



ENJC Religious School Parent Handbook

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Our Philosophy

As we embark on the journey of Jewish life and learning, ENJC as other synagogues, strives to provide the best educational and celebratory experience possible. Parents, in partnership with teachers and educational leaders, can enhance and enrich the goal of building a Jewish identity. It is in the best interest of the child if the parent shares any unique learning or behavioral needs. ENJC will do its absolute best in providing a learning environment that takes into account all of the individual needs of its students.

Those who struggle with Hebrew language learning may be afforded an opportunity for 1:1 learning. Individual tutoring will continue as long as the students demonstrates a commitment to reach grade level by working outside the classroom.

Our School Motto

ל'מודי קדש באהבה

The study of Torah with love and devotion

This has, for many years, been our school motto, and we continue to strive to reach this lofty goal. We are unique in the fact that a warm and friendly atmosphere prevails throughout our school. Our students actually enjoy attending classes. Further, the greatest challenge in Jewish education is that our students should have a love, understanding, appreciation, and strong connection to their Judaism and heritage. Our goals can be summarized briefly as follows:

- Foster an understanding and appreciation of our heritage and values
- Achieve Jewish literacy including the ability to read Hebrew
- Create a familiarity with Shabbat, the Jewish calendar and the observance of the holidays
- Ensure that our children are more than comfortable with our prayers and synagogue services
- Create an innovative, interactive, engaging, hi-tech, pro-active atmosphere that will fully engage our students interests at all times.

Class Schedules

Pre-Gan (K-1st)	Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Gan (1st-2nd)	Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Bet, Daled	Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Aleph, Bet, Gimmel (3rd-5th)	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm
Daled, Hay (6th-7th)	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 – 6:30 pm

All Classes begin Tuesday, September 10th

Classes will begin and end on time. We expect our students to attend class on a regular basis. Late arrival and early pick-up are discouraged as it interferes with the learning experience of your child and the others in his/her class. To get the most out of your child's Jewish education, he/she needs to attend class at least 85% of the time, which calculates to ten absences for the year.

Early dismissal is disruptive to all. Please do your best to keep early dismissal to urgent situations only. If your child must leave early, please send an email or call the school at 631-368-6474. Parents/guardians must come into the religious school office and a staff person will get your child and ask you to sign out on the early dismissal roster. Parents are requested NOT to go directly to the classroom. Please make sure you have proper ID with you.

No child under any circumstances will be allowed to leave the school grounds unaccompanied while school is in session.

Students who are frequently late or excessively absent may be asked to complete extra assignments to ensure they learn the material covered during their lateness or absence so they can master the curriculum for their class.

School Closings

The religious school has a policy of closing when Commack and/or Elwood School Districts close their afternoon school programs due to inclement weather. We will make every effort to notify you via email. Cancellations will also be posted on the synagogue website at www.enjc.org, at www.news12.com and www.newsday.com.

Arrival and Dismissal

Please pull your car up parallel to the religious school entrance and let your child off. A staff member will be at the door until 4:35. After that, your child can ring the bell and be buzzed in by a member of our staff. Please wait until you see your child enter the building before leaving. Children should not be dropped off prior to 4:15 p.m. as our staff is busy preparing for classes prior to 4:15 p.m.

The following procedures help dismissal run more smoothly, and most importantly, safer for the children. Safety is, of course, our main concern. At normal dismissal, students will gather in the Beit Midrash with two staff members who will monitor car pool pick-up. Parents are, of course, welcome to come into the building to get their child from the Beit Midrash.

Food and Snack Policy

In our continuing efforts to keep all our students safe and to maintain kashrut in our school, the Education Committee of the ENJC Religious School has instituted the

following policy:

• **ENJC Religious School is a NUT-AWARE school**

We STRIVE to be a peanut and tree-nut free school! However, some foods may be made in a nut facility (challah, cakes, and cookies). Parents and students will be made aware in these cases.

- NO outside food is allowed to be brought in by students or parents, with the exception of bottled water.
- Students may purchase kosher nut-free snacks in the religious school hallway for \$1 each prior to the beginning of each school session. Students are not allowed to share these purchased snacks with another student.
- Teachers will be aware of food allergies among their students, as written on the “Food Allergy List” from information provided by the parent. The Principal will oversee all foods brought in for religious school holiday celebrations and observances and will notify the parents in advance what foods will be served. It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the Principal if there are any problems with these foods.

Questions/concerns regarding individual situations should be brought to the attention of our Principal, Ellen Marcus.

Books and Supplies

Students are expected to bring their Siddur and workbooks to every class session. In addition, students should bring pens, pencils, notebooks, folders, binders, etc., as requested by the teacher. Please double check that your child is equipped with these materials before he/she leaves for school. **It is strongly suggested that every student have a backpack used solely for religious school.** This will help your child develop positive habits regarding his/her religious school materials, and send a strong message that religious school is an important endeavor.

Please do not allow your child to come to school with any handheld/electronic devices. Use of cell phones, texting and video recording is prohibited during religious school hours and on Shabbat. If you feel that your child must bring a cellphone to religious school, we ask that it be turned off during school and kept in a backpack or coat pocket. If a student is found using a cell phone, iPhone or other device during religious school hours, it will be confiscated and kept in the religious school office for a parent to pick up. In the event a student needs to call home he/she will be making the call from the office.

Homework

We recognize the burden of public school and outside activities. At the same time, it is necessary to assign a limited amount of homework in the religious school. We request that parents encourage their children to spend the time needed to review his/her lessons. Some assignments require parent participation. These are meant to spark family discussions, to encourage transmission of family history from one generation to the next, reinforce the student's learning, and to enhance parents' own home observances of Jewish practices.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah, or righteous behavior, is an integral part of Jewish life. Students will be asked to contribute tzedakah money during each class session. We encourage the children to give of their own resources so that it is truly their contribution. We donate the tzedakah money to many worth organizations, both locally and in Israel.

Acts of loving kindness (Gemilut Hasadim) are highly encouraged both in the school community and in the outside community. Children are given the opportunity to participate in group mitzvah projects run by the synagogue.

Shabbat Attendance Requirements

At ENJC there is a strong partnership between home, school and synagogue; our collective goal is to lead our children to live meaningful Jewish lives. In the classroom, we teach children about prayer and about belonging to a holy community, yet the classroom experience can never replace actively joining a community in prayer on a regular basis. We believe it is vital that our children feel comfortable in the synagogue and competent in leading, following and participating in Shabbat and holiday services. It is our expectation that religious school students regularly attend Shabbat services, either Friday night or Saturday morning or Sunday morning, with an adult family member. In addition to attending religious school classes, attending our Shabbat Morning services will enhance your child's religious school experience. **Prayers that are introduced in the classroom need to be practiced and reinforced in order to be learned.**

All students in grades Alef-Hey are expected to attend 15 Shabbat and holiday services at ENJC September, 2019- May, 2020.

- Students in Alef, Bet, and Gimmel must attend at least ten (10) Family Services. The remaining five (5) may be Family Services, regular Shabbat morning services, Friday evening, or Sunday services.
- Students in Daled and Hay are strongly encouraged to attend Friday and Saturday Shabbat services to prepare for their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. We suggest that they attend at least ten (10) regular Shabbat services in the main sanctuary. The remaining five (5) may be Family Services, regular Shabbat morning services, Friday evening, or Sunday services.

- Pre Bar/Bat Mitzvah students must attend a minimum of fifteen (15) regular Shabbat morning services during the six (6) months prior to their celebrations. In accordance with guidelines set by the ritual committee, failure to fulfill this requirement may result in the suspension of Bar/Bat Mitzvah lessons.
- Students in Pre-Gan and Gan are not required to attend Shabbat services, but are encouraged to do so. Their names will also be proudly displayed on the colorful “Shabbat Attendance Poster” in the school hallway.
- There will be three index-card file boxes, marked “Friday,” “Saturday,” and “Sunday” on the table outside the main sanctuary. Inside the boxes, filed alphabetically, will be cards for each student.
- When your child arrives for services, he/she should find the appropriate file box, then find the index card with their name on it. Remove their index card and hand it in to either Rabbi, Hazzan or the person leading the service.
- Every Monday, our secretary will take the index cards, log the attendance, by date, in a computer file and note it on a bulletin board display outside the Religious School office. The cards will be replaced in the appropriate file boxes.
- Index cards should never be taken out of the building.

Religious School Family Services

Family Services meet in the Beit Midrash at 10:15 am and ends at 11:30 am. Shabbat morning services are led by Ms. Kravit and USY’ers and students may be dropped off. Parents are invited to stay and participate.

September 21	February 1 (Soup Shabbat)
October 19 (Lunch in the Sukkah)	February 2 (WWW for Daled and Hay at 9am)
October 21 (Simchat Torah at 6:30)	February 28 (Bet and Gimmel Shabbat)
November 16 (Hay Shabbat, Sat. Morning)	March 9 (Megillah Reading)
December 7	March 28
December 13 (Friday Night)	April 25
January 18 (Saturday Night)	May 1 (Aleph Shabbat)
January 25	

On Shabbat mornings when Religious School Family Service does not meet, we invite and encourage you to attend Shabbat services as a family in the main sanctuary.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately while in religious school and in the synagogue. **Every boy is expected to bring his own kippah (yarmulke) every day and to wear it at all times while in the building.** Kippot for girls are optional. Baseball caps, visors or other kinds of hats are not acceptable in school or in the synagogue. Sports uniforms (baseball, soccer, football etc.) may be worn on weekdays, but are not acceptable

on Shabbat. Very short shorts and skirts, bare midriff shirts, halter tops and T-shirts with questionable slogans also are not appropriate. For Shabbat, boys should wear a collared shirt and slacks. Girls may wear appropriate slacks or a dress/skirt. **T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, jeans, leggings and sneakers are not appropriate for Shabbat.** Any questions regarding proper attire should be referred to the Principal.

Behavior

Students are expected to exhibit respectful behavior towards teachers, peers, staff and school property at all times. Students are also expected to use their limited time in religious school seriously and conscientiously. In our religious school, every student has the right to learn. In our religious school, no student has the right to prevent a teacher from teaching or another student from learning. We believe that religious school students should demonstrate appropriate behavior at all times to ensure a classroom environment that promotes maximum learning opportunities for every student and encourages appropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior includes fighting, foul language, violent acts, bullying (verbal, physical, and cyber) and will not be tolerated. Please discuss these issues with your child(ren). If behavior problems arise, the student, parents, teacher, Rabbi and Principal will work together to resolve any challenges. The Torah teaches us that we should treat our neighbors as we want them to treat us. At ENJC, we hope that our students follow this teaching.

Tutoring Program

Those students who are in need of tutoring and additional support in Hebrew are identified by the classroom teacher. The tutor will maintain an individual record of progress for the child. Practice and review of the material assigned by the tutor is expected in order for the tutoring to continue.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah Program

We are extremely proud of our Bar and Bat Mitzvah program. Every effort is made to meet the needs of the individual student. Students will be assigned a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date during their 5th grade year. During both the 6th and 7th grade year, there will be an informational meeting for families to discuss the Bar/Bat Mitzvah in detail. Individual tutoring begins 6 to 8 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, meeting with the tutor on a weekly basis. The full Bar/Bat Mitzvah handbook is available via the ENJC website. Mastery begins with the Haftorah blessings, Haftorah portion, Torah blessings, Torah portion and various prayers, to be led by the student during the Friday evening and Saturday service. As students' progress, additional prayers and/or Torah reading may be added. In addition, students work with the Rabbi in the preparation and presentation of a D'var Torah, sharing lessons from their Torah reading. Students also engage in a Mitzvah project which is discussed and planned with the Rabbi.