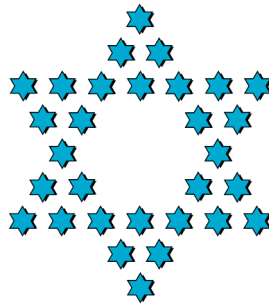


WESTCHESTER JEWISH CENTER
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Hebrew High School Handbook 2009-2010



Aleza R. Kulp
Education Director

Seth Young
Assistant Principal

Jeffrey Segelman
Rabbi

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Associate Rabbi

Alan Sokoloff
Cantor

Judy Herbst & Sherry Gench Thaler
Co-Chairs Board of Education

Rina Beder & Jayne Kligman
HHS Committee Chair

Goals

The Westchester Jewish Center is committed to the concept that a Jewish Education is an ongoing process that does not end with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience. It is the goal of the synagogue to provide an academic and experiential program to students in Eighth through Eleventh grades. We provide a nurturing teen-friendly atmosphere in which students can learn, socialize, pray, and eat dinner together in our building with our staff. It is our goal to support our students' Jewish growth during their teen years and as they prepare to leave for college.

Tuition

Our tuition for the school year 2009-2010 is \$760 for all WJC members. For non-members tuition is \$912. This includes the cost of books, programs and dinner.

Policies

Attendance

With only a small amount of time each week available for classes, we hope all of our students attend classes. Our High School has tried to take into account the many "pulls" tugging at our students for their time. However, we hope the pull toward a Jewish Education will be of an equal level of importance in their lives.

Our faculty will take attendance each week in both the required and elective courses. Students who have been absent for 3 weeks in a row will be notified that they have missed several weeks of school and may need to make up missed work. If there are special circumstances for a short period of time that a student will be missing school please speak directly with the Educational Director.

Hebrew High School students who work as aides in the Religious School are not permitted to miss more than 4 sessions per semester. If a student is unable to meet this requirement, he/she will be notified that they will be unable to continue working in the Religious School.

Arrival and Dismissal

Upon arrival at 6:00 pm, all students are to enter the building from the sanctuary entrance. This is to ensure the safety of all our students. All other entrance doors to the building are locked. Students are dismissed from the same entrance in our lower parking lot. WJC has hired a security guard who is stationed at this entrance to protect your children.

Inclement Weather

Hebrew High School will close for inclement weather if the Mamaroneck Public School system has closed. Please call the school office if you have any questions regarding the weather.

Behavior

Our Hebrew High School community is made up of students, faculty and clergy who eat, pray and learn together. We hope everyone remains respectful of one another, our building, and property. We try to teach our students the importance of *derech*

eret, the mitzvah of acting with consideration and respect towards our fellow classmates. The flexibility and optional times built into our schedule allow for socialization and free time. It is our belief that teenagers are responsible members of our community and will act in a respectful manner.

For the safety of everyone, students are not permitted to leave the synagogue grounds during school hours without the permission of the Educational Director. Once a student has entered the building, his/her safety and security is a primary concern of WJC. Therefore, students are expected to act in a safe and mature manner and follow school guidelines.

Students who choose to not act accordingly will be dismissed from class. The Educational Director will call the parents or guardians to discuss the issues regarding their child. If inappropriate behavior continues, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents, the Educational Director, and either Rabbi Segelman or Rabbi Steigmann. If behavior does not improve, students will be asked to take a leave of absence from Hebrew High School and will not be permitted to work in the Religious School.

Cell phones

Cell phones may be brought to school, but cannot be used during school class hours. If your child carries a cell phone, please remind them to turn it off and store it their school bag until after school. If cell phones are seen being used during school class hours they will be taken by the teacher and returned at the end of the day. If you need to reach your child during school hours, please call 698-2966. Our school secretary will be able to reach your child in case of any emergency.

Guests

We welcome any Jewish teenager in our area to visit our Hebrew High School. If your teenager would like to bring a friend with them to school please contact our school office to arrange a visit.

Recommendations

Members of our faculty would be glad to write any of our high school students a recommendation. We do ask that notification is given in a timely fashion (at least two weeks).

Faculty

Our permanent faculty consists of our Educational Director, Aleza Kulp, our clergy, Rabbi Jeffrey Segelman, Rabbi Moishe Steigmann, and our Assistant Principal Seth Young. In addition, we have adjunct faculty with various specialties who join us for a semester of the school year depending on the course, and their specialty.

Parent Involvement

Our Board of Education Hebrew High School sub-committee meets several times during the year to discuss a variety of issues that might occur in the school. We also discuss

parent/student programs, the school curriculum, and the Israel trip. Parents are encouraged and welcome to attend meetings.

Parents are also encouraged to become involved in our PA, the Parents Association. The PA helps to subsidize school and synagogue wide programs throughout the year. Such programs include the Purim carnival, and graduation.

Once each semester a unique program is planned which is geared towards families. It is our expectation that parents participate in each program so as to further encourage the educational experience of their children.

Different programs are planned for each semester so that we are able to appeal to the interests of all of our families. Notices will be sent home about each program. Programs in the past have included topics on Israel and the media, cults, group cooperation and building exercises, and American Jewish politics.

Israel Trip

Research has shown that visiting Israel as a teenager will play a large role in the commitment a person will have to Judaism as an adult. Teenagers who travel to Israel are given early in life a strong sense of Zionism, a love for Israel. If you are interested in learning more about our teens visiting Israel year, please speak with our Educational Director, Aleza Kulp.

Panim el Panim

This exciting and educational program brings Jewish high school youth together from across the country to Washington D.C. for a four day seminar to gain exposure to American government and the political process. Over the course of the seminar students will learn about Jewish community relations and the Jewish public policy agenda. They will be given the opportunity to participate in community service in the DC area and discuss how it relates to Judaism and the political world. This program offers students a first-hand experience in the study of relevant Jewish texts and values.

If you are interested in learning more about Panim el Panim please speak with our Educational Director, Aleza Kulp.

Teen Assistants

All of our Hebrew High School students, in good standing, are encouraged to work for WJC on Sunday mornings or weekday afternoons as aides in our Religious School classrooms. These are paid positions that encourage our teenagers to be responsible leaders and positive role models for our younger students.

All teen aides are expected to act as a *dugma*, an example for the others. At the discretion of the Educational Director, an assistant may be asked to discontinue working in the school if they can not act as *dugma*. Teen assistants are not permitted to miss more than four sessions of Hebrew High School during each semester. In addition, teen assistants are not permitted to bring outside guests with them to their assigned position as this may cause a disruption in the classroom.

Students may request the time and season that they would like to work. Due to the large enrollment in our high school and interest in working as a classroom aide, we can not guarantee a full school year position to any high school student. Class placement will depend on availability in a specific class and experience working as a classroom aide. We also can not always take into account that students be placed with friends. We encourage our teenagers to view their time in the Religious School as a job and not a time to socialize with friends.

Educational Leadership Institute (ELI)

Hebrew High School students in our eleventh grade that are in good standing may be invited by the Educational Director to participate in the Educational Leadership Institute. Students in twelfth grade interested in ELI must have completed their courses of study through eleventh grade and graduated Hebrew High School. ELI students meet with the Educational Director once a week and learn the basic skills and theories essential to teaching in a school. ELI students work in the Religious School as classroom aides and student teach twice per year as part of their course requirements. Upon successful completion of ELI, students graduate with a Board of Jewish Education Certificate to teach grades Kindergarten – Second grade in any Religious School.

Our congregation sets very high standards of eligibility for admission to the program. Each participating synagogue chooses students from the 11th and 12th grade class to invite to join the program. The standards and expectations are high! Students must be enrolled and have strong attendance in Hebrew High School. They must be a *dugma*, a role model, at all times for others.

Graduation

Upon completion of Hebrew High School in eleventh grade, at the discretion of the Educational Director, students will be granted a Westchester Jewish Center Hebrew High School Diploma. Please take a look at our school calendar for the date of graduation. ELI students will also receive special recognition for their accomplishments in Jewish Education and student teaching.

We see graduation as a significant accomplishment for our youth. It is the culmination of many years of hard work, time and effort. WJC takes great pride in the achievements of our teenagers.

Structure of school

The Hebrew High School meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 – 8:45 pm. Each student in our High School takes two classes each semester. One class is a required class determined by the student's grade level. The other class is an elective which students select from a variety of offerings at the beginning of each semester.

Upon graduation from WJC Hebrew High School each students will have successfully completed eight required classes and eight elective classes.

Hebrew High School Tuesday Night Schedule

6:00 pm	Dinner	Reception Room
6:30 – 7:30 pm	Required course	Assigned classrooms
7:30 – 7:45 pm	Minyan/ <i>Ma'ariv</i> service	WJC chapel
7:45 – 8:00	Break	Youth Lounge and/or Gym
8:00 – 8:45 pm	Elective course	Assigned classrooms
8:45 pm	Dismissal	Downstairs parking lot

Dinner

We offer an optional dinner at 6:00 pm for the entire student body. This is a wonderful time for students to be able to socialize with one another and talk with the faculty of the school. Usually we offer pizza, pasta, deli or Chinese food for dinner and, of course, always a special dessert! Dinner is included in tuition for the school year. Dinner also

provides an opportunity for our students to act as a community as they participate in the appropriate *brachot* before and after the meal.

Students are also permitted to play ball in our gym during dinner. Students who choose to play ball in the gym must wear appropriate shoes (sneakers) in order to be permitted in the gym. Students also are not permitted to play ball in our gym without adult supervision. Our faculty rotates supervising the gym during dinner.

Required classes

Required classes are assigned by grade. The curriculum is set by the Educational Director, Rabbi Segelman and Rabbi Steigmann. These classes, which are generally text based, will give our students a solid foundation in their higher Jewish learning. It is our hope that these classes will peak their interest in learning and expose them to text learning that they have not experienced before in Religious School.

Electives

In the beginning of each semester students will receive a list of elective class offerings. They will be permitted to list their first, second and third choices. We try to accommodate everyone's choices to the best of our ability. It may be necessary to limit class size in some electives. Our oldest students are given first priority.

Elective class time gives our students a chance to learn with teenagers in other grades and creates and expands our sense of a *kahal*, a community, within the High School.

Some of the electives we have offered in the past are kosher cooking, Israeli dancing, Discussions on Hate-Crimes, Week in Review, Judaism and Zionism together, Jewish Ethics, Women in Judaism, *Tzedakah* and *Gemilut Chasadim*, giving charity and acts of loving kindness towards others.

Minyan

Members of our Hebrew High School join the WJC community every Tuesday evening at 7:30 pm for minyan. Participating in the *Ma'ariv* service each week allows our students to perform the mitzvah of creating a minyan for those in our adult community who are reciting Kaddish. It is our belief that this reinforces to our teens the importance of being part of the greater Jewish adult community.

Students not only participate in the service, but are also encouraged to lead the community in our service. This helps to develop their leadership and prayer skills as they become a part of the adult community. Any student wishing to learn more about minyan should speak with Rabbi Steigmann.