

Education Handbook

2008 - 2009

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Alissa Z. Levine
Director of Education



Temple Beth-Ei
3610 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60062

Educational Programming

The philosophy of the education department at Temple Beth-El is to actively engage the learners in the process of their Judaism. We serve the educational needs of not just children and teens, but adults as well. Students are taught to appreciate the whys and the hows of our tradition as well as become the instrument to pass on their Judaic knowledge to future generations.

Prayer is central to what is taught in the Temple Beth-El Hebrew curriculum. It is how we communicate with God and with each other. Students will have a mastery of the weekday and Shabbat service and liturgy.

In addition to classroom instruction using the CHAI : Learning for Jewish Life curriculum developed by the URJ, field trips, weekend retreats, family connections and a variety of holiday celebrations round out the educational experience.

Here are just a few examples of such programs:

- School Activities – L’Dor V’Dor Intergenerational Day, drama (plays written by our faculty members and performed by our children), Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Series, Tzedakah projects benefiting various Jewish agencies.
- The Florence Melton Communiten High School
- Adult Education – Study, Kabbalah and Pirke Avot with our clergy, Sunday morning speaker series, literary discussions, Senior Shabbat retreat, Tour of Jewish Chicago, Phyllis Podolsky Memorial Library.
- Family Programs – Parenting Our Teens, grade level family connections to enrich the experience of the school curriculum for students and parents.

Guiding Principles

TIKUN OLAM

We see ourselves as God's partners in making the world a better place. Learning about the earth, pursuing social justice, and caring for the disadvantaged are just a few of the principles that we must all pursue.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The commitment of the family is imperative to the goals and principles for which our school strives. Your participation in Jewish life will strengthen the bonds between you and your child as well as between your child and the Jewish Community.

TZEDAKAH

Although many interpret "*Tzedakah*" as charity, the translation implies performing righteous acts. Students are encouraged to bring contributions of money for Tzedakah to class and adopt projects during the year.

ISRAEL

Our generation has witnessed the miracle of Israel's birth and we celebrate that miracle throughout the curriculum. The students study the meaning of the State of Israel (*Medinat Yisrael*) through lessons in history, geography and current events.

HEBREW

Hebrew, as it is taught at Temple Beth-El, serves as the language of prayer (*Lashon Kodesh*) and the language of the Torah. The Hebrew language unifies us to Israel and the entire Jewish people all over the world. The curriculum focuses on teaching prayers, rituals and values, while familiarizing them with basic speech patterns.

B'TZELEM ELOHIM

Every person is created in the image of God and has immeasurable worth and the right to learn in a nurturing and secure environment. We strive to maintain the value of the learner at the center.

TALMUD TORAH

Our educational program is directed toward high academics in order to prepare each student to be a contributor to the local and global world. The study of Torah, Avodah and G'milut Chasadim help to shape the learning within the school.

SCHOOL HOURS

Judaic Studies: Sunday

First Session **8:30 -10:30 am**

OR

Second Session **11:00 am - 1:00 pm**

Kindergarten (Gan)
First Grade (Kitah Alef)
Second Grade (Kitah Bet)
Third Grade (Kitah Gimel)
Fourth Grade (Kitah Dalet)
Fifth Grade (Kitah Hay)
Sixth Grade (Kitah Vav)

Hebrew: (Begins in 3rd Grade)

Tuesday 4:00 - 6:00 pm

OR

Thursday 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Kitah Gimel (3rd Grade/First year)
Kitah Dalet (4th Grade/Second year)
Kitah Hay (5th Grade/Third year)
Kitah Vav (6th Grade/Fourth year)

Students and Parents: Please use the School Entrance.

Gesher:

7th grade

Monday 4:30 - 7:00 pm

(Combination of Hebrew and Judaic studies)

8th grade

Monday 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Florence Melton Communiten High School:

9th – 12th grade

(Meets at the Board of Jewish Education building at 3220 Dundee Rd. in Northbrook)

Tuesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm

EDUCATION OFFICE

Phone: 847.559.5800

Fax: 847.559.5808

Email: education@templebeth-el.org

The Temple offices are closed for Jewish and legal holidays

School Year Office Hours

Sunday	8:00 am - 1:00 pm
Monday	9:00 am - 7:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Friday	9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Summer Office Hours

Monday-Thursday	9:00 - 4:30 pm
Friday	9:00 - 2:00 pm

Phone calls are always welcome and will be returned as promptly as possible.

If you wish to contact the Education Office at any other time, please leave a message in voice mail or email:

Alissa Z. Levine, Director of Education

Email: Alissa.Z.Levine@gmail.com Phone ext. 212

Wendy Lake, Education Assistant

Email: wlake1217@yahoo.com Phone ext. 210

Children's Library Hours

Sundays 8:30 am - 1:00 pm during the school year

NOTE: The Administrative Office can be reached at 847.205.9982

Fax: 847.205.9921 Email: office@templebeth-el.org

Policies and Procedures

Enrollment Policy

Based on the decision of the Temple Board of Directors, school enrollment is open only to Jewish children of Temple Beth-El members.

We adhere to the Reform Movement's definition of a Jewish child, namely, a child who has at least one Jewish parent and who is being raised only as a Jew. While we respect the challenges interfaith parents face, we believe it is only possible to instill in our children a meaningful religious identity when they are raised in our religious tradition. Our rabbis would be happy to speak to you about your own family's situation.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for students to become engaged in the community of Temple Beth-El.

If a child has eight (8) or more absences in Judaic studies and/or eight (8) or more absences in Hebrew class per year, make-up work must be completed. The completed assignment is due prior to the first day of school in September.

Of course, children get sick and family emergencies arise when a child cannot attend school. If there is a problem affecting your child's ability to attend school, please contact the Director of Education to make alternative arrangements.

Tardiness

Everyone has an occasional slow start, but it is extremely disruptive to the class when students arrive late. School begins promptly, and we ask you to make every effort to be punctual.

Leaving Early

It is disruptive for children to leave early. If a child must leave early, the **parent must go to the Education Office to sign the child out, get a "Pass" to give to the teacher, and then proceed to the child's class to pick them up.** Teachers will not permit children to leave the school with any unidentified person or non-custodial parent without prior notification. In addition, **students will NOT be permitted to meet a parent outside the building.** Only the Director of Education may permit the child to leave the school should an emergency arise.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Protocol

We need your support to keep our children safe. Please cooperate with the security guard, police directing the traffic, safety patrol parents, and be patient and respectful to everyone in the parking lot.

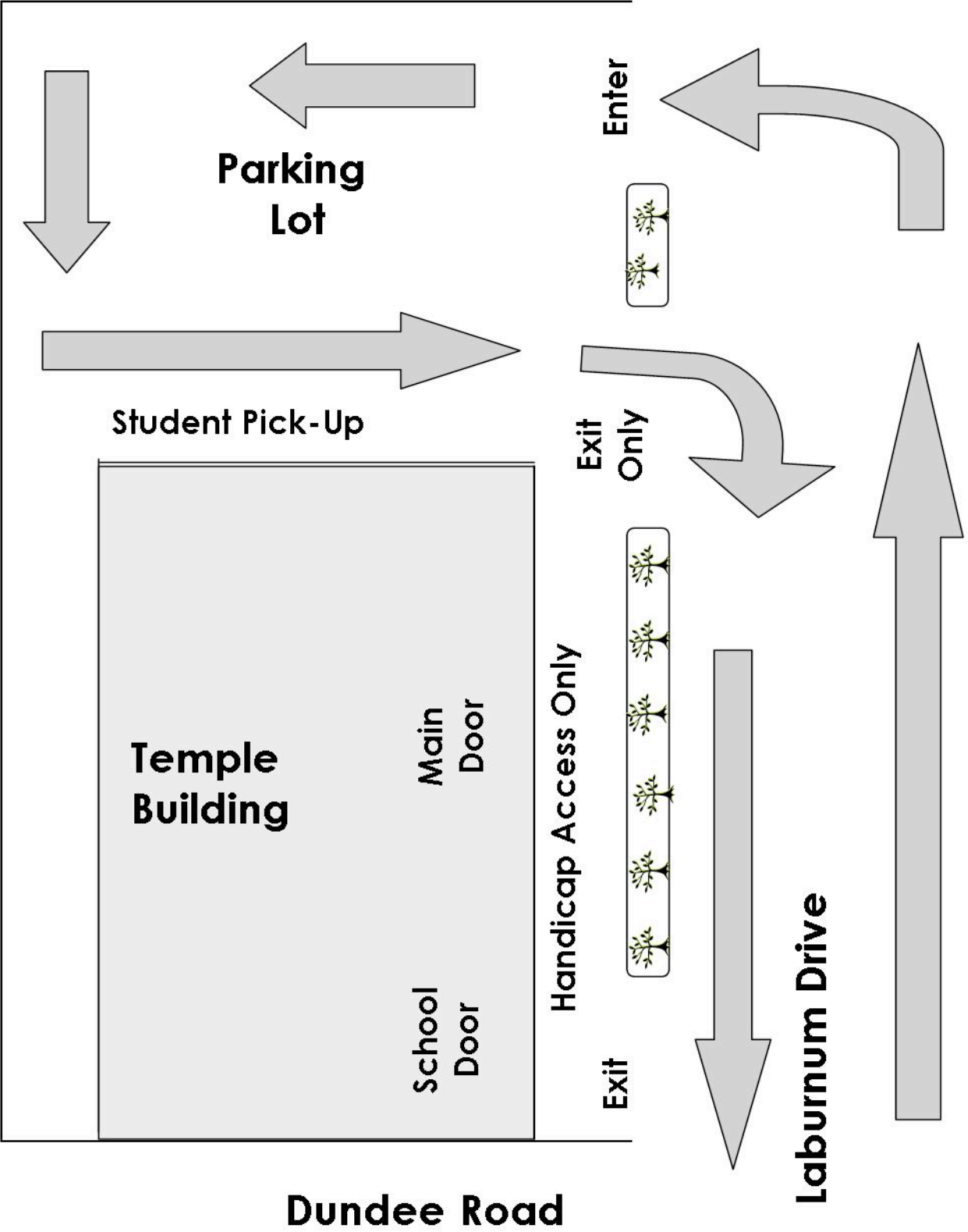
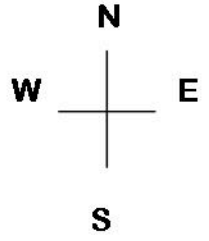
- Comply with the ENTRANCE and EXIT signs.
- Follow the Traffic Pattern as shown on the Map.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING** anywhere along Laburnum Drive or the side street leading into our neighboring townhome complex, Burr Oak. The convenience to a few people obstructs others and ultimately impacts effective traffic flow.
- If you have young children and are parking to come inside to get them, they will continue to be watched over until you are able to get into the building.
- Do NOT block the turning lane.
- Do NOT leave your car unattended in the pick-up lane, you must park in a designated space.
- During the winter months leave your lights on while in line.
- Keep your children with you at all times.
- Do NOT allow the children to run ahead or to cross the parking lot or street.
- **PLEASE STAY OFF YOUR CELL PHONE WHILE IN THE PICK-UP LINE SO YOU ARE ABLE TO FULLY CONCENTRATE AND HELP SECURE EVERYONE'S SAFETY.**



All parents are assigned a Safety Patrol time to help with the control of student pick-up.

PLEASE NOTE - The front of the school has been designated as handicapped parking. We want our Temple and school to be easily accessible to all students and members of our congregation.

PLEASE RESPECT THE HANDICAPPED PARKING SPACES.



Registration

Children must be registered to attend school. Registration material is mailed at the end of April. To give all our congregants an equal opportunity to register their child(ren) for the school year, a lottery system is used. To be included in the lottery, the Registration Form must be received by the stated deadline. Forms should be mailed or dropped off in the Education Office.

- Completed registration forms received by the stated deadline will be processed by lottery. If the registration form is received by the deadline and your choices are no longer available because of the maximum class limit, the child(ren) will be assigned the available time and/or day. However, the child(ren) will be placed on a waiting list for the original choices.
- Forms received after the deadline, will be processed on a first-received basis. If the choices are no longer available because of the maximum class limit, the child(ren) will be assigned the available time and/or day. **Wait listing is not an option.**
- CHANGE REQUESTS WILL BE CONSIDERED *ONLY* WHEN SUBMITTED IN WRITING to Alissa Levine. Change Request forms are available online or in the Education Office. Email your request to Alissa.Z.Levine@gmail.com or drop it off.

Admission Packets are mailed in late August to those families whose school fees are paid in full and are current in their membership obligation, or have made special financial arrangements with the Executive Director.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is reviewed annually and established by the Budget and Finance Committees. Tuition includes the use of textbooks, art supplies, field trips, Family Education, Retreat and other educational materials. (Additional copies of textbooks may be purchased for \$18 a book in the Education Office.) A material fee is also assessed. All membership obligations and school tuition must be paid prior to the opening of the school year. Financial assistance may be discussed by contacting the Executive Director, Victoria MacKay, at 847.205.9982 or vmackay9@aol.com.

Additional fees will be requested for specific purposes such as Shabbat and holiday dinners, B'nai Mitzvah fees during the B'nai Mitzvah year, lost or misplaced textbooks and library books.

Homework

Homework is an important part of the instructional program and requires cooperation between home and school. Homework assignments are relevant to the curriculum and compliment what is being taught. **Use of the following website will help to assist your children in their Hebrew homework: www.behrmanhouse.com**

Student Accommodations

To appropriately meet the needs of students with special needs, it is important for parents to notify us so we can work together to provide your child with a positive learning experience. A Student Accommodation form is included in the Registration Packet. Be sure it is filled out completely including learning disabilities, medical issues and allergies, if applicable. We will attempt to provide and make accommodations to meet the needs of all our students.

Hebrew Enrichment Program

One of the goals of our school is to provide all students with the opportunity to receive their Hebrew education within the confines of the school. The Hebrew Enrichment Program is designed to work with children who require a more individualized educational experience.

Hebrew Challenge

If a student demonstrates a significant lack of proficiency in the study of the Hebrew language as determined by the Director of Education, parents will be notified that additional help may be necessary for the student to be working at the proper grade level. Hebrew begins in the third grade. ***Students beginning after third grade will need private tutoring to bring them up to grade level. The parent will be responsible for the payment of the tutoring sessions.***

Dress Attire

Students should dress in a manner that reflects self-respect and respect for the synagogue. Clothing with inappropriate language or images on it, and Heelys (*shoes with wheels*) are not to be worn in the temple building.

Discipline - "Shalom Bayit"

Discipline is a necessary prerequisite to learning. The children are not allowed to be disruptive, rude or physically abusive. If a child behaves in any of these ways, he or she will be removed from class and the parents will be called. Cooperation between the school and home is an effective method to prevent a difficult disciplinary situation from arising. Please continually remind your children of proper and expected behavior in a synagogue.

In case of extensive misbehavior, temporary suspension may be necessary. A conference with the parents, student and the Director of Education will be scheduled, and guidelines for appropriate behavior expected of students in the school will be established. If a child is a danger to him/her self and/or others, the child will be expelled from school.

We are all members of the Temple Beth-El family, and the building is our home. It is ours to be used, but must be respected. Anyone causing damage will be held responsible for any costs incurred.

Use of Cell Phones, Ipods, etc. During School Hours

Students are not allowed to have their cell phones, ipods, etc., on while in the classroom.

Emergency and Safety

In the event of an emergency during school, we will contact you immediately. If you are unreachable, we will try the emergency number you have listed on the Emergency Contact Form. Please be sure all emergency information is up to date and accurate. If immediate medical attention is needed at any time, the student will be taken to Glenbrook Hospital accompanied by a staff member. If your child has a special health problem, please inform the Director of Education.

Volunteers

Volunteers are needed throughout the year to assist the teachers and staff in various class and synagogue activities, including holiday observances and field trips. ***The success of our School depends greatly on your involvement and support.***

Communication

We will communicate with you during the school year through emails and our "School Happenings", a monthly newsletter mailed to your home. "School Happenings" will include all information on school events, family education and field trips. **Please read everything carefully, make note of all important dates, and RSVP on a timely basis.** Be sure to read your emails and provide us with any changes to your email address during the year.

Snow Closing

In case of inclement weather, school will be closed whenever Northbrook schools are closed. Snow cancellation phone calls will be made. We encourage you to listen to WBBM or WGN - AM radio or Channel 7 for school closings. When in doubt call the Education Office.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued mid-year and the end of the school year.

Classroom Visits

Visits are welcome with **advance notice** to the Director of Education.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found basket is located outside the Education office. At the end of each school year, all unclaimed items will be donated to the ARK.

Requirements for B'nai Mitzvah

The following standards for B'nai Mitzvah have been adopted by the Temple Beth-El Board of Directors and are implemented by the Clergy, Director of Education, Education Committee, Religious Activities Committee and the B'nai Mitzvah Sub-Committee. All those wishing to become a B'nai Mitzvah at Temple Beth-El must fulfill the requirements listed below.

- Students must complete a *minimum* of five (5) years of Hebrew study in the Temple Beth-El school. This means the child will enroll in Hebrew at Temple Beth-El in the third grade (Kitah Gimel). The only exceptions to this policy are as follows:
 - Students enrolled full-time in a Jewish day school recognized as acceptable by the Temple Beth-El Director of Education, Education Committee, and clergy;
 - Students who have been identified by the Director of Education as requiring specialized services or have special needs requiring an individualized study program approved by the Director of Education. These students shall be tutored by Temple Beth-El approved tutors at the family's expense, in lieu of attending class, as the situation requires.
- Maintain all standards in the school related to studies, attitude and attendance.
- Continue to attend Hebrew classes through the completion of seventh grade.
- Successfully complete the B'nai Mitzvah tutoring process.
- Continue Judaic classes and remain in good standing through the Confirmation year (10th grade). This commitment is a prerequisite for B'nai Mitzvah. At the age of thirteen, students are just beginning to conceptualize many of the basic themes presented in Judaism. This is why it is so crucial children continue with their education through Confirmation. The education staff offers a program rich in issues and ideas that advance critical thinking skills. The program is developmentally sound, focusing on group process skills which will take the child into Jewish adulthood.

Assignment of B'nai Mitzvah Dates

B'nai Mitzvah dates are assigned by the Temple based on the student's birth date and Hebrew ability. Due to the size of our congregation, date requests will not be accepted or honored.

Programming

JEWISH LITERATURE AND CULTURAL ARTS

Children's Library

The Children's Library is a wonderful place for children to find Jewish books and material. Children are encouraged to borrow books for up to a two-week period. The library is open during school, and when the building is open. Books must be returned to the library by the end of each school year. Parents are responsible for the cost of replacing any books not returned.

Children's Library Resource Fund

Celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion by making a donation to the Children's Library. Upon receiving a donation, a new Jewish resource item or prayer book is purchased, and a label with the child's name and birthday or simcha is placed on the item.

Blitz Family Children's Cultural Arts Fund

This fund was established to provide guest speakers, music and art programs for the educational benefit of the children of Temple Beth-El. Celebrate a child's birthday or special occasion by making a donation to this fund.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Consecration

Newly enrolled students in kindergarten through second grade are consecrated in an age-old ceremony to welcome new learners. At Temple Beth-El, consecration is held on Simchat Torah. Parents and students are encouraged to attend and will receive a special mini Torah and consecration certificate. A consecration photograph will be taken and given to each child.

Gimel Siddur Ceremony

The study of the Hebrew language and the learning of prayer skills is an important goal to fulfill. Children begin their Hebrew education in Kitah Gimel (3rd grade). By the end of the school year the students have gained the ability to read and pray. Parents help design a bookplate to be placed in a *Gates of Prayer for Young People* Siddur, and present it to their child during a special Family Service in their honor.

Fifth Grade Retreat

An in-house retreat for all fifth grade students is a part of the fifth grade year. The retreat takes place at Temple Beth-El. The cost is included in the tuition.

Sixth Grade Retreat

A retreat for all sixth grade students is a required part of the sixth grade curriculum. The retreat takes place at Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute in Oconomowoc, WI. The cost is included in the tuition.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

s.K.I.P. Send A Kid To Israel Partnership

Through a cooperative effort with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, Temple Beth-El participates in a program that can make a trip to Israel an integral part of the education of students enrolled in the school. SKIP is a savings plan in partnership with the Temple, the student's family and the Federation.

Beginning in Kitah Gimel (3rd grade), each participating student's family contributes \$125, the Temple contributes \$50 per student, and the Federation adds \$85 annually. The money is invested in an interest-bearing account through the completion of ninth grade. At the end of the program, students can select any one of a number of Israel Experiences offered through the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago.

For more information, contact the Education Office.

Summer F.U.N.

Every summer, Temple Beth-El offers a summer camp for pre-school children. It is a summer filled with water activities, art projects, drama, and both indoor and outdoor programs.

Education Committee

The Education Committee formulates the principles and policies of the Slavin-Malkin School, adult education, and the libraries. If you are interested in becoming a part of this committee, please contact the V.P. of Education, Eric Bloom at 847.412.4420.