

**TEMPLE BETH TORAH**  
**MORRIS NIRENBERG RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

**HANDBOOK**  
**5772 / 2011-2012**

Director of Education – Sarit Ferreira  
Chair of Education – Dana Haberman

2162 Washington Street  
Holliston, MA 01746  
(508) 429-6268  
[www.bethtorah.org](http://www.bethtorah.org)

## **TEMPLE BETH TORAH'S MORRIS NIRENBERG RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

### **Administration**

Rabbi Earl S. Kideckel	(508)429-7151
Sarit Ferreira, Director of Education	(508)429-6268
Elaine Swartz, Office Manager	(508)429-6268
Dana Haberman, Chair of Education	(508)893-9889
Laura Mann, Vice President	(508)473-3228

### **Teaching staff**

Torah Tots	Beth Mintz
Gan	Karen Swartz
Aleph	Beth Ecker
Bet	
Gimel	Laurie Canning
Daled	Elyse Banak
Hay	Elyse Banak, Laurie Canning
Vav	Charli Bernstein
Zayin	Laurie Canning, Elyse Banak
Chet	Beth Mintz
Tet/Yud	Rabbi Kideckel

### **GOALS OF THE MORRIS NIRENBERG RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

Religious education at our school is aimed at developing and embracing one's personal Jewish identity as the foundation of leading a Jewish life. We believe that by truly understanding and internalizing the various areas of Jewish education, children embrace Judaism. We strive to connect with Judaism through music, art, drama, debate, and other multi-sensory experiences. Our students from age 2 to 16 engage regularly in Jewish experiences as they celebrate Shabbat, Jewish holidays, participate in prayer services and rituals, and take part in temple life. Fulfilling Mitzvot, and being concerned citizens of the Jewish and secular world are integral parts of our program. Hebrew is studied both for prayer as well as a spoken language, and Israel is experienced as a historical homeland as well as a modern and vibrant state. We encourage our

Students to practice Tzedek (justice), Chesed (deeds of loving-kindness), and Shalom (peace) in all aspects of their lives.

## **Administration**

Rabbi Earl S. Kideckel	(508)429-7151 <a href="mailto:rabbi@bethtorah.org">rabbi@bethtorah.org</a>
Sarit Ferreira, Ed. Director	(508)429-6268 <a href="mailto:Educationdirector@bethtorah.org">Educationdirector@bethtorah.org</a>
Elaine Swartz, Office Manager	(508)429-6268 <a href="mailto:tbt@bethtorah.org">tbt@bethtorah.org</a>
Dana Haberman, Ed. Chair	(508)893-9889 <a href="mailto:habeteacher@yahoo.com">habeteacher@yahoo.com</a>
Laura Mann, V. President	(508)494-1149 <a href="mailto:laura@mannatlaw.com">laura@mannatlaw.com</a>

## **Teaching Staff**

Torah Tots	Beth Mintz and Deb Cagan (Teacher Assistant)
Gan	Karen Swartz
Aleph	Beth Ecker
Bet	
Gimel	Laurie Canning
Dalet	Elyse Banak
Hay	Elyse Banak and Laurie Canning
Vav	Charli Bernstein
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## **THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The Education Committee, which meets monthly, is comprised of the Director of Education, Education Chairperson, the Rabbi, TBT Vice President and Temple members who have volunteered to join the committee. All Temple members are welcome to join this committee and/or attend the meetings.

The functions of the Education Committee include:

- Planning and providing, in conjunction with the Director of Education, enrichment and educational opportunities for students and their families;
- Fostering effective communication between parents, school, and the congregation;
- Insuring adequate space, materials for instruction and safety of the children while in school;
- Planning for the future of the school

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of the Jewish and secular world are integral parts of our program. Hebrew is studied both for prayer as well as a spoken language while Israel is experienced as a historical homeland in addition to a modern and vibrant state. We encourage our students to practice tzedek (justice), chesed (deeds of loving-kindness) and shalom (peace) in all aspects of their lives.

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Gan, Aleph, Bet, Gimel, Dalet	Sunday	8:25am - 10:25am
Hay, Vav, Zayin	Sunday	10:35am - 12:35pm
Gimel, Dalet	Tuesday	3:25pm - 5:25pm
Hay, Vav, Zayin, Chet, Tet, Yud	Tuesday	5:35pm - 7:35pm

### DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

**Student Drop-off:** Parents of students in Tots, Gan, Aleph and Bet MUST escort their child(ren) to their assigned classroom.

All children who are brought to school prior to class should be supervised by the adult who brings them to school.

**Student Pick-up:** Due to child safety concerns, parents are expected to pick up the child(ren) INDOORS.

**Latecomers/Early Dismissal:** Students who arrive at school after the start of class and/or adults who pick students up for early dismissal must check in at the office. Adults are asked not to go to the classrooms to retrieve a child as it is disruptive to the class.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is essential. We have ambitious goals to achieve in a limited number of hours. Students are expected to attend regularly and arrive promptly.

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- No student may leave the school building during Religious School hours without prior authorization.
- Students requiring early dismissal must submit parent/guardian notification to the office before class begins. A parent or authorized representative must come into the office and sign out the student.
- Students must come prepared each class day, equipped with books, notebooks, and a pencil.
- Boys are expected to wear *kippot* at all times inside the Temple.
- Proper behavior and respect toward teachers, fellow students, the educational process, and the Temple building are expected at all times.
- Students and adults are expected to sign the education Agreement (*Brit*) at the end of this handbook noting that both have read this handbook as well as the "*Brit*" and will adhere to expectations.

### CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

We expect that students will follow basic school rules for conduct. Disciplinary action will be implemented as needed for behaviors which include, but are not limited to:

- Interfering with other students' learning.
- Theft or vandalism of personal, school, Temple property, or property of a field trip destination.
- Any smoking or illicit drug use on temple premises.

The Education Committee has adopted the following procedure for disciplinary action:

- If a behavioral problem arises, student and teacher will confer and seek to resolve the matter. The behavior will be documented.
- If a second disciplinary action is required, the child's parents will be contacted by the teacher, the Director of Education will be notified, and a Student Disciplinary Conduct Form will be sent home for the child's parents to sign and return to the Temple.
- If a third disciplinary action is required, the Director of Education will meet with the teacher, student and parents.

Disciplinary action plan may be implemented at any point in this procedure. If the disciplinary action plan is unsuccessful, suspension or dismissal may result. Restitution will be required for any damage of another child's belongings, school property, Temple property, and/or property of a field trip destination.

In the event that the first incident is serious in nature, the Director of Education reserves the right to respond and/or contact the parent/guardian without following the above procedure.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER - SCHOOL CANCELLATION**

On **Tuesdays**, Religious School classes will follow the Holliston Public School policy regarding cancellation of classes due to inclement weather. If Holliston schools are closed, or have an early dismissal, there will be no Religious school.

On **Sundays**, school cancellations will be announced on TV (channels 4, 5 and 7) and emailed to our school families. In addition, you may access the TBT answering machine for updates after 7:30 AM. Cancelled days may be made up at the conclusion of the school year.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication is essential to our school community. A weekly newsletter will be emailed to all religious school families. Please read those thoroughly for up to date school wide and class specific information. Feel free to contact the teachers with questions, concerns or comments. In the event that an issue requires additional support, please do not hesitate to contact the Education Director, Sarit Ferreira, at 508-429-6268 or [educationdirector@bethtorah.org](mailto:educationdirector@bethtorah.org). You may also contact the Chair of Education, Dana Haberman, at 508-893-9889 and [habeteacher@yahoo.com](mailto:habeteacher@yahoo.com) or Vice President, Laura Mann at (508)494-1149 and [laura@mannatlaw.com](mailto:laura@mannatlaw.com).

### **EMERGENCY**

In the case of a medical emergency, the school will contact a child's parent/guardian first. If the parent/guardian is not available, emergency contact will be called. Emergency procedures are followed to ensure the child's safety and well being.

If you need to contact your child during Religious School hours, please call the Office Manager, Elaine Swartz or the Director of Education, Sarit Ferreira, at 508-429-6268

### **VALUABLES**

Please help us reinforce that cell phones and other electronic devices are best left at home. If your child needs to connect with you, he/she will use the office phone.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

We recognize that children have various learning styles and we would like to be sensitive to your child's needs. Please bring any medical, learning or emotional issues to the attention of the Education Director so that we may best serve your child. We strive to design our learning environment to accommodate all children. Please do not hesitate to contact the Education Director with any concerns or questions.

Each family has completed a registration form for each child. Should a special situation develop after the form has been filed, please contact the school or Education Director so we can make accommodations as needed. (i.e. illness, death in the family, divorce, changes of address, etc.)

## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to encourage the development of student's Jewish identity in a personal and meaningful way. Please see our curriculum guide for specifics for each grade. You may obtain a copy online or you may request a paper copy from the Education Director.

## GUESTS, VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

**Volunteers** are welcome and encouraged! Please inquire and/or arrange for such opportunities with the classroom teachers and/or Director of Education. A CORI needs to be completed for anyone over the age of 16 in order to volunteer in the classroom. Forms are available in the Temple office.

## FOOD IN SCHOOL

Only **Kosher** food in unopened packages may be brought into school. **Gum chewing is not allowed in the school OR sanctuary.** Please see the approved Kashrut symbols in the Temple kitchen, in the Temple office and at the end of this book.

Due to the severity of many nut allergies, we request that **NO PEANUT PRODUCTS** be brought into the school. If you have any questions about any aspect of this policy, please contact the Director of Education or Rabbi Kideckel.

## BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

At the beginning of the year, each student will receive textbooks, workbooks and/or notebooks consistent with the grade level curriculum. The student is expected to care responsibly for the books placed in his/her possession. Loss of a book will necessitate reimbursement by the parent for the cost of a new book. We recommend that all books be labeled with the student's English and/or Hebrew name. *Sim Shalom* prayer books and covers will be presented to Kitah Gimel students at the *Chagigat HaSefer* service in the spring and are the student's to keep.

## MADRICHIM (ASSISTANTS)

Madrachim are teens from our congregation who volunteer their time to work at our religious school. They are integrated into the classrooms on a preset schedule. Their role in the classroom varies and may include: assisting with class-wide activities, small group instruction, creating various enrichment activities for students and helping in school events. Madrichim are supervised by classroom teachers and are trained by the Director of Education.

## SHABBAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE

Shabbat service attendance is a vital part of your child's religious education during the school year. By attending services in *our* Temple, your child and family become comfortable in our sanctuary and gain familiarity with the TBT service and tunes. This helps build a larger and stronger knowledge base for B'nai Mitzvah and lifelong participation. The following are service attendance requirements for each grade. Attendance is NOT taken on holidays.

### Service Attendance expectations by grade:

Kitah	# Friday PM	# Saturday AM	# Havdalah
Gan (Gr. K)	1	1	1
Aleph (Gr. 1)	3	1	1
Bet (Gr. 2)	3	2	1
Gimel (Gr. 3)	3	3	1

Dalet (Gr. 4)	5	4	1
Hay (Gr. 5)	5	5	1
Vav (Gr. 6)	5	6	1
*Zayin (Gr. 7)	5	8	1

Shabbat B'Yachad Services count toward Shabbat attendance requirements for students in Gan through Vav. Attendance is taken at the end of each service. It is the *student's* responsibility to make sure that their attendance is taken before they leave the synagogue. Parents should also keep track of Shabbat attendance, in case discrepancies arise. If your child attends a service at another temple, please notify Elaine Swartz, Office Manager, so she can give attendance credit for that student. Please be aware that attendance at another temple does NOT meet B'nai Mitzvah requirements, while it DOES meet "The Prayer Posse" credit.

### THE PRAYER POSSE

Designed to encourage attendance at Shabbat services, "The Prayer Posse" recognizes and rewards those students who attended the full amount of services specifically expected for their grade. "The Prayer Posse" will be honored in the spring.

### \*ZAYIN B'NAI MITZVAH STANDARDS & REQUIERMENTS

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is an important milestone in the Jewish life of our students. Dates are assigned approximately two years in advance. The Zayin Class Service Attendance Requirements may be counted towards the B'nai Mitzvah Policy for service attendance requirements. The B'nai Mitzvah Policy states that the child **MUST** attend the following services AT TEMPLE BETH TORAH within the 8-month period prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah in order to participate in the prayer service at his/her own Bar/Bat Mitzvah:

**8 Saturday morning services** (Two B'Yachad services MAY count toward this requirement, providing the student leads a portion of the B'Yachad service and joins the Shabbat morning service in the main sanctuary afterwards. The student **MUST** obtain a sticker at each service to verify attendance, but it will only count as one service that day.)

#### AND

**2 Other Shabbat services** (Friday night, Saturday morning, B'Yachad or Mincha/Ma'ariv services.) Students are expected to attend services at Temple Beth Torah (rather than accepting attendance at other temples) so the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child has a better understanding of the structure of our services and to help the student and parents feel comfortable in our congregation and service. Please note, as with Shabbat Service Attendance, Holiday Services do not count toward these requirements.

#### IN ADDITION

If the child would also like the honor of participating in the Friday evening service preceding his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah, 5 additional Friday night services are required at Temple Beth Torah, for the reasons stated above. (If the child completes the 5 Friday night service requirements for Shabbat Service Attendance, those services count toward B'nai Mitzvah requirements.)

### CLASS PARTICIPATION SERVICES

Each class has the honor of leading prayer services during the year. Students are expected to participate in his/her class service(s). A summary of these services for the 2011 – 2012 school year is listed below; please consult the calendar on the Temple's website for final dates [www.bethtorah.org](http://www.bethtorah.org).

**Gan/Aleph/Bet – Friday, January 13, 2012** – During this Small World Shabbat, Gan/Aleph/Bet classes will lead some of the prayers and songs.

**Gimel – Chagigat HaSefer – Friday, March 23, 2012** – A special book cover, which is made for each child's Siddur by his/her family, will be presented to the student at this service. We hope that the cover design will be kept a surprise until the Siddur is presented during the service. The Temple provides the Siddur and instructions about cover construction to the families well in advance of the service.

**Dalet – Tu B'Shvat Seder – Friday, February 3, 2012** – Students lead and participate in a special Friday night service combined with a Tu B'Shvat Seder.

**Dalet/Hay – Saturday, March 3, 2012** – The Dalet & Hay classes combine to lead the majority of the Shabbat morning service.

**Hay/Vav – Friday, December 2, 2011** – Hay & Vav classes combine to lead the Friday Night Kabbalat Shabbat & Ma'ariv services.

**Vav – Saturday, May 19, 2012** – Kitah Vav leads the Shabbat morning service and divides parts in chanting from the Haftarah – **with trope** – for the first time!

**Zayin Participation Services – Friday, November 18, 2011 and Saturday, March 24, 2012.** Kitah Zayin leads the entire Friday night and Saturday morning service. In addition, students who have become Bar/Bat Mitzvah chant from the Torah scroll.

**Zayin Graduation Service – Friday, June 1, 2012.** Kitah Zayin students lead Friday night service and reflect on their religious school experiences.

### SHABBAT B'YACHAD SERVICE

This family Shabbat service meets six times during the school year from 10:00–11:00 on Saturday mornings. Together, families learn and pray under the expert leadership of Elyse Banak. This service counts toward Shabbat attendance for grades K – 6. Students in Zayin may count TWO B'Yachad services toward requirements.

### HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

Exciting holiday programs take place throughout the school year. Please consult the Temple Calendar on the Temple website [www.bethtorah.org](http://www.bethtorah.org), Torah Talk (Temple update emails), emails from the classroom teacher and the school's weekly newsletter for updated information.

### LIBRARY

Our library is an excellent source of books available to students and families. It contains many books with a wide range of Jewish interests with literature geared toward young children through adulthood. The library is open when Religious School is in session. If this time frame does not work for you, please contact the Education Director to schedule a time to check books out.

### ROSH HODESH: IT'S A GIRL THING

For the second year, "*Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing*" will be offered. This is a monthly program offered to girls in grades 7 and 8. It is a nationally acclaimed experiential curriculum resembling a Jewish summer camp with your best girlfriends. Our gifted facilitator, Nancy Fried-Tanzer, leads girls in discussions about

teen issues, creating new rituals, artistic projects and much more. To sign up or to receive more information, please contact the Director of Education.

### **WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS**

A written progress report is sent home with each student twice a year at the end of each term. The first term progress report must be signed by the child's parent and returned to school in the envelope in which it came. The second term progress report need not be returned. Each report card will note Religious School days of attendance as well as Shabbat service attendance.

Parents should read the reports carefully and review them with their child(ren). If you would like to discuss your child(ren)'s progress at any time or you would like to set a time to meet with your child's teacher, please contact the teacher or the Education Director, Sarit Ferreira. In the case of discrepancies in service attendance notation, please see the Office Manager, Elaine Swartz.

### **YOUTH GROUPS**

Our youth programs are designed to enrich and broaden our academic program and to enhance the social needs of young people.

USY (United Synagogue Youth) is divided into three sections:

- Kadima for 4th and 5th graders
- Junior USY for 6th, 7th and 8th graders
- Senior USY for 9th – 12th graders

Each group meets once a month during the school year. We get together to do local events as a chapter and we are invited to participate in regional and sub regional activities throughout the year. Our Youth Director provides leadership for these groups. Kadima and USY provide an opportunity for our youth to socialize with other Jewish youth, participate in Tikkun Olam activities and take part in religious activities.

For more information, contact: **Laurie Canning**, Youth Director, at [lauriecanning15@comcast.net](mailto:lauriecanning15@comcast.net), **Madeline Knapp**, Youth Chair, at [hemawesa@msn.com](mailto:hemawesa@msn.com) or go to our Temple website [www.bethtorah.org](http://www.bethtorah.org).

### **TIKKUN OLAM (REPAIRING THE WORLD)**

In an effort to teach our children the importance of giving and to develop a greater sense of community, our Religious School promotes participation in Tikkun Olam projects throughout the year. Some examples of Tikkun Olam are:

- Students of all ages visit The Village at Farm Pond, an assisted living facility, and students from Kitah Vav may choose to participate in the Keshet 13 program who volunteers at Farm Pond regularly.
- Kita Vav plants flags for Jewish soldiers at Grove Street Cemetery.
- New this year, our Chet (eighth grade) and Zayin (seventh grade) students will participate in the Telem and B'nai Telem programs - an innovative program for Boston area Jewish teens that integrates community service, learning, and reflection—and provides opportunities to effect real change.
- Temple families participate in Mitzva Day in the spring. A concentrated day of giving back to the wider community. Look for more information later in the year.
- Classroom teachers may collect Tzedakah throughout the year to send to a chosen organization.

- Families are welcome, throughout the year, to donate items to various organizations. Look for notification in the school newsletter for details.