

שופר KOL שופר SHOFAR

BEIT BINAH / TICHON

Parent and Student Guide
2017-2018 / 5778



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Congregation Kol Shofar's Beit Binah/Tichon! We are looking forward to an exciting year filled with meaningful learning, good fun, and shared growth.

This guide will provide guidelines for our year together, helping us to make it a successful and positive experience. Please review this information and discuss it together as a family. Your awareness of these guidelines and your help in adhering to them will ensure that we all enjoy an outstanding year in Beit Binah/Tichon together!

L'Shanah Tovah,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Steinberg', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rabbi Paul Steinberg
Interim Director of Life Long Learning

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THE BEIT BINAH/TICHON APPROACH

Etz Chaim Hee... it is a Tree of Life for all those who grasp it, and all who uphold it are blessed. Its ways are pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.

- Proverbs 3:17-18

Being Jewish is not merely what we are, but how we are. Judaism provides us with a dynamic view of life, infusing everything with meaning and connecting each of us with a sense of being part of something much bigger than ourselves alone. It encourages a joyful manner of living, it fosters an enduring commitment to prayer and study (*Tefilah* and Torah), and it promotes a sensitivity and respect for others and the world, leading to the desire to take responsibility for each other and ourselves (*Hevra* and *Gemilut Hasadim*). This Jewish view of life directs our attitudes and behavior, ultimately, guiding us to become self-knowing, productive, and good human beings.

Beit Binah/Tichon seeks to guide each child's development in acquiring his or her own positive sense of Jewish identity. Positive Jewish identity is developed and acquired through 1) gaining reverence for and actively participating in Jewish practices and traditions; 2) gaining both a broad perspective and certain depth of Jewish knowledge through study of Hebrew Bible, rabbinic literature, and Jewish history; 3) appreciation and active study of the Hebrew language; 4) appreciation, celebration, and study of the State of Israel; and 5) the practice and habit of *tzedakah* and *gemilut hasadim* (acts of loving-kindness).

Beit Binah/Tichon supports and encourages warm and positive relationships between students and their teachers, as they are among their most important Jewish role models. Furthermore, we strive for creative, active, dynamic classroom environments, emphasizing social interaction and cooperative learning.

Beit Binah/Tichon is a model of *K'lal Yisrael*, valuing the entire community of the Jewish people. We understand our primary goals include helping students, teachers, and parents, along with the rest of Congregation Kol Shofar, to connect to one another as a vibrant, Jewish community. Moreover, we celebrate diversity in our student body and school community. We hold the utmost respect for all Jewish backgrounds and practices. The school is coeducational and egalitarian, providing equal opportunity for boys and girls in every respect to their Jewish and spiritual lives.

THE BEIT BINAH/TICHON PROGRAM

PRE-K/KINDERGARTEN – GRADE 12

Attending Beit Binah/Tichon

Arrival

Beit Binah begins at 4:00 PM on Wednesdays and at 8:30 AM on Sundays, unless there is a publicized change. Tichon begins at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays. We suggest that students arrive approximately 5-10 minutes beforehand. If parents or guardians park in the parking lot, they must escort children until they arrive at the synagogue entrance. Safety is always one of our chief concerns.

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive to school and class on time. A student arriving 20 minutes late is deemed tardy. Should a student arrive late, s/he must check in to the Kol Shofar office with a parent's note explaining the tardiness. Tardiness will be excused when a student is late due to illness, dangerous road conditions, or other reason deemed acceptable by Kol Shofar Administration.

Absences

Good attendance and punctuality are critical to effective learning and socialization. If your child will be absent, please call the Kol Shofar office by 3:30 PM on Wednesdays or 8:00 AM on Sundays.

1. Absences: A student is permitted up to 10 absences in the school year. Further absences may result in a student being dismissed from the school. Students are responsible for missed work during an absence. Any day of school that a student misses 1 hour during school time, the student is considered absent.
2. Tardiness: Three tardies are equivalent to one absence and will be added to the number of absences a student has accumulated. A student leaving class 20 minutes early will also be considered tardy.

Any tutoring necessitated by absences or tardiness, excused or unexcused, is at the financial responsibility of the student's parents.

Parent Guidelines

Visitors

Parents or other visitors may visit classrooms only with prior permission and knowledge of the classroom teacher or administrator. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend *Tefilah* (communal prayer) or *Kehillah* (community circle).

Dress

Parents should always be mindful of appropriate attire when at school, especially for *Tefilah* or for volunteer opportunities.

To reduce classroom disruption, please deliver student clothing articles (e.g., jackets, sweaters, *kippot* or change of clothes) to the Kol Shofar office. These items will be delivered to the student's classroom by an office staff person.

Carpool

Drivers should never use cell phones or have children or pets on laps when driving carpool.

Beit Binah Days

“No School” Announcements

If school is canceled for some unforeseen reason or emergency, an email and phone call will be sent by 12:00 PM on weekdays and 7:30 AM on Sundays.

Lost and Found

Each month, Lost and Found items will be sorted and those that were not claimed, after a note has been sent home, will be given to a worthy charity. Students will pay \$1 for each item retrieved from Lost and Found at the end of each month.

Messages

The Kol Shofar office staff is not able to leave the office to deliver messages to students. In the case of an emergency, messages can be left with staff and they will be delivered to the student or the student's teacher at the earliest convenience.

Telephone Use

Students may not use telephones unless given special permission. Students who bring cell phones must keep them turned off and put away during Beit Binah/Tichon hours. Cell phones may be used after dismissal. Cell phones will be confiscated if this policy is not strictly followed.

Toys, games, Ipods, etc.

Potentially unsafe equipment and other items not necessary for Beit Binah/Tichon should not be brought. If special permission has been granted by a particular teacher or for a specific event, the item in question should be used only as directed. Otherwise, such items may be confiscated.

Student Dress

Student clothing must be appropriate for a place of study and prayer. Clothing should be clean and in good repair. Boys must wear *kippot* or other appropriate hats during Beit Binah/Tichon hours. Girls are welcome to wear *kippot* if desired. Discretion should be exercised regarding any slogans displayed on clothing.

The following attire is considered inappropriate for Beit Binah/Tichon:

- clothing made of light weight or “see-through” material

- cut-off shirts, muscle shirts, or shirts showing any part of the midriff
- spandex or cutoff shorts
- pants with holes or tears
- clothing advertising liquor or cigarettes
- clothing displaying sexually suggestive, vulgar, or violent slogans or designs
- skirts shorter than 3” above the knees

Any student found to be inappropriately dressed will be asked to call home for a change of clothing or offered something from the Kol Shofar office. The student will not be able to attend class until a change of clothing is made (or unless otherwise permitted by the Director).

Our Community

Communal Behavior and Values

Beit Binah/Tichon is dedicated to helping students grow in their moral character and their responsibility to others in our community. We are guided by Jewish *middot* (values) such as: caring, citizenship, holiness, responsibility, justice, respect, and integrity. Such Jewish values help enrich school experiences and form the guiding principles of discipline. Living by these *middot* will instill the values and character traits vital to becoming productive and considerate citizens.

Discipline

Discipline issues will be handled by the classroom teacher and the Director. Parents will be called on for support should an issue persist. *See Appendix A* for the Behavior Management Policy.

Behavior for Field Trips

A student is expected to conduct him or herself in a manner that reflects the enduring Jewish values of Kol Shofar and Beit Binah/Tichon. Those students who are unable to behave appropriately will not be allowed to participate on class trips or field trips.

Kashrut and Food

Kashrut

Kashrut (the Jewish dietary laws) is one of the pillars of Jewish practice and life; it is one of the most important ways of making our behavior holy. Beit Binah/Tichon serves students across the entire spectrum of religious observance and Kashrut. While we completely respect each family’s personal observance and spirituality at home, we must maintain a standard of Kashrut that is inclusive of all our families that is guided by the principals of the Conservative Movement.

Shared or Distributed Food

Any time food is shared or distributed, such as served snacks or gifts of food and candy, the food must be dairy (not meat) and must absolutely be certified as kosher, with an appropriate *hechsher* (kosher symbol). Please refer to the list of approved *hechshers* at <http://kolshofar.org/about-us/rental-information/kiddush-kitchen/kashrut-policy/>

Allergies and Other Food Prohibitions

Out of concern and consideration for students with life-threatening allergies to peanuts/nuts/nut products, please do **not** send any products containing nuts to Kol Shofar.

Communication

Contacting Faculty Members

Parents should contact teachers or administrators any time they have a question of immediate concern. Messages can be left at the Kol Shofar office. All staff members will do their best to return calls within a 24-hour period. Kol Shofar employees will not conduct school business on Shabbat or *chagim* (Jewish holidays on which school is closed). Please do not call teachers at home unless given permission to do so by a specific teacher.

*Parents are responsible for updating the Kol Shofar office with any change of contact information. Please call the office at (415) 388-1818, ext. 100.

Emails and Letters Home

School information is often updated and reminders are given through emails, letters, and school announcements. Please be sure to read emails and letters, as they allow you to be a part of the Kol Shofar community, thereby ensuring that students will gain the most enriching experience possible.

Health Issues

Health, Safety, and Welfare of Students

Health and Emergency forms must be completed and on file before a student is allowed to attend Beit Binah/Tichon or assigned to a teacher.

Students who are ill should not be sent to Beit Binah/Tichon. Following an illness, a student should be free of fever for 24-hours before returning to Kol Shofar. Those with a communicable disease, such as strep throat, pink eye and impetigo, must be on anti-biotic for 24-hours before returning to Kol Shofar. Contagious diseases, such as chicken pox or lice, must be reported to the Kol Shofar office as soon as possible. Notes will be sent home to members of the student's class, informing parents that a classmate has a communicable disease.

Children with illness or conditions that prevent them from participating comfortably in Beit Binah/Tichon activities, or which require more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, should not be sent to Beit Binah/Tichon.

Such conditions include:

- Fever, lethargy, irritability, or breathing problems
- Diarrhea or stools containing blood or mucus
- Vomiting 2 or more times in the previous 24-hours
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever, unless cleared by physician
- Chicken pox, until all lesions and sores have scabbed over
- Head lice, until after first treatment (including removal of all visible nits)
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed

In the case of an accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If we cannot reach a parent or guardian, we will call the emergency contact and/or the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. If we cannot reach a parent or a designated emergency contact, the Director or staff member will make the necessary decisions about the care of the child, provided a signed medical authorization is on file with the Kol Shofar. Parents are expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expenses. For students' protection, please keep the Kol Shofar office up to date with phone numbers, emergency contacts, and other pertinent medical and safety information.

Medication

All medication used by students must be administered by a designated adult and/or administrator. For prescription or non-prescription medication, a student must have a parent's consent on file. Prescription drugs will be given only they are sent in the original container and accompanied by a note from a parent indicating the time of administration (child's name and dosage should already be on the label).

If your child takes medication every day, please be sure to provide the Kol Shofar with a 3-day supply of the medication. All medication should be delivered in a ziplock bag labeled with child's name, directions for use, as well as EpiPens and asthma sprays.

APPENDIX A:

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

At the Beit Binah/Tichon, our approach to classroom management is proactive and based on developmentally appropriate logical consequences. Teachers create community standards and systems within their classrooms to reinforce respect and caring for all within the learning community. If a situation requires further intervention, parents and administrators will participate in resolving the issue. This may include removal from class or from the program.

Some situations are handled individually within classroom settings unless the problem reoccurs. These include:

Tardiness
Dress code violation
Having food, drink, or electronic devices in classrooms
No *kippot* (*kippot* are required for boys)
No *siddur* during *tefilah*
Disrespect or inappropriate language
Disruptive talking
Misconduct or horseplay in class, or on school property

Other situations which might compromise the safety of the child or others in the school are handled by administrators, and families will be called immediately. These include:

Repeated classroom disruptions
Cutting class or any other activity while at school
Possessing items posing a safety risk (e.g., smoking materials, pocket knives, etc.)
Any action that necessitates removal of a student from the class at teacher's discretion
Leaving school property without permission

If a child puts him or herself or others at risk, s/he will be removed from class and sent home immediately. If a child is sent home more than once, s/he is placed on probation and at risk of expulsion.

Stealing
Fighting
Possession of contraband on campus (weapons, drugs or alcohol).
Willful destruction of synagogue property
Bullying of any form, including sexual harassment

A student whose general attitude and conduct demonstrates an unwillingness to abide by the values of the Kol Shofar may be dismissed from the student body.

Beit Binah / Tichon Responsibility Agreement 2017 – 2018 Educational Year

Beit Binah/Tichon is a welcoming place for the children of our community to engage in Jewish learning. Our approach to classroom management is proactive and based on developmentally appropriate logical consequences. Teachers create community standards and systems within their classrooms to reinforce respect and caring for all within the learning community. Our commitment to providing a respectful environment that guides each child toward his or her positive sense of Jewish identity must be balanced as well by our students' commitments to model responsible behavior. The following Responsibility Agreement has been developed in order to ensure that a warm and positive relationship between students, families, educators and administrators will be maintained via our discipline policy. Please read the elements of the Agreement carefully, as your receiving of this indicates the acceptance of the Agreement. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Kol Shofar office. Thank you!

It is expected that all Beit Binah/Tichon students will:

- Dress appropriately
- Cooperate with and respect one another
- Take responsibility for their behavior
- Use appropriate language and refrain from verbal harassment of others
- Develop, share and model a sense of responsibility
- Respect the privacy and property of others
- Communicate in a constructive manner and be courteous towards one another
- Resolve conflicts without physical contact

The following series of steps will be implemented should a discipline problem arise:

1. Teacher Intervention: Teacher will manage disruptive behavior in the teaching environment. Teacher will notify administration of inappropriate behavior and actions taken to resolve the issue. These situations include:

Tardiness
 Dress code violation
 Having food, drink, or electronic devices in classrooms
 No *kippot* (for boys)
 No *siddur* during *Tefilah*
 Disrespect or inappropriate language
 Disruptive talking
 Misconduct or horseplay in class, or on school property

2. Administration/Family Involvement: Problems persisting beyond attempts at resolution from Step 1, or situations involving students whose behavior compromises safety, will be handled by the Director. In certain situations, the family of a student will be called immediately. A meeting will be scheduled with the student, family, teacher and Director to discuss the problem and set goals for future positive behavior. Documentation of the meeting will be placed in the student's file. These situations include:

Repeated classroom disruptions
 Cutting class or any other activity while at school
 Possessing items posing a safety risk (e.g., smoking materials, pocket knives, etc.)
 Any action that necessitates removal of a student from the class at teacher's discretion
 Leaving school property without permission

Zero-Tolerance Infractions:

Serious infractions, such as those identified below, will result in immediate removal from class and dismissal. A student sent home more than once is placed on probation, and is at risk of expulsion. A student whose general attitude and conduct demonstrates an unwillingness to abide by the values and Responsibility Agreement of Beit Binah/Tichon may be dismissed from the student body:

Stealing
 Fighting
 Possession of contraband on campus (weapons, drugs or alcohol).
 Willful destruction of school property
 Bullying of any form, including sexual harassment

APPENDIX C:

SUGGESTED JEWISH READING & WEBSITES FOR PARENTS

Ideas and Beliefs

What do Jews Believe?: The Spiritual Foundations of Judaism, David Ariel

Tough Questions Jews Ask, Ed Feinstein

God in Search of Man, Abraham Joshua Heschel

Jewish Thought Today, Louis Jacobs

Daily Life and Practice

A Tapestry in Time, Nina Beth Cardin

A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice, Isaac Klein

Lifecycle

Celebration and Renewal: Rites of Passage in Judaism, Rela M. Geffen

Finding Each Other in Judaism: Meditations on Rites of Passage from Birth to Immortality,
Harold M. Schulweis

Holidays

Celebrating the Jewish Year: Fall Holidays, Paul Steinberg

Celebrating the Jewish Year: Winter Holidays, Paul Steinberg

Celebrating the Jewish Year: Spring and Summer Holidays, Paul Steinberg

The Jewish Holidays, Michael Strassfeld

Culture

The Cambridge Dictionary of Judaism and Jewish Culture, ed. Judith Baskin

The Modern Jewish Canon, Ruth Wisse

History

Jewish People: Jewish Thought: The Jewish Experience in History, Robert Seltzer

Parenting

Blessing of a Skinned Knee, Wendy Mogel

Teaching Children About God, David Wolpe

Websites

General and Expansive Information:

1) My Jewish Learning – www.myjewishlearning.com

2) Jewish Virtual Library – www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

Calendar

1) Hebrew Dates and Converter – www.hebcal.com

News & Other Interests

1) Jewish Telegraph Agency – www.jta.org

2) American Jewish World Service – www.ajws.org

3) American Jewish Committee – www.ajc.org