme disruptions take exception to this policy and may require immediate action.
- The second time, the students will be asked to leave the classroom (and sit outside the classroom door) for a short period of time to reflect on this warning and behavior, and only can return to class when he or she feels ready to enter the classroom and follow the rules.
- The third time, the student will be sent to the Director of Education's office for a short conversation and the parents will be called to discuss the matter as we try to reach a constructive method to deal with the issue. The student will then return to class if possible.
- If sent out again, the parents will be called to come and pick up their child immediately from religious school. A follow up conference/meeting will be scheduled with the teacher, director, and parents.

## Students with special needs

- Teachers will be informed and advised about students in their classrooms with special needs. A plan will be discussed on how best to plan for accommodation to achieve the greatest success in the classroom. All information about students will be kept confidential.

## Always promote **RESPECT**:

- ❖ We show respect and honor of our congregational home – B'nai Israel.
- ❖ We show respect and honor of our people, traditions, and history, and toward a lifelong commitment to Jewish learning.
- ❖ We show respect to our *Morim* – teachers, our *Chaverim* – friends and to ourselves by our conduct, demeanor, and actions.

At the end of the day, please return the classroom to the condition in which you received it.

- Pick up all debris from the floor.
- All materials have designated cabinets or use your storage crate.
- Our classroom fronts are glass so please hang student work neatly with suction cups and keep the rooms tidy.

## **CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION**

### CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Congregation B'nai Israel embraces a lifelong understanding and pursuit of Jewish identity, commitment, and values. Our congregation strives to instill knowledge of pride in Jewish heritage including Torah, tefillah and mitzvot, leading to active participation in Jewish life.

**\*\*Mission Statement created and adopted by Temple Board July 1999.**

**Curriculum Goals:** The goal of B'nai Israel Religious School is to enable students who complete our program:

- ✧ to apply Jewish lessons and concepts to their everyday lives, and lives everyday
- ✧ to have a strong, positive Jewish identity
- ✧ to be familiar with their heritage and history
- ✧ to understand the history and perform Reform rituals related to Jewish holiday and life cycle celebrations
- ✧ to have a basic understanding of Torah, God, and our connection to Israel

The curriculum provides guidelines and content, but the greatest classroom resource is the teacher. The teacher incorporates ideas, thoughts, creativity, and imagination to make each lesson the best lesson possible. The other best resources are parents, involvement in Jewish life, home ritual, and attendance at Jewish summer camp, as well as a teen trip to Israel.