PARENT-STUDENT COVENANT & HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

All parents are required to sign the Parent-Student Covenant & Handbook prior to student attendance at the Temple Emanuel Religious School (TERS).

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Temple Emanuel Religious School is to provide an experiential and meaningful religious education. We aim to foster a love for Judaism as a spiritual practice - a living, breathing tradition that is relevant to daily life and a source of ethics and spiritual fulfillment.

GOALS

Underlying our curriculum are three specific goals for our students:

(1) They have a great time and associate Judaism with positive experiences.
(2) They have personal experiences of learning and ritual that are memorable and spiritually meaningful.
(3) They learn skills they find useful in their everyday lives.

These three goals underlie our teaching at every grade level.

ENROLLMENT, SCHOLARSHIP AND TUITION REQUIREMENTS

Those who enroll their children in the Religious School must be members in good standing of either Temple Emanuel or Congregation Beth Chaverim. Members of Congregation Beth Chaverim must pay tuition for their children in advance through Temple Emanuel. To do so, please contact the Temple Office during regular weekday business hours (757) 428-2591.

Children of members of Temple Emanuel in good standing or who are new members of Temple Emanuel will receive a full tuition scholarship for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

However, in order to receive a tuition scholarship (full or partial) for the 2022-2023 school year, students must fulfil the following requirements this year (2021-2022):

(1) Attend 75% of classes.* This requirement applies equally to in-person and virtual sessions.

(2) Attend a minimum number of worship services dependent on the ages of your child/children (SEE SHABBAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS BELOW). This requirement may be met by attending in-person or virtual High Holiday, Shabbat, or festival services.

(3) Tuition for the 2022-2023 school year will be $800 for classes that meet twice a week and $400 for classes that meet once a week. Each attendance at a worship service** during this academic year (September 2021 – April 2022) will act as a $50 credit towards next year’s tuition reduction scholarship.

Example A: Amanda attends 75% of classes and attends 8 worship services during the coming academic year. Her tuition credit the following academic year will be $400.
Example B: David attends 60% of classes and attends 4 worship services during the coming academic year. He will be charged full tuition the following academic year because he did not meet the minimum 75% attendance requirement.

Example C: Zachary attends 75% of classes and attends 16 worship services during the coming academic year. He will receive a full tuition scholarship the following academic year.

Teachers are responsible for tracking attendance at classes. Members of the Executive Board are responsible for facilitating the tracking of attendance at services with the assistance of parents and their children.

* “Attendance” at a class means being present for the majority of a class.

** Please note that credits can only be applied to the following year’s tuition. Temple Emanuel runs roughly nine worship services a month, ranging from 1 hour to 2.5 hours in duration. Our Friday Night service is joyous and 1 hour in duration. For students preparing for Bar or Bat Mitzvah, our Shabbat morning service is likely to be better preparation for their life cycle celebration.

HANDBOOK – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This handbook is unique to the 2021-2022 school year. It takes into account that the Rabbi’s role is currently being handled by lay leaders of the congregation. It also takes into account adjustments that may need to be made in response to an ongoing public health emergency.

We anticipate beginning the 2021 school year with in-person Sunday School for all our PreK-12 religious school students and an online weekday Hebrew learning experience for religious school students in grades 4-7. In the following sections of the handbook, we have provided guidance as to how policies and procedures may differ depending on whether your children are in a traditional classroom setting with teachers in our Temple or whether your children are engaging in virtual learning at home. These stated policy and procedure differences will continue to apply if circumstances create a need for hybrid learning or complete virtual learning at home on Sunday School Days.

Students and parents must agree to abide by the health and safety procedures outlined by the Temple Emanuel Board of Directors for all students who participate in in-person learning. A separate document will outline all these applicable health and safety procedures.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

Our Religious School program includes Judaic Studies, Hebrew, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction. For Judaic Studies, the Temple Emanuel Religious School uses an experiential values-based curriculum that stresses Jewish literacy, critical thinking, and emotional resilience. Hebrew language instruction is integrated with the study of Judaics by each class’ teacher whenever possible. This instruction is supplemented with individualized instructional time on classroom computers running Hebrew instructional software and with our online syllabus for studying the traditional Hebrew prayers. For the 2021-2022 school year, weekday virtual learning of Hebrew will be individualized for every student grades 4-7.
Parent/guardian and student will receive information regarding the topics and achievement goals of the class at the beginning of the school year from each individual teacher. For further details of our curricula, please see our website.

BAR & BAT MITZVAHS

At Temple Emanuel we recognize that becoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a crucially important moment in your child’s education, while also recognizing that it is just the beginning of their Jewish journey. This life cycle moment is not a one-size-fits all affair. Instead we encourage our parents to choose the kind of ceremony that suits their child’s needs best and that provides ample flexibility for the experience they hope to create.

We ask that parents choose their Bar or Bat Mitzvah date nine months in advance, so that we can make sure that your child is on track for success. We meet with parents and students at the beginning of 6th and 7th grade, to ensure that expectations can be met, responsibilities understood, and so that any questions you have can be answered. You will receive a full outline of the Saturday morning service and a template for the ceremony “program.”

For the 2021-2022 school year, Kevin Tabakin will teach both 6th and 7th grade Hebrew in the classroom and as part of their formal preparation for Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Students are required to follow the provided homework schedule to continue their learning at home with the help of our unique online Tefillah resource, which makes learning Hebrew prayers much easier. Parents must ensure that their child is practicing frequently at home to ensure that they are making timely progress. Kevin Tabakin will evaluate each student's progress on an ongoing basis.

Kevin Tabakin will also begin teaching your child their Torah Reading and Haftarah around six months prior to the date you have chosen so that your child is well-prepared for their big day. They will also meet with her for roughly two months prior to their ceremony to deepen their understanding of Judaism and write their teaching/speech. Please familiarize yourself with the Shabbat service attendance requirements listed above. Bar and Bat Mitzvah students are required to attend the Shabbat morning service (or their ceremony service) three times a month prior to their ceremony.

All our Temple Emanuel educators consider it both a sacred charge and a privilege to guide each Bat & Bar Mitzvah student along this journey. It is this relationship that ensures your child will retain positive feelings for their Judaism long after the ceremony is done and encourages them to participate in our programs for 8th grade and beyond.

Tuition for Bar and Bat Mitzvah is $980. This covers tuition for an average of 20 sessions specific to your child’s reading and ceremony, alongside associated payroll costs and taxes.

Please feel free to contact Kevin Tabakin with any questions you may have about the process at ktabakin@gmail.com
SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Temple Emanuel aims to provide a Jewish education for all children who wish to receive one. Should your child require any special accommodations, a meeting should be arranged before the school year with their teacher and the educational director to create a plan to help your child succeed.

TERS requests that parents/guardians share any IEP if one is created in public school. If an IEP changes during the school year, the school will need to receive a copy of these changes.

TERS will make every reasonable effort to include all children within its regular program, however, due to school size, it may not be able to accommodate the learning differences of all children.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our school attendance policy includes both classroom and Shabbat service attendance. Depending on health and safety precautions, school may be in person, hybrid, or totally online during the 2021 – 2022 school year.

CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE

When TERS begins in Fall 2021 Sunday school is anticipated to be in person and Wednesday instruction will be online. Class hours will be as follows:

PreK- Third grades: Sunday 9am-12 pm

4-7th grades: Sunday 9 am-12pm and Wednesday/Tuesday online individualized instruction

For safety reasons, doors to the religious school are always locked. Parents must ensure that their child has entered the building before driving away and must come to the front door of the building to pick up their child.

For your children’s weekday individualized Hebrew instruction please ensure that your children are ready for school, appropriately dressed and seated in an appropriate learning space at their fully charged computer/device in time to smoothly begin class. Students should not use apps or games besides those teacher-designated for the duration of class.

For more details, please see our full school calendar.

During Fall 2021 if a return to online schooling becomes necessary, online school hours will be as follows:

PreK- 2nd grades: Sunday 9am-10am

Third grade: Sunday 10 -12 pm

4-7th grades: Sunday 10 am-12pm and Wednesday/Tuesday online individualized instruction
SHABBAT SERVICE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

• PreK-2nd grade are required to attend at least ONE SHABBAT SERVICE each month
• 3rd-5th grade are required to attend at least ONE SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE each month
• 6th grade is required to attend TWO SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES each month
• Bar or Bat Mitzvah students must attend THREE SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES each month
• *Students from Congregation Beth Chaverim may substitute attendance at CBC services.

ABSENCES

If your child will not be able to attend class either virtually or in person on a particular day, please contact your child’s teacher or call the Temple Office at 428-2591 in advance. Excused or unavoidable absences will not be counted towards your child’s attendance record.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE RECORD OF 50% OR LESS MUST BE REMEDIATED, EITHER BY INDEPENDENTLY CONTRACTED PRIVATE TUTOR OR EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE. AFTER FURTHER ASSESSMENT, IT WILL BE AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE SCHOOL AS TO WHETHER THE STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO PROGRESS TO THE NEXT GRADE LEVEL.

BOOKS & SUPPLIES

Textbooks if required will be provided and must be returned at the end of the school year. Lost or damaged materials will be subject to a replacement charge. For in-person learning, supplies will be provided by the religious school. For online learning sessions, parents will need to have appropriate supplies available for their children’s use. Instructional software will be made available to all children independent of setting. Please advise the school of any help you may need in ensuring your children have access to electronic materials.

For online learning sessions, parents will need to work with their children to ensure that specific materials that are needed for a given day’s activities are readily available for their children’s use. Teachers will alert students to specific needed materials/supplies prior to the lesson in which they will be needed. Having children prepared for class will allow each class session to be as productive for your children as possible.

HOMEWORK

Teachers will frequently assign homework to ensure that students both retain and improve in proficiency. Each student is expected to arrive at class prepared with completed homework. Parents should assist their children when needed in meeting this requirement. If a homework sheet is provided during in-person sessions, parents are expected to sign that their child completed the assignment.
CELL PHONES & OTHER DEVICES

Cell phones and electronic devices must be powered off during class unless express permission is given by the class’ teacher for educational purposes pertaining to that class. Having your children work in the least distracting space possible in your home setting is highly recommended. Toys and games are not permitted in religious school whether the setting is in your home or at the Temple.

During in- person sessions, electronic devices used during school hours will be held by Temple Emanuel’s staff until the end of school hours. Teachers may ask students to remove any electronic devices or other objects that have the potential to distract from their person and place them in a receptacle for the duration of class.

CONDUCT: BEHAVIOR EXPECTATION IN CLASS, AT SCHOOL-WIDE EVENTS, AND ON FIELD TRIPS

It is essential that there be an atmosphere of learning and respect in our school. This is true whether we are in an in-person or virtual environment. Disruptive or antagonistic behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. In the case of such behavior, the steps* listed below will be followed:

1. The teacher will caution the student.
2. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian and if necessary, conduct a meeting. (Education Director may be in attendance.)
3. Parent/guardian will be notified in writing if disruptive behavior continues. At this time, the student will be suspended and not able to attend classes. Students will be responsible for all classwork and homework during this time.
4. Temple Emanuel’s representatives will meet with the family, student, teacher, and possibly the Education Director to determine a course of action, up to and including termination of student’s participation in the Temple Emanuel Religious School. The student’s parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the Temple’s decision.

*Some or all of the above steps may be modified or eliminated depending on the severity of the situation.

DISMISSAL

Parents/drivers must come to the front door of the religious school building to pick up children due to security concerns. Students will be dismissed in an orderly fashion, and no student will be allowed to leave the building without a parent/driver.

DRESS CODE

Students must dress appropriately for school. Boys are required to wear a kippah at all times in religious school. Hoods/hats may not be worn and language on t-shirts and clothing must be appropriate. While children are learning in their home setting, please have them dress as if they were actually coming to TERS for instruction.
FEEDBACK

Parents should feel free to direct any feedback or concerns they might have to Dr. Rita Frank, our Education Director. She will thoroughly evaluate that feedback or concern and, where appropriate, respond to the parent formally with details if any action is to be taken. You can be in touch with Rita directly at drrita70@verizon.net.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally, field trips are scheduled to supplement classroom learning. Parents will be notified in advance and a field trip form will be sent home at least 2 weeks prior to the event. Participation is voluntary and only students with a signed form will be able to participate.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EXITS

Temple Emanuel has passed all fire inspections and has adequate exits and fire extinguishers. The school has a yearly fire drill and lockdown to ensure that students and staff know safety procedures.

FIRST AID OR MEDICAL NEEDS

There is a first aid kit in the main foyer. If your child has allergies or health issues that may need to be addressed during school hours, indicate them on the registration form. You will be notified if there are any questions. Temple Emanuel Religious School staff cannot administer medication.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, parents will receive a phone call, text, or e-mail at least an hour before the start of school. Unless power goes out, virtual schooling should be able to continue under various weather conditions.

ILLNESS

If your child is sick and will not be in attendance, please call the Temple office on (757) 428-2591. Do not send your child to school if he/she is sick. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours. Students are responsible for completing missed classwork and homework. As long as the Temple is notified, these are considered “excused absences.” During the period of virtual learning, use your best judgment about whether your child should miss class. Specific instructions about what will be done if your child gets sick in school will be provided in a separate document that will outline all the applicable health and safety procedures in place for the 2021-2022 school year.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Students will receive two progress reports which will track their attendance, progress toward expected goals, and behavior. Parent/teacher conferences will be made available if there are questions and concerns. If teachers are in consistent communication with parents concerning these outcomes, such communications may take the place of progress reports.

SNACKS AND FOOD PREPARATION
Please make sure that your child has eaten before Religious School. We will not be having a snack during in-person school for the 2021-2022 session. When you child is attending an online class, if you feel your child will need an extra boost, please have a healthy snack and drink readily available so that class is not disrupted.

TZEDAKAH

The religious school supports several Tzedakah (charity) projects throughout the year, and children are encouraged to bring in their change for Tzedakah each week. Students will decide which charity will receive the year’s Tzedakah.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

Family involvement and volunteerism is essential to our school’s functioning. On occasion you may be contacted to assist in the various activities of the school. Please volunteer if your schedule allows. Volunteer hours may be spent on Sunday or at functions sponsored by the Temple Religious School. If you have a specific talent or interest you would like to share, please let us know on the registration form. Stay tuned for volunteer opportunities that may be engaged in virtually as well as in-person.