

Mission of Religious School

In keeping with the Conservative Jewish movement,

the mission of the Religious School is to provide

an Enjoyable and

Effective education

with an emphasis on Religion,

Hebrew language,

Culture,

and Tradition

to foster Jewish pride,

Lifelong-learning,

and Commitment to Jewish life.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy on Enrollment in and Attendance at CAS Religious School

Congregation Ahavath Sholom encourages its member families to provide a Jewish education for their children by enrolling them in the Religious School. Religious School classes are available for children from pre-school through 12th grade. The Religious School strives to meet the needs of all its students. Classes are small, instruction is personal, and enrichment programs are offered. Each class builds upon the one before, and includes skills-based age-related instruction.

There are several milestones within the educational cycle, among them Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Confirmation, and graduation. We view these as integral highlights of a Jewish life, rather than final achievements. We believe Jewish education is a lifelong process.

In order to gain maximum advantage from the instruction available and to enjoy the benefit of being part of a Jewish community, students need to attend Religious School on a regular basis. This includes Shabbat and holiday services.

For students enrolled in the Religious School, the following standards apply:

- All students need to attend at least 75 percent of class sessions in order to receive credit.
- Beginning in 3rd grade, students must attend and participate in Shabbat and holiday services. Students in grades 3-6 must attend Youth Congregation 75 percent of the time. (If a student attends services out of town s/he will receive credit by providing the Director of Education with documentation such as a program from the service within two weeks of the event.)
- During the year immediately preceding the event the student must attend at least 13 Erev Shabbat (Friday evening) services and 26 Shabbat morning services. The 26 services can include attendance in either Youth congregation or Adult services.
- Parents must notify the school (by telephone, by letter, or by e-mail) if a student will be absent from class. Students who miss class (excused or unexcused) will need to make up the work. Teachers will be in contact with parents regarding attendance and missed assignments.
- If a student is unable to keep pace with the regular program due to excessive absences (excused or unexcused), the director will recommend that the family hire a tutor from among the faculty so that the student can quickly regain lost ground. This assistance will be at the family's expense.
- Religious School teachers may assign homework at any time. Students are expected to complete assignments in a timely manner.

For families whose children are not currently enrolled in the Religious School who wish to celebrate milestone events at the congregation, the following standards apply:

- Each newly-enrolled student must take a Placement Test to determine the appropriate level of instruction needed.
- If currently enrolled in and attending the Hebrew Day School but not the Religious School, s/he will be exempt from the required Religious School attendance as long as s/he passes the appropriate grade-appropriate placement test. Families may contact the Director of Education for a copy of the expected outcomes for each grade.
- Shabbat attendance requirements apply to all youth, whether they attend Religious School, Hebrew Day School or both.
- If a family chooses not to enroll their child in Religious School, (and the child is not enrolled in a Jewish day school in the area at that time), then any Bar/Bat Mitzvah service they desire to hold must be scheduled for a Monday, Thursday, or Sunday/Rosh Chodesh (weekdays when the Torah is read). Shabbat morning B'nai Mitzvah are reserved only for those students enrolled in and attending the CAS Religious School.*The Rabbi, Ritual Director, Director of Education, and chairs of the Education Committee and Ritual Committee will convene to make decisions on any extenuating circumstances that may arise.

LEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS

Ann Cobert is Coordinator of Education for the 2009-2010 school year

Sunday Teachers are:

Kindergarten- No Class

1st grade – Stephanie Beckman

2nd grade – No Class

3rd grade - Judi Massis-Leventhal

4th grade – Judi Massis-Leventhal

5th grade – Ann Cobert

6th grade - Hedy Collins

7th grade – Carol Paul

8th grade – No Class

9th grade & Confirmation (12:00-1:00) - Rabbi Zeilicovich

Music - Javier Smolarz

Computer Lab-All Classes-Ted Hoffman

Wednesday Teachers are:

Level 1 Hebrew – Carol Paul

Level 2 Hebrew – Judi Massis Leventhal

Level 3 Hebrew – Nancy Stansbury

Computer Lab-Ted Hoffman

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

1. TIMES—PLEASE NOTE NEW TIMES FOR WEEKDAY CLASSES!!!

GRADE	DAYS	TIMES
Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2	Sunday	9:30 am-12 noon
Grades 3, 4, 5 6	Sunday Wednesday	9:30 am-12 noon 5:00-7:00pm
Midrasha 7,8 and 9	Sunday	9:30-12:00
Confirmation	Sunday	12:00-1:00

2. STUDY HALL

For your convenience, we are instituting a study hall program for students who need to arrive more than 15 minutes early for classes on Wednesday. Students must report to the Library and will not be allowed to enter the Education Wing until 4:45. These students will have adult supervision in the Library. They must bring something to study or read. **It will not be a playtime.**

3. ATTENDANCE

It is our policy that students attend classes 75% of the time to matriculate. Students who do not attend the required number of sessions will be required to complete class work in order to progress with their peers. Each time a student misses class, his or her teacher will be calling parents immediately after class. If you know that your child is going to be out, please notify the office as soon as possible.

4. LATE ARRIVAL

Please help maintain classroom atmosphere by making certain that your child arrives on time. Since weekday class time is shortened from previous years (See above), it is imperative that students arrive on time. If you are going to be late, please talk to your child's teacher, the Lead teacher for your grade level, or contact the office as soon as possible.

On Sundays, students in K - 2nd grade report to the Fun Room. On Sundays, students in grades 3-6 will report to the Fun Room for school opening.

5. EARLY DISMISSAL

If your child needs to be dismissed before the end of class, we must have a note to that effect. Children in all grades must be picked up from the classroom. **Because of security concerns, children will not be allowed to wait outside for rides.**

6. PICKING UP YOUR CHILDREN

Please join us the last five minutes of every school day to sing *Hatikvah*. Students will be dismissed from the Fun Room *after they sing*. Children will be taken to the main exit of the School wing for dismissal to cars. Parents need to line up in their cars to pick up children. If you are running late to pick up your students, please notify the office at 817-731-4721.

FEES

School tuition should be paid in full by the first day of school or a payment plan should be worked out with the Shul office. If a family has a financial hardship, attempts will be made to help them with tuition. If you have any questions about your financial responsibilities, please contact the President of CAS or Treasurer.

OFFICE HOURS

The Synagogue office is now open on Sunday from 8:30-1:30, Monday-Thursday 9:00-6:30 and until 7:00 on Wednesday and Friday from 9:00-1:00. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the synagogue at 817-731-4721.

HOMEWORK

Homework may be assigned if a teacher feels it is meaningful for his or her class. We appreciate your support and encouragement with these home assignments.

PARENT CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS

Report cards/Progress reports will be sent home three times during the school year. However, teachers are always available to discuss your child's progress at any time. Parent-teacher conferences may be initiated by parents or teachers at any time during the year. If you wish to arrange one, please call the school office.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Teachers will go over rules for their class on the first day of school. In the event that a student does not follow the rules, the teacher will ask the parent to assist. If problems continue, the lead teacher will be advised and the parent and student will meet with the Teacher and Coordinator. The next step will be a conference with the Rabbi and Chair of the Education Committee.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The CAS Religious School Faculty along with the Education Committee have developed projected student learning outcomes for each grade level from K through 10th grade. Students are expected to achieve these goals before progressing to the next grade. Teachers document each student's progress toward these goals. Within the first couple of months of school, you will receive a packet containing the Learning Outcomes for your

child's grade. If you would like to see the outcomes for other grades you are welcome to come into the office and go over these with the Lead Teacher for your child's grade.

A portfolio is kept on each student. Samples of student work as well as documentation of progress toward meeting the Learning Outcomes is contained in these portfolios.

RESPECT

Respectful behavior towards teachers, fellow students, administrative personnel and building staff is expected from all. Any other behavior is not acceptable. Parents will be contacted if problems arise.

DRESS CODE

Because much of our curriculum involves the study of Holy Texts, it is expected that students dress in a respectful manner. Boys are required to wear a Kippah at all times while they are in the building. Clothes should be in good repair and fit well. Students should not wear tank tops. Shorts and skirts should come to at least mid thigh length. No belly buttons should be seen. This policy will be strongly enforced.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

Classes will automatically be canceled when Fort Worth Independent School District closes school or dismisses early due to inclement weather. If school is canceled on weekend or after, school director will contact teachers, who will then contact students.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All of our students are very important to us. We strive to work with each student so that he and she can achieve optimal learning. If a student has special needs, **please** notify the school office so that we can insure that the proper techniques are in place to maximize learning.

If your child has any types of allergies, it is also important that the school be aware of this to prevent putting a child at risk.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

The Religious School provides students with needed texts and most supplies. Books which are lost will need to be replaced at student expense.

TZEDAKAH

Money will be collected each school day for *Tzedakah* as a way of teaching our students that being sensitive to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and helping them willingly and generously is an integral part of the Jewish tradition. In order to remind students of the importance of Tzedakah, students will be given the opportunity to choose a charitable organization to receive our Tzedakah.

We will also be collecting canned goods and non Perishable Food items to donate to the Food Bank. Your child will be bringing home information about our Food Drive during the second week of school and throughout the year.

There will be other Tzedakah projects through out the year as well. Students will be asked to occasionally donate pet food that will be used to feed the pets of clients of Meals on Wheels.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

TORAH TROOP

Torah Troop meets, approximately twice monthly, on Shabbat morning during the school year. Students in grades 3-7 have the chance to participate in services according to his or her level. Students should attend Torah Troop 75% of the time prior to Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Torah Troop meets from 9:30 am to approximately 12 noon. Parents are always welcome to attend services. Dress code is nice Shabbat clothes. Review dress code comments.

Dates for Torah Troop are: September 12 and 26, October 17 and 24, November 7 and 14, December 5 and 19, January 9 and 23, February 6 and 27, March 13 and 27, April 3 and 17, May 1 and 15. On May 16 the Torah Troopers will lead the Shabbat Service.

STUDENT LEAD SHABBAT SERVICES

Students in K-12th grade will lead Shabbat services throughout the year. This is an important learning activity for our students. Students in these grades will lead part of the service either individually or in groups. Dates to be announce when school starts.

TEACHER APPRECIATION SHABBAT

All of our Religious School Students will participate in the Shabbat service as a way to honor their teachers. Please make plans to attend these services so that you can personally thank the teachers who have worked so hard to give your child a great learning experience. An Oneg Shabbat will follow the service.

MILESTONE EVENTS

1. CONSECRATION

Kindergarten Consecration celebrates the beginning of Jewish Learning for our Kindergarten class. During the service, students can show that they have learned the Brachot or Blessings for lighting Shabbat candles, for wine and for challah.

2. SIDDUR CELEBRATION

At the end of the Third grade year after students have begun reading prayers, they receive their own Siddur. This year our Siddur Celebration will be **announced**. A family Shabbat Dinner will follow.

3. BAR AND BAT MITZVAH

Bar or Bat Mitzvah is scheduled according to the child's Hebrew 13th birthday. B'nai Mitzvah dates are given out approximately two years in advance and individual training for Bar or Bat Mitzvah begins about 6 months prior to date. For additional information about Bar or Bat Mitzvah, please contact the office. (Please see page 2 for our Enrollment and Attendance Policy.)

4. CONFIRMATION

Middle school and High School Students struggle with their identity. "Who am I?"; "What should I do with my life?"; "Where do I fit in?" The problem is compounded for Jewish Youth growing up in an area where they are the minority. The process of Confirmation, and those classes between 7-10th grades help Jewish Young People develop a strong Jewish Identity and help them to develop the skills that they need after high school. Besides simply sitting in class, it also gives students a chance to interact with other students as they discuss topics and at times are called on to defend their beliefs in controlled settings. Students will lead **Friday evening service on May 28, 2010**. The Confirmation experience culminates with the annual trip to New York. **Other Confirmation Expenses include price for Oneg for May 28, Flowers for May 28 and**

Gift to synagogue. This school year 9th & 10th Grades will be combined. At the end of the year, the 10th Grade students will be confirmed.

FOR POST CONFIRMATION STUDENTS

1. MADRIKHIM

Madrikhim are our classroom aides. *Madrikhim* must be enrolled in Confirmation as a 10th grader or have completed confirmation class at CAS. Our classroom aides work on Sunday or Wednesday afternoons, depending on the needs of our teachers and the schedules of our teens. *Madrakhim* are also required to attend monthly training sessions during the school year.

2. THE ROSE AND MAX PILA SCHOLARSHIP

High school Juniors and Seniors may apply to receive the Rose and Max Pila Scholarship and must use it toward a trip to Eastern Europe and Israel such as “March of the Living”. In order to be eligible for this scholarship, students are required to write an essay. An impartial panel will judge essays and the award will be presented accordingly. For additional information, please call the school office.

4. S.K.I.P. (Send Kids to Israel Program)

Our community offers a wonderful opportunity which can help you plan ahead for a post-Confirmation trip to Israel for your child. Each year, beginning with grade 4, you may contribute up to \$300 and the Jewish Federation of Fort Worth and Tarrant County will match that amount. Therefore, if you participate each year from grades 4 through 10, you will have accumulated \$4200, which has been set aside for your child’s trip. You do not have to participate every year; however, your child must be confirmed to receive funding from Federation.

Teenage trips to Israel have been proven to be important in maintaining Jewish identity in college and beyond. We hope you will seriously consider participation in S.K.I.P. Additional information and S.K.I.P. enrollment forms are available through the school.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY DINNERS

Congregational Family Shabbat Dinners will be scheduled throughout the year. Don't miss this opportunity for a very special Shabbat family experience.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee works closely with Education Coordinator in maintaining our Religious School Program and is responsible for establishing school policies. If you are interested in membership on this committee, please contact Ann Cobert, 817-798-4825.

LIBRARY

The synagogue library is located directly across from the Rashti Chapel. We encourage you and your children to take advantage of this wonderful resource. Books of Jewish content are available for circulation.

ADULT EDUCATION

We will have several Adult Education Classes this year. Watch for announcements in the CAS bulletin.