

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I've always enjoyed 'Back to School'. It's not that I didn't enjoy the beach, camp, swimming, outside sleepovers and all that summer implies, but there was also something so intriguing about the unknown of the approaching school year. There was always that special week in August when you knew 'the letter' was coming and you'd wait each day for the mail carrier. Unless, of course, you had the worst parents in the world, and you were away on vacation when one of the most important pieces of mail was arriving. I'd like to apologize to my children (again) for being that parent.

Which teacher, what classes, what we are going to learn and most importantly who are my classmates going to be?

I can't solve all these impending mysteries, but here's some of some of what will be going on in both our schools this year. Every grade will cover, at the appropriate level, how to be a mensch – for themselves, for their families, for their communities, and for their world.

K-1: Hebrew Word of the Day, Storytime, Learn about the Holidays, Crafts, Physical Activity Time, Tour the Synagogue and Meet Our Staff, music biweekly

2: Ease into Hebrew Learning, Learn about the Holidays, Crafts, Jewish Symbols, Israel, music biweekly

3: Concentration on Torah stories, Hebrew reading, Israel, Hebrew 1:1 sessions (optional), music biweekly

4: Concentration on General Judaism - Prayer Books, Tanach book, Holidays, review Hebrew, simple prayers, the 4 Questions, Hebrew 1:1 sessions (optional), *T'filah* biweekly

5: Being a Mensch, Shabbat Prayers and Customs; Hebrew in 1:1 sessions, *T'filah* biweekly

6: Jewish Lifecycle, Israel; Hebrew in 1:1 sessions, *T'filah* weekly

7-12: Holocaust and anti-semitism, *T'filah*, a mature look at some of the holidays, teen discussions of how to be a mensch with guest speakers to talk about how their Judaism impacts their profession. This year we are excited to announce a partnership in programming with Ramapo College's Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies!

Family School has a rotating schedule of curriculum for the 3rd/4th and 5th/6th grades. If you want to know more about this unique program, check in with Director of Education, Rebecca McVeigh. She can explain and also put you in touch with current Family School parents.

School Calendar: is available on the website – www.bethhaverimshirshalom.org, under the Religious School tab

Community Service Hours Available: Whether it is helping with clerical projects or assisting our teachers in the classroom through the *Morei Derech* program – which can be volunteer or paid – we love seeing our students engaged with their younger counterparts!

Reading back through I realized I didn't mention one of the most important parts of our upcoming school year. For those who know me, you're probably thinking it's the shopping. I absolutely enjoyed the first night of school visit to our local Ben Franklin for notebooks and folders, and I am still wondering what happened to my best First Day of School Outfit *EVER* (red Sassoon jeans and a fabulous striped top), but really, it's the parents, grandparents, guardians, and caretakers who get the students to school on time, engage with them about what they're learning and make their Jewish education an important piece of their journey.

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