



Religious School
Parent Handbook

2017-2018
5778

B'ruchim HaBa'im!

Welcome!

On behalf of the teachers, the Education Committee, and myself, welcome back to another year at Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School.

By enrolling your children in our school, you are giving them a solid base upon which to build their Jewish lives. Parental involvement is crucial to the foundation of any age child's Jewish identity. Together, we hope to build a strong school community within our synagogue.

Our curriculum is an integrated program incorporating Jewish holidays, Hebrew prayer, study of Torah and major texts as well as history and a love of Israel. These topics will be covered through story, song, art, critical analysis and family education. We look forward to working with you to insure a successful Jewish educational experience creating a community of learners.

If you have any questions, or would just like to stop by and say "hello", please do. I look forward to meeting you.

B'Simcha,

Rabbi Ronald Hauss

Religious School Director



Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School Mission Statement

Congregation Beth Shalom strives to be the center for Jewish education in the Santa Clarita Valley. Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School challenges each student to develop their Jewish identity through a modern exploration of Judaism. Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School fosters love for our Jewish heritage, and what it means to be a responsible member of the Jewish community at home and abroad, in an environment that is rooted in Conservative Judaism's philosophy, ethics, and values. This love of our heritage is also taught through a deep connection to Israel and an appreciation of the Hebrew language. Students attain academic and personal success through a rigorous and relevant curriculum that is supported by positive relationships within the school community.

Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School Vision Statement

Students at Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School experience engaging, creative, and active learning in an environment that is nurturing, positive, and conducive to building lasting relationships and friendships. Students become life-long learners, making Jewish continuity more meaningful. Students are active participants in the community, strengthening contemporary American Jewish life.

Class Schedule

Our CBS School hours are as follows:

- Religious School Classes: Sunday 9AM to 11:30AM
- Hebrew School Classes : Thursday 4PM to 6:30PM and Sunday 9AM to 11:30AM

Attendance

Students must attend at least 70% of their class sessions. Students exceeding 30% absences will be required to get private tutoring to bring them up to class level.

Kippot

All boys are required to wear kippot. Girls may also wear kippot if they so choose.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Training

All policies, rules and regulations regarding Bar/Bat Mitzvah are contained in a special Bar/Bat Mitzvah packet available in the synagogue office. All requirements are the responsibility of the parents and the student.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates must have successfully completed at least five years of instruction at Congregation Beth Shalom or a recognized Hebrew School program. Children transferring from other Jewish schools must demonstrate an equivalent knowledge, understanding and fluency in the subject areas of Hebrew language, Jewish people, Jewish life and religious practice as those students who have attended the Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School. All Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons will be conducted outside regular classroom time.

Conferences

Mandatory parent conferences will be scheduled halfway through the year to review your child's work to date and to answer any questions you may have. Conferences may also be set up at other times as needed or requested by the parent, teacher or director of the religious school. Please do not hesitate to call if you have a question or concern.

Parking Lot

When dropping off your child, please park your car and walk your child to their classroom. When picking up your child, once again, please park your car and wait for your child to be dismissed from their classroom and walk them to your car.

Early Pick Up Policy

For your child's protection, if you need to pick up your child early, you must come to the office to sign them out. They will meet you in the office.

Late Pick Up Policy

Sunday sessions end 11:30AM. Religious School ends on Thursdays promptly at 6:30PM. All students picked up more than 15 minutes late must be picked up from the office.

Code of Conduct

The CBS Education Committee has instituted a Code of Conduct and dress code for our school. Students are asked to strictly adhere to both.

1. Be respectful of others and their property.
2. Use only appropriate language.
3. Show respect for people in authority (i.e. teachers, principal, Rabbi).
4. Bring kippot, books and supplies to class each day.
5. Assignments must be completed in a timely manner.
6. No food, drink, gum or candy in class.
7. Appropriate classroom etiquette should be maintained.
8. No electronic games, head phones, CDs or toys on campus.
Cell phones may not be used during school hours.

Regarding Electronic Equipment

All students deserve an environment that is conducive to learning. It is the policy of Congregation Beth Shalom that **all cell phones and electronic equipment be turned off during religious school hours, including break.** If a parent or anyone needs to contact a student during religious school, please call the office at (661) 254-2411. We will always have someone to answer phones and deliver a message to a student at the appropriate time.

If a student is found to be using a cell phone or any other electronic equipment, in any capacity during school time, it will be taken away from the student. The student's parent may sign for it in the office.

Dress Code

The act of study at Congregation Beth Shalom deserves respect. We begin by coming dressed appropriately. Clothing must not be torn and may not have offensive language or artwork. Hats may not be worn during class sessions.

Boys - No "low-rider" pants. Shirts must cover chest and stomach.

Girls - No revealing clothing: No spaghetti straps, no tummies showing, no short-shorts.

Discipline

We at Congregation Beth Shalom believe in a positive approach to classroom discipline based on mutual respect for the needs and expectations of the students, teachers and school. When a student's behavior becomes detrimental to the learning process, however, the discipline policy will be enforced. This policy is as follows:

1st Occurrence - The first time a child is sent out of class for disciplinary reasons, they will have a meeting with the religious school director regarding the inappropriate behavior. The student will create a written record of the incident, which will be reviewed with the Religious School Director.

2nd Occurrence - The student must write a description of the disciplinary incident and the teacher must sign it. This notice is to be signed by the parents and returned on the following school day. Parents will be called if the note is not signed and returned.

3rd Occurrence - Parents will be called and a conference will be scheduled with parent, student, teacher and director.

4th Occurrence - The student may face suspension or other appropriate action.

Please be aware that this is a basic policy and may be adjusted to deal with special circumstances. If an event has occurred in the student's life that may affect their behavior, please inform the director immediately so that the appropriate steps can be taken to alleviate the problem.

Family Education and Participation

By participating in the religious school programs, your child's grade level Shabbat service and your Family Education Day, not only will you be able to share in your child's Jewish educational experience, but you will also be showing your child that Judaism has an important place in your own family's life. We ask each parent to volunteer at the school. Sign up with the parent volunteer coordinator.

Kosher Food List

Congregation Beth Shalom is a Conservative Congregation and adheres to the traditional dietary laws as prescribed by the Conservative Movement. When sending food to the Synagogue, please keep these guidelines in mind:

Acceptable

- ◆ All fresh fruits and vegetables
- ◆ Juice, milk marked with kosher symbol
- ◆ Any product marked parve
- ◆ Products marked with a kosher symbol
- ◆ All foods for parties must be kosher and approved by the Religious School Director or Rabbi

Unacceptable

- ◆ Meat or chicken of any kind, even if it is kosher
- ◆ Children may never sell food on the school premises

There will be a ten-minute break during each class session. The parent council will sell snacks for 50 cents per item. Also, please note that the students may not bring food or drink into the classroom. No gum whatsoever on synagogue premises.

Homework and Class Preparedness

Hebrew school students are required to come to every class with books, notebooks, pencils, kippot and any other necessary supplies that they may have brought home the previous class. Having a special backpack or book bag for Hebrew school is helpful in keeping class materials together. Make sure that all books and backpacks are clearly labeled with your child's name. Class work missed as a result of coming unprepared will have to be made up at home.

Homework, when given, is reinforcement and enrichment and is always relevant to the material being studied in class.

Religious Policies

Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School curriculum and religious practices are a product of the Conservative movement. The synagogue school encourages the families of its students to participate in a full Jewish life, including participation in the synagogue and its programs. The school believes that a child's commitment to Judaism is fashioned both by their home environment and the school.

The Religious Committee of Congregation Beth Shalom is charged with the determination of religious policy in the school, with the rabbi as the ultimate authority on all questions of Jewish law. No action may be taken in contradiction to the decisions of the Committee of Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly.

Service Attendance

In Judaism, religious services are experiential, not a subject that can be known through “book learning”. In order for the students to be knowledgeable in the area of t’fillot (prayers), they need to experience synagogue services.

Jewish life is a family experience. We encourage you to attend services regularly with your children. Each class will be participating in either a Friday night or Saturday morning service once during the school year.

Report Cards

Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School will send home report cards in January and June. Report cards are meant to provide the parents with information pertaining to the student’s academic progress, attitude, as well as classroom and service attendance.

Student Information

Medication:

Please make sure that all student information is kept up to date. This includes emergency and doctor phone numbers, along with medication changes or additions. N Students may not carry and dispense their own medication while on synagogue property. All medication must be kept in the office where it will be dispensed. All medication must be clearly marked with a doctor’s instructions. Pills in a plastic bag with oral instructions are not acceptable.

Conferences:

If any questions or problems should arise concerning your child’s participation in the religious school program, please arrange a conference with your child’s teacher as soon as possible. Please contact the Religious School Director if more help is needed. We attempt to make your child’s religious education as positive and pleasant an experience as possible. You can aid us in achieving this goal by being involved in your child’s Jewish education, and by making sure that the guidelines set forth in this manual are followed.

Youth Groups

Participation in Jewish youth groups is an excellent way of developing a positive Jewish social identity. Congregation Beth Shalom offers three major youth group programs. For more information, please contact the youth group director.

Maccabees	Grades 1 - 3
Kadima	Grades 4 - 6
USY (United Synagogue Youth)	Grades 7 - 12

Emergencies

Safety is a primary concern to all of us at Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School. Please be certain that the student's emergency form is filled out and updated each year.

Policy and Procedure Agreement

I/We have read the Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School Manual in its entirety and have taken special notice of its policies and procedures concerning school operations and student requirements and expectations. We have reviewed the student's expectations with our child/children who will be attending this school.

After a complete understanding of the policies and procedures of the Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School, I/We agree to all its terms and provisions.

Print Student(s) Name(s): _____

Print Parent(s) Name(s): _____

* * * * *

Student(s) Signature(s): _____

Parent(s) Signature(s): _____

Date Signed: _____