



Westchester Jewish Center

Palmer & Rockland Avenues • Mamaroneck, NY 10543 • 914/698-2960 (T) • 914/698-3610 (F) • www.wjcenter.org

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021 5781



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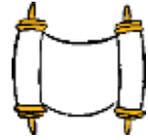
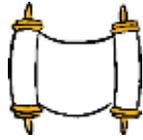


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It is a new school year, and while this year may look different than any other school year previously at WJC, our faculty continues to strive to offer a program filled with engaging texts and, creative learning and dynamic activities.

Our goal is to provide the best quality Jewish education for all children in a stimulating and nurturing environment. We strive to build an atmosphere for every child that creates a desire to learn and understand. As a school, we are guided by values Judaism teaches us. These values include *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world and *Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh La'Zeh*, we are each responsible for one another. These values along with the mitzvah of *Talmud Torah*, the study of Torah for its' own sake, are the principles that guide us as a community throughout the school year.

To succeed in our endeavor we need your help. I would like to encourage you to be as active and supportive as possible in your children's Jewish education. The more involved you become the more meaningful you and your children's experience here can be. Here are just a few ways in which you can get more involved at the Religious School:

- Stay informed! Open all communication from our Religious School and faculty.
- Support the WJC Parent's Association.
- Join the RS Parent Committee and take part in our meetings! All are welcome!

This handbook serves as a basic guide to our school both for remote and in-person learning. The information in this handbook should answer many of your questions about the coming school year.

I look forward to working closely with you and your family. Please feel free to be in touch throughout the school year with any thoughts, suggestions or concerns you may have.

Shanah Tovah! Wishing everyone a safe, happy and healthy New Year!

Aleza Kulp
Education Director and Synagogue Program Coordinator

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS

We at the Westchester Jewish Center Religious School endeavor to nurture the child in the context of the family and the community. We appeal both to the child's intellect as well as the child's heart. Our goal is to light the fires of life-long curiosity and love of learning in all our students. We encourage all children to participate in all aspects of religious ritual and celebration.

Educational Objectives:

- The ability to read Hebrew in print writing.
- The ability to be comfortable using the Siddur (prayer book) on Shabbat and Holidays. This includes vocabulary that reflects important concepts in Prayer and Holidays.
- A basic knowledge of the structure and meaning of the service.
- Knowledge of selected Shabbat and Holiday prayers.
- An understanding of the observance of Shabbat and Holidays and their meanings.
- The ability to identify Jewish home symbols and understand their functions and origins.
- An understanding of the observance of mitzvot and Jewish values.
- The development of positive ethnic and religious identification.
- A commitment to "*Kol Yisrael Aravim Zeh La'zeh*": All Jews are responsible for one another.
- An understanding of stories and key historical figures from the TaNaKh, the Torah, Neviim (Prophets) and Ketuvim (Writings)
- The ability to identify various laws with their correct moral behaviors.
- Knowledge of various time periods throughout Jewish history

Upon completion of Religious School we desire that our students believe:

- In God, in some way that is constructive.
- In the Bible as a source of wisdom and guidance for living.
- In themselves as proud Jews.
- In Prayer as a source of personal comfort and community connection.
- In Mitzvot as an ethical and rational way of life.
- In the centrality of the State of Israel.
- In Shabbat as a positive personal and family institution.
- In the value of Tzedakah.
- In the Holidays as a way to identify and connect to the past.
- In the Home and the Family as a primary focus of Jewish expression.
- In our tradition as an expression of Jewish identity.

Remote Learning

Weekly Schedule

Grade	Day	Time
Gan (Kindergarten)	Sunday	10:00 - 11:30 am*
Kitah Alef (1st grade)	Sunday	10:00 - 11:30 am*
*An elective will be offered weekly on Sunday mornings from 11:30 - 12:00 pm led by Gan and Kitah Alef teachers along with Betty Moallem, our Assistant Principal.		
Kitah Bet (2nd grade)	Sunday Wednesday	10:00 - 11:30 am** 4:00 - 5:45 pm
Kitah Gimel (3rd grade)	Sunday Wednesday	10:00 - 11:30 am** 4:00 - 5:45 pm
**An elective will be offered weekly on Sunday mornings from 11:30 - 12:00 pm led by various Religious School teachers.		
Kitah Dalet	Sunday Wednesday	10:00 - 11:30 am*** 4:00 - 5:45 pm
Kitah Hey	Sunday Wednesday	10:00 - 11:30 am*** 4:00 - 5:45 pm
Kitah Vav	Sunday Thursday	10:00 - 11:30 am*** 4:00 - 5:45 pm
***Music for 4 th - 6 th grade will be offered from 11:35 - 12:00 pm with our music teacher, Matt Baum. Hebrew support with various Religious School teachers will also be offered during the course of the year from 11:35 - 12:00 pm.		
Kitah Zayin	Thursday	4:00 - 6:30 pm

Procedure for Remote Learning

Parents are asked to review the following protocol with their child before remote learning begins in September:

- Students agree to log on to their virtual class on time.
- Students will only use their real name (Hebrew or English) during their virtual class.
- Students agree to start their video connection and be on camera so teacher can monitor every member of the class.
- Students will keep their camera on and sit in a non-reclining position.
- Students are asked to maintain the mute/unmute position as directed by their teacher.
- Students will only send relevant messages in the chat box. i.e. answers to teacher questions, links to pictures if asked, etc. No student will use the chat for private messages to classmates.
- Students should sit in a quiet area with minimal distractions during remote learning.
- Students should not be using other electronic devices during their remote learning unless directed by the teacher i.e. Kahoot.
- Students commit to acting in a respectful manner towards their teacher and classmates during virtual learning.
- Students are permitted to choose one background during their learning. Students are not permitted to change their background during class time.

PLEASE REVIEW WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)

Academic Program

GAN (Kindergarten)

This is a very exciting year for children in Gan as they begin to explore their Judaism. During the school year, Gan will learn stories in the Torah such as Noah's Ark, Joseph and his brothers and the Ten Commandments. As a culmination of their learning, children will create a booklet with their very own interpretation of the stories from the Torah. Intertwined with each unit the class will learn songs and Hebrew vocabulary related to each subject. Gan will begin their Sunday mornings with Tefillot (prayers) including Modeh Ani and the Shema. Students will sing the Alef Bet song as an introduction to the Hebrew language.

KITAH ALEF (1st grade)

As children enter 1st grade, we begin to discover as a community how the Jewish people are responsible for one another. By learning that we are commanded to help those that are ill, speak kindly about others, give tzedekah and welcome guests into our home and community, Kitah Alef will gain an understanding of various mitzvot and commandments. Children will explore how each mitzvah can fit into their personal lives through various activities including art, writing, stories and music. In addition to learning about mitzvot, Kitah Alef will continue to learn various prayers as they begin each Sunday morning with Tefillot (prayers). Students will also be introduced to various Hebrew vocabulary including weather, body parts, colors and numbers.

KITAH BET (2nd grade)

Just as it is written in Genesis, "In the beginning," so too is this a new beginning for 2nd grade students. In Kitah Bet, students begin attending Religious School on Wednesday afternoons in addition to their studies on Sunday mornings.

2nd grade students will begin their study of Hebrew reading skills. In conjunction with their Hebrew learning, Kitah Bet will begin to learn about Israel and find connection to our Jewish homeland. As the school year progresses, students will also be introduced to various *Brachot* (blessings) and learn the various ways we thank God for what we are given.

KITAH GIMEL (3rd Grade)

Kitah Gimel children continue the Hebrew reading skills they have learned in Kitah Bet. Over the course of the year, the students will learn how to read and write in Hebrew and participate in weekday tefillot (prayers). In conjunction with their Hebrew studies, students will explore the Book of Genesis and Exodus. As each chapter in Genesis and Exodus is taught students will be introduced to a variety of Biblical characters and the lessons they have taught us. These lessons will help to link students to the history of the Jewish people. During the course of the year, students will learn of legends and tales that Rabbis wrote after the Bible to help explain stories from the Bible.

The children continue to learn prayers in the Siddur. .

KITAH DALET (4th Grade)

Students will continue to progress in their Hebrew reading throughout the year. A variety of prayers will also be learned during the year which will reinforce the students Hebrew reading skills. In addition to Hebrew and Prayers, students will study the Book of Numbers, Prophets and Kings which helped to shape our Jewish history. The students will also research the geography of Israel and how it relates to our Biblical history. Students will study the history of such cities as Jerusalem, Tzfat, Haifa, Tiberias and Beer Sheva.

KITAH HEY (5th grade)

Our Jewish values are the principles on how we live our daily lives. In Kitah Hey, we will explore together Jewish values that relate to ourselves and our family. We will begin the year studying the value *Kevod Habriyot*, individual dignity. We are going to learn how we can have dignity in our lives and treat our family and friends with respect. Students will continue to discover ways Judaism teaches us to have *Shalom Bayit*, Family harmony in our homes and how we need to live a life of *Kiddushah*, Holiness as Jews. In addition to our study of *Midot*, values, 5th grade will begin to learn the Shabbat morning service including the Sim Shalom, Shalom Rav and the Amidah.

KITAH VAV (6th grade)

During the school year, 6th graders will begin to explore the Jewish values that are thought provoking and relevant to their lives. They will discuss what it means to be a good friend to others and how each student has a responsibility of *Tikkun Olam*, taking care of the world around us. In addition, 6th grade students will continue their Hebrew studies twice a week. During their Hebrew lessons, students will be introduced to the Shabbat morning Torah service. This includes the blessings before and after an Aliyah and the Haftorah and the prayers recited before we open the Ark.

KITAH ZAYIN (7th Grade)

In 7th grade students study two parts of our Jewish history that has not been studied during previous year. They will learn about the history of the Jews during the Holocaust and how this time period shaped our lives, as Jewish people. Students will also explore the establishment of the State of Israel and its' history since 1948.

Attendance

We are very limited with the amount of time we have with our students each week so therefore, continuity for each student is essential. Repeated absences can confuse a student and interfere with their learning and connection to the community. Remote learning begins promptly at 10:00 am on Sunday mornings and 4:00 pm on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. If a student is late or will be absent, please notify Aleza immediately via text (914) 772-1383 or email at educdir@wjcenter.org

Hebrew Support

For this coming school year, in addition to various Hebrew electives, our school will provide Hebrew support for those students who have difficulties or need reinforcement in Hebrew reading. This Hebrew support is for students with regular attendance who need an extra boost in their Hebrew reading skills. If a child is behind in their studies due to poor attendance, it may be recommended that a family find a private Hebrew tutor at home.

Parents that are interested in receiving Hebrew support on Sunday mornings from 11:30 – 12:00 pm need to communicate directly with Aleza so that our faculty can be prepared for the coming school year.

Kitah Bet and Gimel (2nd – 3rd grade)

Students in 2nd and 3rd grade who need an extra boost in their Hebrew letter and vowel recognition will be able to join in smaller groups with a member of our school faculty on Sunday mornings between 11:30 – 12:00 pm.

Kitah Dalet, Hey and Vav (4th – 6th grade)

Students will work in small groups on Sunday morning from 11:30 – 12:00 with a member of our Religious school Faculty. Students will be divided by reading level and not by grade level in order to give certain students more individualized attention.

Reinforcement at Home

Gan (Kindergarten)

Each week, our Kindergarten teacher will communicate with our families what exciting material is planned for the children for the coming week. Following our remote session on Sunday morning, it is then encouraged for parents to discuss with their child what they learned and if they have any questions about the material. This will help to reinforce the weekly material that is being taught on Sunday morning in Kindergarten.

Kitah Alef (1st grade)

At the beginning of the school year, 1st grade students will be given a set of packets that will compliment their learning throughout the school year. Our Kitah Alef teachers will communicate weekly with our families what material was covered and which packet should be explored and discussed as family at home in order to enrich the material in class.

Kitah Bet – Kitah Vav (2nd – 6th grade)

It is strongly encouraged that students practice Hebrew at home in order to reinforce the skills that they are studying during our weekly remote learning. Each student will receive a copy of their text book to practice reading at home and teachers will communicate weekly with parents as to what specific lessons each student should focus on for the following week. Students in 2nd and 3rd grade will also receive a code to a Hebrew app that coincides with their Hebrew book.

Electives

Throughout the school year, various electives will be offered to students in all grades. Electives compliment our weekly academic program and enrich each student in various subjects including Torah, Hebrew, Holidays, Jewish History and Culture. Electives will be offered on Monday and Tuesday afternoons either remotely or, if permissible, in small school groups at WJC. In addition, students in Kindergarten and 1st grade will be invited to join members of our faculty for an elective on Sunday mornings from 11:35 – 12:00 pm beginning in October. There is no limit to the amount of electives a student may participate in for the coming school year and all electives are included in the Religious School tuition. Families will receive emails throughout the school year about our various electives.

Shira (Music)

Gan through Kitah Gimel (Kindergarten – 3rd grade) will meet with our music teacher on Sunday mornings for a period of 20 minutes throughout the school year. Kitah Dalet – Kitah Vav (4th – 6th grade) will have the option of music as an elective each Sunday morning from 11:35 – 12:00 pm following their remote learning. Music enriches their academic program. Modern Hebrew songs as well as traditional Shabbat and Holiday melodies are learned during the weekly shira class.

Tefillot (Prayers)

As early as Gan (Kindergarten), students are introduced to various tefillot (prayers). Each grade will recite different Tefillot, at an age appropriate level, in the beginning of school on Sunday mornings and on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Students each week will also learn different melodies for the tefillot with Cantor Goldberg and explore their meaning with their teacher.

Classroom Aides

WJC teenagers in 11th and 12th grade are invited to be aides in the younger grades of the Religious School. Aides assist the teachers, work with students and serve as role models for the children. These are paid positions that encourage our teenagers to be responsible leaders and positive role models for our younger students. All aides are expected to act as a *dugma*, an example for the others. During our remote learning, classroom aides will engage with our students and assist the teacher with various lessons. Classroom Aides are not permitted to supervise students and monitor students in breakout rooms.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents Association (WJCPA): Our school is a partnership between the synagogue and the home. Our PA offers a variety of activities and opportunities for parents to learn and get involved in our school. We encourage you to join our PA and its many important projects. To learn more about our PA contact Marisa de Sa (516) 808-5137, Laura Grill (261-2327) or Mia Mandel (718-685-2209)

Religious School Parent Committee: The Religious School has its' very own Committee to discuss Religious School issues. Our committee co-chairpeople are Susie Miller (914-833-0330), Anne Rossman (914-231-7062) and Erica Sigel (973-219-4848)

Religious School Enhancement Fund: This fund exists for the benefit of the children and staff of the religious school. Special programs for the school, appropriate faculty gifts and opportunity for study for the teachers are some of the uses of the fund. When a family seeks an opportunity to thank or acknowledge a staff member, we encourage a donation to this fund.

.IN-PERSON LEARNING AT WJC

Given the ever-changing environment, we currently think it is in the best interest of our students and faculty to begin our learning remotely. At the same time that we are learning remotely, our leadership and I will continue to work together on different ways to possibly bring our children into the walls of the synagogue. We will do this while, of course, adhering to any NY State regulations and look to the WJC COVID-19 Task Force for guidance and recommendations.

The following section of this handbook explains Religious School with the hope of coming back into our building.

Enrichment Programs

The Religious School two-day per week formal classroom setting is complemented by a variety of enrichment programs that are a key part of the Religious School for each enrolled child. Each student in the WJC Religious School is required to participate *in four or more* enrichment programs over the course of the year. Enrichment programs are organized into the following three categories:

- **Classroom-based learning.** Electives vary by grade and run anywhere from 3 weeks to the full school year. For example, topics include Nature and Judaism, Lessons on Kashrut, Hanukkah Fun, Mezuzzah Madness and Building Jerusalem with Lego.
- **Synagogue-wide programs.** These programs are designed to engage the whole family in the WJC experience. Friday night family services and dinner, Purim services, Simchat Torah celebrations are just a few examples of the lively opportunities WJC offers to families in our congregation.
- **Family activities.** We encourage the Religious School community to expand their Jewish educational experience beyond the school and the synagogue. Performing mitzvot as a family, conducting Jewish rituals as a family at home, and visiting a Jewish museum are highlights of family activities.

Each student is required to complete an enrichment program in each of the three categories. Each student may choose their fourth enrichment program from any of the three categories.

Religious School Shabbat

Religious School students with their families are encouraged to come on a select number of Saturdays (dates can be found on the school calendar). It is our hope that the whole family will come to WJC to celebrate Shabbat on the Religious School Shabbat mornings.

Various options for our children and families include:

- 1) Traditional Shabbat Service (children with a grownup) in the sanctuary.
- 2) Simple and Soulful (children with a grownup) in the Activity Center led by our clergy.
- 3) Learner's Service is for children on their own or with their parents.

Resource Room

Our school provides resource help for those students who have difficulties or need reinforcement in Hebrew and/or Judaic studies. Students may work individually with one of our teachers or in small groups. The sessions do not last more than 15-20 minutes, once a week. The resource teachers work closely with the classroom teacher. Students are referred to the Resource Room for additional instruction upon recommendation of the classroom teacher, with approval of the Education Director.

Resource Room is for students with regular attendance who need an extra boost in their Hebrew reading and/or writing skills. Students who have fallen behind in their Hebrew skills due to excessive absences are not sent to the Resource Room for support. If a child is behind in their studies to do poor attendance, he/she may need to be tutored at home privately.

Shira - Music

Gan through Kitah Dalet (Kindergarten - 4th grade) have music each week for a period of 20 to 30 minutes throughout the school year. Kitah Hey (5th grade) will have music for the first half of the school year. Music enriches their academic program and adds spirit to the classroom. Modern Hebrew songs as well as traditional Shabbat and Holiday melodies are learned during the weekly shira class.

Library

The synaogue library is open on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons to our Religious School students. Students in Kitah Bet and Gimel visit the library as part of their curriculum.

Hebrew High School (grades 8th - 11th)

Students from grades 8 through 11 meet once a week on Tuesdays, from 6:00 - 8:00 pm. For further questions please contact Rabbi Cornelia Dalton at (914) 698-2960

Classroom Aides

WJC teenagers who either attend Hebrew High School or a Jewish Day School are invited to be aides in the younger grades of the Religious School. Aides assist the teachers, work with students and serve as role models for the children. These are paid positions that encourage our teenagers to be responsible leaders and positive role models for our younger students. All 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 cannot act as *dugma*.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Children learn best by experience. Educational activities are not just limited to the classroom environment. We provide diverse and varied programs for our students.

School Prayer Services

Students in Kitah Bet through Kitah Zayin come together to pray the Mincha (afternoon) service on weekdays and participate in Shacharit (morning) service on Sunday mornings. Children in Gan and Alef learn some of the simpler prayers in their classrooms. This encourages the students and faculty to begin the session in the proper frame of mind for religious studies.

Class Trips

School trips are taken when unique opportunities can enhance the Religious School curriculum. As part of their curriculum, students in 7th grade visit the Museum of Jewish Heritage to enhance their unit on the Holocaust. Institutions we visit often request deposits weeks ahead of time and bus transportation commitments are made well in advance. We therefore ask that parents assure attendance and return the permission slip into the Religious School office no later than its due date. Any cancellation made by individual families can not be reimbursed by the synagogue.

Family Programs

Family Education Programs provide an opportunity for parents to spend quality Jewish time together with their children. Parents are invited to learn with their children and share in creative activities, to see and to hear what their children are learning and to spend some time in adult study. The programs are relevant to the class curriculum and enable the parents to become partners in the learning. Dates for these programs are listed in our school calendar. Please make sure to check your e-mail for further information!

Gemilut Chassadim/Righteous Acts of Giving

Helping others is an important Jewish value. Each class has its own Tzedakah box and each student is asked to contribute from her/his own money each day. Our students help to decide how their Tzedakah money is allocated.

Class Services

Students in Gimel through Vav have been assigned a Shabbat where they invited to participate in various aspects of the service. Please check the School Calendar for your child's service date.

Kitah Zayin Recognition

At the end of the school year, we will recognize our 7th grade students who have completed their years of Religious School. We will acknowledge all of our students for their hard work and dedication. Please see our Religious School calendar for the date and time.

COMMUNICATION/STUDENT EVALUATIONS

You are encouraged to acquaint yourself with the school curriculum, your child's teachers and the many programs offered by the WJC Religious School through both formal and informal means of communication. Please do not hesitate to call the Educational Director should you have any questions or concerns.

E-MAIL

Each week our families will receive a weekly e-mail from our Religious School secretary with reminders of our upcoming programs. In addition, we will send program notifications and various classroom communication from the teachers via e-mail. Each month families will receive a summary of what students are learning in the classroom. If a parents would like to meet with their child's teacher any time during the course of the school year, please contact the Education Director to schedule a meeting. Teachers also have their own e-mail account for parents to communicate directly with their child's teacher.

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION

Students' achievements are constantly evaluated by the classroom teacher. During the course of the year, a progress report for each student will be prepared and sent home to each family.

SCHOOL POLICIES

ATTENDANCE & LATENESS

Due to the limited time of Religious School, the subject of one lesson may be continued over a number of class sessions. Repeated absences can seriously interfere with a child's progress. We request that parents prevent and discourage absences unless absolutely imperative. During the week, the school days begins promptly at 3:45pm and conclude at 6:00pm. On Sunday, classes begin at 10:00am and conclude at 12:00pm. Please see that your child arrives on time for the beginning of each class.

Attendance Policy:

1. A maximum of ten absences during the school year is permitted. It is the responsibility of each family to make sure that their child has received and completed the class work that they missed in class.
2. If there is excessive absenteeism, the parent shall receive notification from the Assistant Religious School Principal. In order to ensure continuity in the child's Jewish Education, the Assistant Principal may suggest a home study program at the expense of the parents for the child.
3. Parents who are concerned that their children may not be able to attend Religious School on their designated day(s) of school on a regular basis must consult with the Educational Director. Any change to a student's Religious School schedule will be made at the sole discretion of the Educational Director on a case by case basis. In determining whether a change to the schedule should be made, the Educational Director may consult with one or more of the parent(s), the Religious School teacher, the Religious School special educator, and if necessary, any appropriate outside professionals.
4. In order to ensure the continuity of the curriculum, no child is permitted to attend class on a different day or time without permission from the Education Director.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (Sunday and Weekday)**Arrival for all Religious School Students on weekday afternoons**

- All students are to enter the school building via the upper parking entrance.
- All other doors to the synagogue will be locked to maximize security.

Sunday mornings

- All students are to enter the school building via the sanctuary entrance/lower parking lot entrance.
- All other doors to the synagogue will be locked to maximize security.

Dismissal for Gan - Kitah Alef (Kindergarten - 1st grade) Students

- Students will be dismissed from their classrooms. Parents will need to park in one of our designated parking lots and enter via the lower parking lot entrance.
- If you would like an older sibling to pick up your child please provide the teacher written authorization in the beginning of the school year.

Dismissal for Kitah Bet - Kitah Zayin (2nd - 7th grade) Students

- All students in grades 2 and up will be dismissed from the lower parking lot entrance. Religious School faculty will supervise the students as they await pick up.
- Cars must enter via Palmer Avenue and line up around the circle so that children can enter the passenger side. At no point will any child be allowed to cross any lanes of traffic to reach any car.
- All cars in the pick up line will exit via Palmer Avenue.

- Any parents or drivers who do not wish to wait in line in their cars to pick up Religious School students must park in a designated parking area and come to the lower parking lot entrance to pick up their children.
- Do not enter the pick up line via Rockland Avenue.

Please note the following

We do not rope off our Rockland Avenue entrance so that cars may park in the parking lot area off of Rockland Avenue. However, cars will not be permitted to enter or exit the dismissal car line through Rockland Avenue.

EARLY ARRIVAL

Supervision on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons beginning at 3:00 pm is provided by WJC for students in 2nd - 7th grade. Students are supervised by the Assistant Religious School Principal each afternoon.

EARLY DISMISSAL

In order to ensure safety, no child will be dismissed early without written permission or a phone call from the parent to the school office. Students will be dismissed only if a parent or a parent representative picks up the student in person; children will not be released from class to wait outside. No exceptions will be made.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Religious School is automatically canceled when Mamaroneck public schools are canceled on weekday afternoons. Please note this includes any notifications from the Mamaroneck public schools that afterschool programs have been cancelled. If, however, we decide to cancel school when Mamaroneck public schools are open, our office will call the various schools and they will announce that there is no religious school. Please trust your gut instincts and call the office if you have not been notified by phone and feel that there is a problem with the weather. Do not drop off a child and leave until you determine that the building is open.

On Sunday mornings, in addition to an email, the Religious School will be sending a text message notifying parents of school closures for snow days.

SNACKS/KASHRUT

Students who come to Religious school directly from Public Schools are often hungry and in need of a snack. Students should bring their own Kosher snack to school.

WJC Religious School is nut-aware and does not service or allow any food containing nut products in the classrooms. It is important to note that Westchester Jewish Center is not a nut-free building. Please help us by not sending food items that may contain nut products to school.

In addition, please ensure that any snacks or food brought into the school/ synagogue are properly marked kosher in keeping with the Jewish dietary laws. No food prepared at home may be brought into the Center. Please do not send your child with food in a Ziploc bag other than fruits or vegetables. All food needs to be in its' original package.

If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact Rabbi Arnowitz or Rabbi Dalton.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones may be brought to school, but our policy is that they are not to be used during school hours. Teachers will ask students to turn off their phones and put away in their school bag. All phones will be returned to each student before school dismissal. If you need to reach your child during Religious School hours, please call our office at (914) 698-2966 and our Religious School Secretary will be able to give them a message.

SAFETY

Fire and lockdown drills are performed several times throughout the school year for the safety of the children. Parents will be notified in advance of any drills and notified upon completion.

VISITORS

If any person would like to visit our school, please schedule a visit with our Educational Director.

HOMEWORK

We recognize the existence of public school work and outside activities that take up much of your child's free time. We would like to ask you to encourage students in 2nd grade through 6th grade to practice their reading, as practice strengthens their reading skill. We would be happy to provide you with material so that your child could also practice at home. This material would not involve a parent to know Hebrew. It would just involve time and focus for your child.

BOOKS & SUPPLIES

Students are always required to bring their textbooks with them to class unless otherwise advised. They should also bring pens, pencils, and notebooks as required by the teacher. All are encouraged to bring their own personal Kippot to Religious School. Please double check that your child is equipped with these materials before leaving the house.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

WJC prides itself on keeping the children in our congregation a top priority. Their health and safety are always a main concern for us as a staff and community. We understand that all of the children in our school are likely vaccinated, however, we want to take this precaution to ensure the safety of our children.

A copy of all immunization records from your child's physician is required. Each family may submit a copy via email (scanned or photograph), mail or drop off a copy anytime to the WJC office.

WJC RELIGIOUS SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

The staff at the WJC Religious School work with parents and educational professionals to provide a productive and safe learning environment for all of our students. Students and teachers are expected to behave in a way that exemplifies the concept of "Derech Eretz," proper respect. On rare occasions, however, a student makes it difficult or impossible for the teacher to lead the class and for the other children to learn, or otherwise behaves in a manner that is not consistent with the exemplification of "Derech Eretz" towards our teachers, administrators, school, institution, building or facilities. Our discipline policy is intended to be implemented only in those unusual circumstances where a child will not adjust his or her behavior to the requirements and safety standards of the Religious School.

1. In the event a student is disruptive in class, which shall constitute behavior which, in the opinion of the teacher, is detrimental to the respectful work environment in the classroom, the teacher will speak directly to the student. In the event that the student continues to act in an inappropriate or disruptive manner after having been spoken to previously, the teacher shall alert the Educational Director. The Educational Director shall immediately notify the student's parent or guardian to discuss the behavior. The parent is strongly encouraged to speak with his or her child regarding this incident.

Upon notification that a student's behavior has been disruptive for the third time, the Educational Director will require a meeting with the parent, student, teacher and Educational Director and, if the parent so requests, with a Rabbi. The purpose of the meeting will be to determine appropriate measures to correct the disruptive behavior. The student shall not be allowed to return to school until the meeting has taken place and a solution acceptable to the Educational Director is determined.

If the student is allowed to return to school and exhibits disruptive behavior for a fourth time, the student shall be suspended. While suspended, the student shall complete a "mitzvah project" under the supervision of the student's parent, in consultation with the Educational Director. The student may return to Religious School after no fewer than 30 days from the date of suspension, provided that the student has completed the mitzvah project. In addition, the student is responsible for learning the material covered in his or her class during the suspension. Should tutoring be necessary as a result of the suspension, it shall be at the parent's expense.

Upon return from suspension, if a student exhibits disruptive behavior for a fifth time, the student shall be suspended for the remainder of the school year. The student may

return the following year. Tuition will not be refunded for any portion of the school year for which a student was suspended.

2. If a student exhibits any other form of behavior deemed disruptive in the sole discretion of the Educational Director while attending Religious School, including (without limitation) defacing school property, acting disrespectfully to teachers, administrators or any WJC staff member, etc., such student shall be subject to such disciplinary action as the Educational Director shall deem appropriate in her sole discretion.
3. If a child has acted in any way that the Educational Director or Rabbi feels is dangerous or poses a safety risk to the children in the school, his or herself, the school staff, the WJC staff or any aspect of the school environment, immediate suspension will be imposed. The length of suspension and whether the student shall be allowed to return to school will be at the sole discretion of the Educational Director.

Generally, the discipline policy shall not affect any student's ability to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at the WJC Synagogue; however, all Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates are always subject to the discretion of the senior Rabbi.

Parents/guardians of any student who is suspended shall meet with the senior Rabbi to discuss alternatives in their child's Jewish education.

WJC SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY YOUTH SERVICES

WJC provides religious services for children of all ages. Services run from 10:45-11:45AM each Shabbat and on all holidays (except for Simchat Torah where children are encouraged to join the main congregation). Children in each age-appropriate service will spend time reviewing the customs and meaning of some of the Shabbat prayers as well as learn to sing the individual prayers. Children are encouraged to lead parts of the service.

Torah for Tots This Shabbat morning program is geared for children in Nursery School through Kindergarten. Through play, music and dancing children are introduced to the delights of Shabbat. Parents are encouraged to remain with children for this special hour. Kiddush follows the service.

Youth Service: Becoming a "regular" in our service can be a positive Jewish experience which can last a lifetime and will certainly contribute toward a child's development as a responsible Jewish adult. These services are geared for children in 1st – 6th grade. Check the WJC Weekly Shabbat Announcements for weekly topics and lessons.