

Temple Sinai Religious School

Family Handbook

2011-2012
5772

Welcome

[Class Schedule](#)

[Our K- 7 Educational Program](#)

[Kehillat Noar – Our Hebrew High School Program](#)

[Policies and Procedures](#)

[Attendance & Service Requirements](#)

[Student Expectations](#)

[Parental Involvement](#)

Dear Families,

It is with much excitement that I write to you at the beginning of this school year. The teachers and I have been working over the summer to prepare and get ready for what promises to be a wonderful year.

While it is true that we are about to begin a new school year, the fact remains that it is new for only a small number of students. At Consecration, we welcome our new students to the religious school and the lifelong pursuit of Torah. For most of our students, September will be a time to pick up where we left off last spring. We will work to build upon what our students have already learned and to continue to strengthen our connection to and understanding of Judaism.

This handbook contains a great deal of information - please take the time to read through it. It is meant as a practical guide to the school experience here at Temple Sinai. It will answer many questions and, hopefully, lead you to ask others.

Our goal at Temple Sinai Religious School is to make the time spent here by our students a productive and positive experience. I would like to work with you to reach this goal. If I can be of any help, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Lauren Resnikoff, RJE
Director of Education

CLASS SCHEDULE

Grades K, 1, & 2:	Wednesday, 4:10 – 6:00 p.m.
Grade 3:	Monday, Tuesday, OR Wednesday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m.
Grades 4 & 5:	Monday and Wednesday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m. OR Tuesday and Thursday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m.
Grades 4, 5 & 6 Hevra:	Monday OR Tuesday OR Wednesday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m. AND Shabbat programs as per schedule
Grade 6:	Monday and Wednesday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m. OR Tuesday and Thursday, 4:10 - 6:15 p.m.
Grade 7:	Monday, 6:40 - 8:00 p.m.
Grades 8, 9 & 10:	Tuesday, 6:40 - 8:00 p.m.
Grades 11 & 12	Selected Monday nights



Hevra Program

The Hevra Program is an alternative education program offered to families with students in grades 4, 5 or 6. Students participating in the *Hevra* program attend traditional classes 1 day per week and participate in select Shabbat experiences with their family. For more information about the *Hevra*, program, please call the school office.

Kavod Class

Kavod Classes are offered to students in grades 3-6. These classes offer students the opportunity to explore grade-level subjects further in depth. Students in grade 4-6 *Kavod* classes will also be introduced to and be expected to master additional Hebrew prayers.

Special Needs & Situations

Temple Sinai offers a variety of learning environments to enable us to best serve the individual needs of our students. If your child has special needs, or if you have any special family circumstances that could affect your child's learning, it is important that you share this information with us. Please contact your child's teacher and/or Lauren Resnikoff, Director of Education.



School Closings

If it becomes necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather, or for any other reason, school closing announcements will be sent out via email. Our voice mail system will announce the school closing and the closing will be listed as follows:

WCBS (AM 880) WOR (AM 710)
WINS (AM 1010) News12 Long Island

www.cancellations.com

www.mysinai.org (Temple Sinai's website)

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

GOALS OF REFORM JEWISH EDUCATION

The goal of Jewish education within the Reform Movement is the deepening of Jewish experience and knowledge for all liberal Jews, in order to strengthen faith in God, love of Torah, and identification with the Jewish people. We have the same goal - we want our children to grow up with a sense of what it means to be a Jew and to have positive feelings about their Jewish identity. Our program is based upon the ten goals of Reform religious education, as formulated by the Union for Reform Judaism:

1. Jews who affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves to the Jewish people.
2. Jews who embrace the Torah through study and observance of *mitzvot* (commandments) as interpreted in contemporary liberal thought.
3. Jews who affirm their historic bond to *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel.
4. Jews who cherish and study Hebrew.
5. Jews who value and practice *tefila* (prayer).
6. Jews who further the causes of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing *tzedeck* (righteousness), *mishpat* (justice) and *chesed* (loving deeds).
7. Jews who celebrate Shabbat and the festivals and observe the Jewish ceremonies marking the significant occasions of their lives.
8. Jews who esteem their own person and the person of others.
9. Jews who express kinship with *K'lal Yisrael* (the Jewish People) by actively seeking the welfare of Jews throughout the world.
10. Jews who support and participate in the life of the synagogue.

CURRICULUM THEMES & TOPICS

Kindergarten

/Grade 1

Eitz Chayim Hi L=Machazikim Bah - It is a Tree of Life to Those Who Hold It Fast

Exploration of the stories from Torah, Shabbat and Jewish holidays

Grade 2

Im Tirtzu Ein Zo Agada - If You Will It, It is No Dream
Study of the Land of Israel

Grade 3

Klei Kodesh - A Holy Congregation
Introduction to the themes of Jewish community, the synagogue, prayer, and *Shabbat* and holiday observances

Grade 4

Bereshit Bara Elohim- In the Beginning God Created
Exploration of how we can be partners with God

Grade 5

K'lal Yisrael - The Jewish People/ The Community of Israel
Study of life cycle and study of Israel

Grade 6

Am Yisrael Chai - The Jewish People Live
Study of Jewish American History and Jewish Values

Grade 7

Eilu Devarim Sh'ain L'hem Shiur- These are the Obligations without Measure
Exploration of obligations we have as Jews



Technology in the Classroom

We continue to integrate computers to our school program. Students will have access to Hebrew & Judaic software and the Internet. Our goal is to use computers to motivate the students, enhance their learning environment and serve as a teaching aid. A gift from the Legacy Heritage Foundation has provided us with a SmartBoard. We are also thrilled to have a set of ipads that we use in the classroom, as well as software that enhances his teaching of Hebrew.

Enrichment Programs

Our educational program is enhanced by a variety of enrichment programs. Each day of class, our students participate in one enrichment program. Over the course of the month, students will have the opportunity to meet with our music teacher, participate in prayer services, read and take books out of the library, meet with our art specialist, and participate in informal Jewish educational programs led by our Youth Director, Alison Schulman. Students will also participate in communal Jewish holiday celebrations.

Milestone Shabbat

Each grade level works with our music teacher, preparing to lead songs and prayers at a Shabbat Service. Dates and times for these milestone services are listed on the calendar.

Special Programs

Many of our special programs are coordinated by grade level. Throughout the year, students in all grades will be participating in unique holiday programs. Some programs will be school-wide, while others will be geared for a particular grade level. In addition, special culminating activities for curriculum units will be held by grade level.

Youth Programs

Students in grades 4 and up have the opportunity to engage in informal Jewish educational opportunities that complement their classroom experience and build community among the students. JORTY, Club 7, SORTY, and the Rosh Hodesh Groups are all coordinated by our Youth Director, Alison Schulman.

Eilu Devarim 13 Mitzvot Program

Students are expected to complete this special Mitzvot Program in the year prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The seventh grade curriculum complements this program.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminar

In preparation for Bar/Bat Mitzvah, families are **required to attend** a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Seminar. These seminars are led by the clergy and offer important information and experiences relevant to your child's upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

KEHILLAT NOAR: THE YOUTH COMMUNITY OF TEMPLE SINAI

The weekly Hebrew High School program is designed for Temple Sinai teens looking to learn, volunteer, and grow in an environment that is safe and welcoming. Every Tuesday night, as a community, students will think together about Jewish teenage life now, what Jewish identity truly means, and how each individual can challenge him/herself to take on those responsibilities that come with Jewish adulthood.

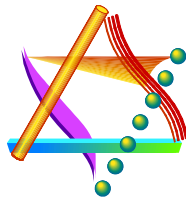
Each night will begin with Torah at Your Table – Pizza, salad, and informal learning based on the latest movies, happenings, issues, and holidays. Following dinner, students will choose elective courses which will consist of small group discussions and activities led by Temple Sinai's rabbis and teachers. Trips and community service projects will be an integral part of each of these tracks.

10th Grade

The Confirmation class meets with Rabbi White in his study each week so to discuss contemporary topics and Jewish responses. How can Jewish texts influence our relationships? Our attitude toward the environment? Toward war? Our treatment of those of different backgrounds? And what about God? The year culminates with a beautiful Confirmation service held on Shavuot morning, led by the students.

11th/12th Grade

For those preparing to graduate from high school, the Temple Sinai Hebrew High School provides a series of encounters and experiences geared toward the student's transition to college and beyond. 11th and 12th graders now meet on Monday nights, with many of the meetings taking place either in Rabbi White's home or on field trips with Rabbi David into Manhattan so to learn via experience and discussion. Our textbook will be the galleries, shows, Hillels, and synagogues that we visit. The 11th/12th grade year culminates with a moving, student-led service on **Friday, May 18, 2012**.



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Cell Phones

Cell phone use is prohibited in school. If a student is found using a cell phone during class, it will be taken away. Confiscated cell phones may be retrieved from the Director of Education by PARENTS ONLY. Students will be permitted to place emergency calls home from the Religious School office.

Snack Policy

Children are permitted to bring a SNACK to school to eat in the allotted snack time. The students have no more than 5 minutes to eat the snack and connect with friends, so it is VERY IMPORTANT that they bring ONLY ONE SMALL SNACK. Students may also bring a small drink, but NO SODA OR GLASS BOTTLES are permitted.



We request that you read the labels of the products you send to ensure that the product DOES NOT CONTAIN NUTS. We have several students with life-threatening nut allergies and need to ensure their safety in our school. We also ask that you not send any Biblically prohibited foods or food products, i.e. pork or shellfish to school.

We also request that you do not send popcorn with your child. Too often, the popcorn spills on the floor and becomes both a hazard for those walking in the room and a mess that is difficult to clean.

Traffic Procedures

Our drop-off procedures are as follows:

Please enter the lot and proceed to the canopy to drop off students.

Please pull as far up as possible to enable multiple cars to drop off at the same time.

A staff member will be standing at the drop-off point to welcome your child.



Our pick-up procedures are as follows:

Please enter at the traffic light through the NORTH driveway. A staff member will direct you to line up in the parking lot. At 6:15, teachers will escort all students in grades 3 and above to the parking lot. Once all of the students have safely entered their vehicles, cars will be permitted to exit the lot.

After 6:15, any student still waiting will be asked to wait with a teacher under the canopy.

At 6:00 pm on Wednesdays, teachers will escort students in grade K-2 directly to their cars.

Early Dismissal

Because of the short amount of time that your child spends in religious school, we ask that you do not remove your child from class early. On occasions when your child must be dismissed early from class, **please go to the Religious School office to sign out your child. No child will be dismissed until s/he is signed out!** Students will be held responsible for classwork they miss due to an early dismissal.

ATTENDANCE & SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Temple Sinai has instituted attendance and service requirements as part of a system in which students can progress in a meaningful way. By working together, we can create an atmosphere in which regular school attendance and service participation is the norm.

< Students must attend a minimum of 80% of all scheduled class sessions. *Students will be expected to make up any assignments they missed during their absence. Teachers will call home if a student has missed three consecutive sessions.

< Because Religious School classes meet for only two hours at a time, it is **imperative** that your child be on time to school. Coming late deprives your child of an important part of the lesson and disrupts the class.

< Each student must attend *t'filah* (prayer services) in order to complete his/her service requirement. This requirement must be fulfilled between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. Service credit will be granted for the following services:

Shabbat - Friday evening

Shabbat - Saturday morning (in the sanctuary)

Shabbat - Saturday morning (Jr. Congregation)

Rosh Hashanah *

Yom Kippur *

Sukkot

Simchat Torah/Consecration

Passover morning

Shavuot/Confirmation

Service requirements are as follows:

Grade	Requirement
K-2	1
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	5
7	13

*Must attend both services to receive 1 service credit

< **When attending services, please observe proper decorum in the sanctuary. Students should be doing their best to follow along and participate in the service. Gum chewing, texting, and side conversations should be saved for outside the sanctuary.**

< Students are expected to attend at least two family workshops during the year. Students may choose any two workshops and attend with at least one adult family member. There will be grade level workshops offered on weekday evenings in lieu of class, in addition to weekends workshops. Pre-registration is required.

Students must return check-off cards to the Religious School office in order to receive credit for their attendance at services and workshops.

In case of illness or extenuating family conditions which threaten attendance and achievement standards, please notify the school office as soon as possible. Each situation will be carefully reviewed to determine the most acceptable solution for all parties concerned

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Class Preparation

Students should arrive for class with all necessary materials, including paper, pencils, and completed homework. It is **essential** that students bring their books to class, as they will be used regularly.

Evaluation

To promote a non-competitive atmosphere, each student is evaluated based on his/her own progress. Each semester an evaluation will be sent home that discusses your child's academic progress and personal growth. In addition, teachers are always happy to schedule individual conferences with parents. Please call the Religious School office if you wish to set up an appointment to discuss your child's progress.

Homework

All teachers bear in mind the heavy loads our students carry, yet some home review is necessary. Students will benefit from a regular review of Hebrew a few minutes each day. Please monitor your child's reading practice. On occasion, students may have written work to prepare. Please check with your child concerning any homework assignments.

Behavior and Discipline

We wish to promote a pleasant and cooperative atmosphere in the school that encourages each child to do his/her best. Therefore, class rules will be explained on the first day of school. Class rules will require that students be respectful of each other and each other's property. Students must show respect for teachers, other staff members, and adults at all times.

If and when discipline problems arise, they will first be handled within the classroom. Teachers will keep a record of the problem, including any phone calls made to parents. In addition, the teacher will keep the Director informed of the situation.

When a discipline problem can no longer be handled within the classroom, the child will be sent to the office, where the Director will speak with him/her. Children will be held responsible for work they miss while out of the classroom. When a child is ready to return to class, s/he will be sent back. Each visit to the office is recorded in a notebook, with the date and nature of the incident that prompted the child's removal from class.

If a child is sent to the office two times, the Director will call home to discuss the situation. Calls will be made home on each subsequent visit to the office. After two calls, if there does not seem to be any improvement in the child's behavior, the parent will be asked to come to school to meet with the Director of Education and/or the child's teacher. If necessary, one of the Rabbis and a Religious School Committee Chairperson may be asked to join the conference.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

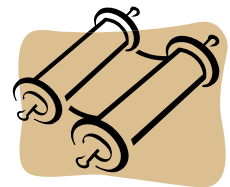
Students spend a maximum of 4 hours a week, on average, in our program. We cannot possibly claim to be more than a supplement to the Jewish life our students experience at home. To provide a complete Jewish education means to provide opportunities in the home for children to utilize what they have learned in religious school, i.e. participation in Jewish rituals at home, attendance at services, participation in activities related to supporting the Jewish community, and conversations about Jewish topics.

We strongly encourage you to question your child about the content of his/her classes and to help him/her to be responsible about completing homework. Keep in touch with your child's teachers and join us when you are invited into the classrooms. We also recommend that you supplement your child's educational experience with family discussions, as well as trips and books with Jewish content.

You can best help your child benefit from his/her religious school experience by making sure that s/he arrives at school on time, adheres to the attendance policy, and comes to class prepared. You can also make sure that your child completes his/her reading practice regularly and turns in homework assignments on time. Homework will not be assigned often, but when it is assigned, it is expected to be turned in on time. In addition, please read your child's progress reports and return them to your child's teacher with any comments you may have. Teachers will be happy to arrange for private conferences, when necessary.

Lifelong Learning

Since we want our children to feel that their religious school education is only the beginning of a lifetime of Jewish learning, it is wonderful for them to see their family members showing a continuing interest in broadening their Jewish knowledge. After all, Judaism is not a children's religion. A variety of classes for adults are offered throughout the year.



Junior Congregation

Our Junior Congregation program provides an opportunity for families to worship together informally, in conjunction with the Shabbat worship of our *Hevra* program families. Check the calendar for dates that our Jr. Congregation will be meeting

Class Parents

If you are interested in being a class parent, assisting with special programs and class events, please contact the school office.

Education Committee

The Education Committee, comprised of temple members, meets a few times each year to discuss issues related to the Religious School. Parents interested in taking an active part in their child's religious education by creating vision, developing policies and future plans should call the Religious School office. New members are always welcome to these meetings.