

THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE OFFICE IS
LOCATED IN ROOM 217
THE TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR ALL SCHOOL RELATED CALLS IS 766-6418 ext.314, 320 or

school e-mail addresses:
jewishexperience@centralsy.org
educator@centralsy.org Marilyn Greenspan

JEWISH EXPERIENCE TEACHERS - 2015-2016

Kindergarten	Ms. S. Kivelevitz	room 210
Grade 1	Ms. S. Rossi	room 215
Grade 2	Ms. D. Riess	room 216
Grade 3	Ms. A. Laish	room 202
Grade 4	Ms. S. Kamens	room 203
Grade 5/6	Mr. A. ackerman	room 204
Grade 7	Ms. M. Raimondi	room 206

MESSAGE FROM
THE JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Dear Jewish Experience Families,

On behalf of the Education Committee, we welcome you to a new year. Our knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff looks forward to providing a year of challenging and enriching learning experiences for you and your child. In addition to your child's classes, we encourage you to participate in Family Education Programs, the Shabbat Seder and family services to enhance your child's Jewish learning. We know you will enjoy the Show and Kvell services.

Your Education Committee is comprised of members of our congregation, members of Beth Emeth, the Director of Education and the Clergy. We meet regularly throughout the year to evaluate programs, share suggestions and comments, as well as to prepare for future events. Our goal is to make our school a true place of learning for all students from kindergarten through graduation. To this end, we continue our synagogue service requirements for grades 3-6 this year. We also have an exciting eighth grade and High School program in place. The school is truly a Jewish Experience.

Please contact any member of the Joint Education Committee if you have any concerns, comments or suggestions throughout the year, by calling the Synagogue offices (Central) 766-4300 or ((RCBE) 374-9220. Only together can we make The Jewish Experience the best it can be by being partners and advocates in our children's learning. We look forward to a successful school year as we strive to meet these common goals.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO YOU

The Jewish Experience @ 430 DeMott offers a program of age appropriate Jewish educational experiences for students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Our educational program prepares students to:

- have a positive Jewish identity and connect themselves to our people through the study of Jewish history, ethics, theology, and rituals
- have a relationship with God, and to express this relationship in various ways
- affirm their bond to both *Eretz Yisrael* (the land of Israel) and the modern State of Israel
- value the study of *Torah* and Rabbinic literature
- read Hebrew, and to understand the themes, key words and appropriate occasions for the recital of prayers in Progressive liturgy
- pray with sincerity, and to participate in services in both our own synagogue and in synagogues worldwide
- appreciate Hebrew as a modern, living language
- pursue *mishpat* (justice), *tzedek* (righteousness), and *chesed* (loving deeds), and to understand that these acts are *mitzvot* (Jewish obligations)
- celebrate *Shabbat* and other holidays, and to observe Jewish life cycle events with an understanding of why and how they are observed
- respect themselves as liberal Jews and to be able to make informed choices
- express kinship with *K'lal Yisrael* (the community of Israel) by learning about the diversity of Judaism within their own community and around the world
- support, participate in, and enjoy synagogue life, and to view the synagogue as a safe and enriching environment
- encourage the participation of parents in the Jewish education of their children and provide opportunities to enrich their education
- continuously strive to provide a quality instructional program, for all, in a safe school environment

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO US For Parents

At the Jewish Experience we strive to do so much in the limited time your children are in our care. In order to better accomplish our goals, we need to enlist your support as full and active partners. Together we can create a positive Jewish experience for your children. Here is how you can help:

1. **Encourage your children** and impress upon them the importance that you place on Jewish learning.
2. **Make the Jewish Experience a priority** and do your part to see that your children attend classes regularly and on time. Please make sure that make-up work is completed.
3. **Take an ongoing and active interest** in the study materials, worksheets, art projects, and event notices that your children bring home; check school e-mail.
4. **Bring the spirit and joy of Shabbat into your home each week.** Bless the candles, wine and challah.
5. **Observe holiday celebrations at home.** Share the excitement of preparing holiday foods and singing around the holiday table.
6. **Worship regularly as a family at our synagogues.**
7. **Make Judaism visible in your home** by displaying works of art and ritual objects.
8. **Interest your children in Jewish books and culture.**
9. **Deepen your own Jewish learning** through participation in family education programs and adult education classes.
10. **Meet and communicate** regularly with the Director of Education, teachers and clergy.

For Students

1. **Come** to the Jewish Experience with a positive attitude, all your supplies, and a smile!
2. **Show respect** for teachers, classmates, and school property.
3. **Participate** in classroom activities with lots of enthusiasm.
4. **Attend classes regularly** and arrive at class on time
5. **Discuss** problems and share ideas with your teachers.
6. **Do your homework regularly** and make up missed assignments.
7. **Practice** reading Hebrew at home.
8. **Dress appropriately.**
9. **Bring in tzedakah** money regularly.

JEWISH EXPERIENCE SCHEDULE

Grades K - 2:

Sundays: 9:30 A.M. - Noon

Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7

Sundays: 9:30 A.M. - Noon

Wednesdays: 4:30 - 6:00 P.M.

Grades K - 2:

Sundays: 9:30 A.M. - Noon

Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7

Sundays: 9:30 A.M. - Noon

Wednesdays: 4:30 - 6:00 P.M.

Grade 8

Wednesdays:

Sept. 30, Oct. 7 & 14

March 30, April 6 & 13

Sundays:

Oct. 25, Nov. 22,

Jan. 31, Mar. 13

Grades 9-12:

Sundays:

Nov. 15, Dec. 20, Feb. 28, April 3

Wednesdays:

October: 14, 21, 28

December 2, 9, 6

Jan. 6, 13, 20

March 9, 16, 23, 30

May 4, 11, 18

JEWISH EXPERIENCE CURRICULUM

The school uses the CHAI curriculum which was designed to facilitate lifelong Jewish learning in liberal, progressive congregations. It consists of 3 strands: Torah (study), Avodah (worship) and G'milut Chasadim (acts of loving-kindness). It focuses on the "big ideas" in Judaism leading students to a deep and enduring understanding of Jewish belief and practice. In addition, the curriculum includes Jewish holidays and their background, Israel, Hebrew and prayers

Primary Grades

Kindergarten and 1st grade. The students focus on the Jewish home and holidays. We recognize that every family participates in Jewish activities at different levels; therefore, we emphasize the basics. Many of the rituals are explained and performed in class, and we celebrate all the holidays. We introduce the sanctuary as a special place, and explain the objects found there. It is a year filled with fun activities, including craft projects and library time. Hebrew letters are introduced on a primer level.

2nd grade uses the CHAI curriculum. In the Torah Strand, study is from the Book of Exodus. We discuss how the Torah is different from other books, and how it can help us in everyday life. The Avodah Strand speaks about finding sacred connections to God, self and the community and the G'milut Chasadim section discusses the responsibility we all have to perform acts that make the world a better place. In Hebrew, the letters and sounds of the alphabet are reinforced. The year is filled with activities, crafts, music, art and library visits.

MIDDLE GRADES

Grades 3 -7 meet each Sunday for a short service. The older students are encouraged to lead the services and everyone enjoys the singing. There are brief prayer explanations and the students are given the opportunity to express their opinions

The main vehicle for learning to read Hebrew is our Hebrew tutoring program staffed by teen tutors. Students work in pairs or individually with a tutor to learn about and practice correct Hebrew reading.

3rd grade begins a more formal approach to the study of Hebrew. The students are now expected to recognize all of the letters, group them into simple words and know how to write Hebrew block letters. In the middle of the year the students are eligible to begin the online Mitkadem program. We recognize that students learn differently; therefore, individual attention is given to students who require extra help. The overall topic of the CHAI curriculum is *K'dushah*/holiness and the difference our actions can make in the world.

4th grade students learn about themselves and the community, their connection to the Jewish people and the land of Israel. Hebrew studies now include learning prayers from the *siddur* (prayer book).

5th grade children continue to expand their Hebrew reading and writing skills, again with emphasis on *Shabbat* and other holidays. This year, the CHAI curriculum focuses on liberal, progressive Judaism and the community. The books of the Prophets are used to understand how God wants us to live.

When the children reach **6th grade** and become increasingly aware that the day on which they will become a *bar or bat mitzvah* is fast approaching, a large part of their curriculum focuses on helping prepare them for the responsibilities of becoming Jewish adults. Cantor Kohlbrenner teaches the class for a half hour on Wednesday for part of the year. By grade six, the average student should be very comfortable reading Hebrew. Revelation is the main topic of the CHAI curriculum dealing with our relationships to God through text, and *g'milut chasadim*.

7th grade students become increasingly involved in *bar/bat mitzah* preparation. Hebrew studies reinforce the skills they already know. The question posed in the CHAI curriculum is, "What does it mean to be a responsible Jewish adult?" The 7th grade also studies about the Holocaust.

8th Grade

The 8th grade meets three times a year with their parents on scheduled Sundays from 4-7 PM. The interactive course helps parents and teens discuss difficult topics within a framework of Jewish values. There are two 3 week sessions for the students only to learn about topics of interest such as the Jewish view on money or Jewish communities around the world. There is also a day trip to the Lower East Side with the clergy and a Shabbat weekend at a nearby camp.

High School Program

The High School Program is designed to encourage students to pursue Jewish learning, assume responsibility to the community, participate in Jewish activities and develop personal relationships with each other, their rabbi and members of the synagogue community. They meet on selected Sundays for a 2 hour program and 4 to 5 times during the year for 3 week courses on various topics.

Art

Our students' learning is also enriched regularly by our wonderful art program. Children create beautiful ritual objects that may be used at home for a variety of holiday celebrations. Through drawing, painting, and sculpting, students have the opportunity to express their Judaism in a hands-on creative atmosphere.

Projects are connected to our Thematic learning units and presented at the Show and Kvell services.

Music

Jewish values, practices, vocabulary, and prayer are reinforced by our exciting music program. Students meet regularly with our song leader, for fun-filled song sessions rich with Jewish music.

Library

We have a large collection of books and resource materials appropriate for the children of the Jewish Experience thanks to the support of our congregations. Storytelling is an integral part of our curriculum. All classes are regularly scheduled to visit our beautiful Library. Our librarian, Sara Reed, provides our students with enriching discussion and encourages them to read Jewish books at home.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In addition to the regularly scheduled classroom instruction and special activities planned during class time, students are expected and encouraged to participate in a large number of educational and social events which serve to enhance the learning experience and complement the growth of a Jewish child. These activities include:

- Family Education Programs
- Family *Shabbat* Services
 - Shabbat Seders
 - Youth Group
 - *Sukkah* Decorating
- Purim* & *Chanukah* Programs
 - Social Action Projects

PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

TORAH FOR TOTS

Parents of three and four year olds may want to take advantage of our Torah for Tots Program which meets once a month on Sunday mornings. This enrichment program, sponsored by our Sisterhood, and available at no cost, is open to temple and non-temple members. The program revolves around the Jewish holidays, as well as our wonderful Jewish literature, culture, and traditions. It is a multidimensional opportunity for young children to explore their heritage. The children will participate in a variety of creative activities including art, cooking, music, and story time. For info, contact 766-4300.

LIFE CYCLE EVENTS

Consecration

Consecration means making something sacred or holy. During the Fall Holiday services, we consecrate and welcome all new kindergarten through third grade students by presenting them with a gift of a miniature torah and blessing these children as they begin their journey through Jewish education. This ceremony illustrates our belief that we see the beginning of a child's education as a sacred experience.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Bar/Bat Mitzvah means "son or daughter of the commandment." This is the time when a young girl or boy is considered old enough to begin taking on Jewish responsibilities, *mitzvot*. During the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* service, the student will lead the congregation in prayer and read from the *Torah* and *Haftarah*. A student will become *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* upon completion of the requirements established by the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Committee, including a minimum of five years of religious school attendance, beginning in the third grade. He/she must be registered and in attendance in the religious school during the year in which he/she will become *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. As part of becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* it is expected that a student will continue his/her Jewish education through Confirmation and beyond.

Confirmation Graduation

The confirmation ceremony was developed by the early Reform Jews as an affirmation of a young person's mature acceptance of the Jewish faith. The idea of this service was developed to encourage students to continue their Jewish education while helping them to create their own Jewish identity. Confirmation differs from the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* service in that it is a group ceremony. Students participate in the service by leading the congregation in prayer, reading *Torah* and sharing their own thoughts about Judaism grade. Students who continue their Jewish Education through twelfth grade participate in this service. This is the culmination of study in the Jewish Experience program but, hopefully, not the end of your child's Jewish education. The structure of the service varies according to the interest of the students.

SCHOOL POLICIES: Attendance, Absences & Tardiness

Students, parents, teachers, staff, and clergy are a team working together to provide a quality education for your child. Consequently, we need your help to ensure that your children attend at least 80% of their classes, a requirement for promotion. **With less than 80% attendance the Jewish Experience cannot guarantee sufficient Hebrew skills and the family may be required to hire a tutor for additional Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation.**

Please try to be on time to class. Students coming in late disrupt the class and miss out on important introductions and instructions. A child who arrives ten minutes after class begins will be considered tardy. A record of excessive tardiness or absence will be reviewed by the Education Committee and additional makeup work may be required.

We understand that extenuating circumstances sometimes occur. If your child must be absent from school, **please notify the Jewish Experience** either by telephone (766-6418) at any time prior to class, or in writing. In all cases of absence, students are required to make up missed class work and homework assignments. It is the responsibility of the **student** and/or parents to obtain this work.

Service Attendance - Religious Service attendance at Shabbat or holiday services is required for all students in grades 3-7.

<p>Third grade - 3 services/yr Fourth grade - 4 services/yr Fifth grade - 5 services/yr Sixth grade - 6 services/yr Seventh grade - as per bar/bat mitzvah requirements</p>
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The Friday night Shabbat Seder services will be counted towards meeting the requirement. Holiday services include Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Purim, Passover, Israel Independence Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and Shavuot.

Homework

Homework is an extension of work done in the classroom and is used to reinforce material that has been previously covered. Special assignments, preparation for evaluations, and makeup work are also expected to be completed. **We encourage children to carry a special backpack to school for projects that they work on in class, as well as for homework assignments for the following class session.**

Progress-Reports

Progress reports are issued twice yearly for students in grades K-7. In addition, teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate with one another throughout the year. An appointment to meet with a child's teacher or the Director of Education may be arranged by calling the school office at 766-6418 ext. 20 or e-mail at educator@centralsy.org.

Appropriate Attire

In order to show respect for the synagogue, appropriate attire is required of all students. Clothing worn on the playing fields is not suitable for the sanctuary. Clothing should be clean and neat. **Cleats or wheeled shoes are not permitted in the building at any time.** Caps are not allowed to be worn in the classroom.

Visitors to the School

All visitors, of any age, who wish to enter a classroom for any reason must report to the Jewish Experience Office, Room 217, for permission.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah is collected every school day in all grades. While each child should remember to bring money, the amount is not important; remembering to give is the *mitzvah*.

Request for Early Dismissal

Should it be necessary to pick up a child from school before class has ended, a note providing an explanation and the intended time of pick up must be presented to the school office prior to the start of class on that day. **Parents must report to the school office, room 217,** to sign out their child(ren). There they will be given a dismissal pass to give to the child's teacher, who will release the student(s) from class.

Snow Days

If the Rockville Centre public schools are closed on a Wednesday due to snow there will be no religious school classes. Arrangements have been made to notify you whenever school is to be closed because of weather or other conditions. If you are in doubt as to whether the school is open, you are urged to check the Central Synagogue website. Please do not call the school. Please check the website and expect a phone call from either Marilyn or another parent in the school.

Parking, Drop-off, and Pickup

Parents are reminded to be prompt in drop-off and pick-up of students and are urged to exercise caution when children are entering or leaving the school grounds. Please drive slowly in the parking lot and near its entrance and exit, and park in marked spots in the lot while you wait for your child. Do not sit in front of the school door, as doing so blocks the flow of traffic and creates a dangerous situation.

Emergencies

If your child suffers a minor accident, necessary first aid will be rendered. If the injury is one that will require additional medical treatment, you will be contacted immediately. For this reason, we require you to update the emergency medical release form each year.

Discipline

Most discipline problems are dealt with in the classroom. Should a student be so disruptive that he/she must be sent to the school office the Director of Education will speak with the student and follow up with a parent if necessary. If the student's behavior continues to be a problem, a conference will be scheduled to discuss options. Continuous misbehavior may result in suspension or expulsion.

Safety

For your child's safety, **skating, skate boarding, rollerblading, scooters, and bicycling are prohibited on synagogue property** If your r child must use one of these items to get to school, please have him/her get off and walk once the synagogue grounds are reached. Bikes must be locked in the bike rack outside the school doors. Children should wear proper safety helmets, as required by law. **We do not allow shoes with wheels in the building**

Elevator

Children are not permitted in the elevator lobby areas, and are not permitted to use the elevator, at any time, unless they are accompanied by an adult or have prior permission from the Director of Education.

Cell phones

Students are required to keep their phones turned off and in their book bags during class time unless being used for a class project. We ask that you not call them with change of plans or updates until school is over. You can also call the office and we will notify them. Students who have their cell phones out during class may have them taken away to be returned at the end of class to either the student or his or her parent.

**GROUPS WORKING TO ENHANCE YOUR
CHILD'S JEWISH EDUCATION**

Joint Education Committee

The Education Committee consists of members of the congregation who work toward the betterment of Jewish religious education. It supervises the operation of the Jewish Experience and recommends policy to the Board of Trustees. The meetings are open to congregants and written communications to the committee can be sent to the synagogue office. Anyone interested in membership on the Education Committee may contact the chairperson through the synagogue offices.

Sisterhood of Central Synagogue

In celebration of *Shabbat*, the Sisterhood of Central Synagogue enables us to provide *challah* and juice on a weekly basis to all children in kindergarten through grade 3, in order to help familiarize them with the appropriate blessings. Sisterhood helps plan and prepare celebrations for *Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, and Passover*. Parent participation is encouraged. To become involved, call the synagogue office and leave a message. A Sisterhood volunteer will return your call.

Brotherhood of Central Synagogue

Brotherhood of Central Synagogue welcomes all of the students of the Jewish Experience and their parents. We wish you a most enjoyable and productive school year.

Brotherhood is proud of the achievements and accomplishments of the students. We are delighted to be able to help and support our students and youth.

Each year we present gifts to all of our *B'nai Mitzvah*, Confirmands, and High School Graduates; give financial support toward the expense of our youth delegates to conventions; distribute the Yellow Candles (Yom HaShoah Programs) to our students; and try to enhance our school and youth programs.

We invite anyone interested to join Brotherhood. We ask the parents, faculty, and students to suggest how we may further serve the school and youth.

**Morim Ozrim (Teaching
Assistants/ Tutors)**

Morim Ozrim are a valuable asset to our school. They tutor our students in Hebrew using the Mitkadem curriculum, help teachers with general classroom tasks and facilitate small group and individual learning. Students in grades 8 through 12, who are enrolled in The Jewish Experience are eligible to be teaching assistants in our classes on Wednesdays and Sundays. They are paid an hourly wage and are supervised by the Director of Education and the teachers. For further details please contact the school office.

Youth Group

We encourage all of our young adults, to participate in our Youth Program, ROCKY. We have a wonderful program lined up for the school year. It includes social events such as movie nights, paintball and Shul of Rock. . There is also social action programming.

The Helen Blau Memorial Library

The Helen Blau Memorial Library is as integral part of the Jewish Experience. Reading to the children is a regular activity on Sunday mornings and the library is always available on Sunday morning and Wednesday afternoon for book borrowing.

The children's collection consists of approximately 700 books, including story books, folklore, books about the holidays, and resource materials. Our new DVD collection is growing rapidly.

The library also contains approximately 3,000 adult books in all areas of Judaica and is available to the congregation on Friday evenings, Wednesday afternoons and during Sunday school hours, and by appointment during the work week by calling the Central Synagogue office at 766-4300.

Children's material may be borrowed for one to two weeks and adult books may be borrowed for one month.

FYI
Our sponsoring congregations have wonderful websites with a lot of useful information
www.centralsy.org
www.RCBE.org
The Jewish Experience e-mail
Marilyn - educator@centralsy.org Julie – mitkadem@centralsy.org