



Yachad Jewish Community School of Pensacola

**Handbook
2011-2012
5772**

"Better Together"

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Curriculum Director: Melissa Sontag – (850) 501-1245
Administrative Director: Wendi Ochs - (850) 449-1667

Letter from Board of Jewish Education

Welcome Prospective, New and Returning Families

If you are reading this letter, you have likely downloaded the Handbook to learn more about Yachad and registration of your child(ren) for our Sunday morning Jewish educational experience.

The Yachad Jewish Community School is a collaborative effort to give your child a broad exposure to Judaism in a positive and experiential environment. The curriculum is a development of the Institute for Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) but the school and its benefits very much depend on parental support and participation. The fundamental goal of developing a sense of Jewish identity and community for our children is difficult to fulfill without parents as partners. The best way to insure knowledgeable Jewish children is to be raised in a knowledgeable Jewish home.

The inaugural year 2010-11 was like a dream fulfilled and was an overwhelming success from the surveyed perspective of students, faculty and parents. Much gratitude is due to our Co-Directors, Wendi Ochs and Melissa Sontag. With increasing experience, we anticipate increasing accolades.

As the foundations are laid and learned, the Board is becoming strategic in function, attempting to ensure success and future viability. If you have any questions or concerns, or constructive suggestions, a first point of contact should be the Directors, but I offer my assistance when needed and can be reached preferably by email at baripps3@aol.com or phone at home 850.494.2882

We all look forward to an exciting, productive 2011-12 school year.

B'Yachad,

Barry Ripps

***As it states in Pirke Avot, "our fathers planted for us,
So we plant for our children."***

Shanah Tovah U'metukah – Have a Sweet New Year!

Mission Statement

Yachad Jewish School of Pensacola strives to educate our students to become proficient in the skills needed to be life-long Jewish learners. We feel that this is best accomplished by creating a welcoming, inclusive and nurturing environment for our students and their families; one that also honors individual traditions and embraces Jewish pluralism.

Philosophy

The name Yachad means “together” in Hebrew and is a metaphor for our unique school. Our goal is to help our students form a positive Jewish identity that is rooted in core Jewish values and beliefs. We want them to see Judaism as fundamental to their lives, both as moral decision makers and as Jews who celebrate the beauty of life. Through both classroom instruction and diverse Jewish experiences, our hope is that we will embrace the idea that Jewish education is a lifelong pursuit.

We offer a unique pluralistic approach to education. Our students develop a level of comfort with diverse Jewish practices as they learn about customs rituals, and traditions through a spiraled curriculum. Students benefit from the insights and perspectives of a diverse classroom guided by a classroom teacher committed to strengthening each child’s knowledge and understanding and building strong Jewish identities.

Specific Goals of Yachad Jewish Community School of Pensacola

At Yachad Jewish Community School of Pensacola we strive to:

1. Develop a meaningful identification with Jews past and present through the study of Jewish history, culture, Hebrew language, liturgy, music, literature, arts, and texts.
2. Foster the Jewish values of Torah Lishma (Jewish study), tzedakah (giving to just causes though money or through action), kehillah (participation in the Jewish community), and tikkun olam (repairing the world).
3. Prepare our children to embrace the religious insights and ethical standards of Judaism when faced with problems in their lives.
4. Provide our children with meaningful experiences in the practice of Jewish life cycle ceremonies, events and holiday celebrations using the symbols, rituals, prayers and traditions of their Jewish heritage.
5. Prepare our children to actively participate in personal and synagogue worship.
6. Introduce our children to the Hebrew language in order to provide a foundation for participation in services and an understanding of the written and spoken language.
7. Stimulate a connection to and an understanding of Jewish life in America, the global Jewish community, and to our children's heritage as Southern Jews.
8. Identify with Israel as the Jewish homeland, understanding its history and develop a sense of community with and responsibility toward Jews throughout the world.
9. Create a link between Synagogue and home through Family Education.
10. ***Recognize that Jewish education is a lifelong endeavor, one that involves a critical and inquiring approach whereby the process of questioning is as valued and important as the quest for answers.***

Hebrew

Foundational Hebrew is provided for classes in Pre primary – 6th grade during our regular Sunday School program. Additionally, students preparing for B'nai Mitzvot (beginning in 3rd grade and generally through 7th/8th grade) may also meet on Sunday afternoon and Tuesdays at B'nai Israel or on Wednesday afternoons at Temple Beth El. Hebrew study is a mandatory part of preparation for B'nai Mitzvah and students who cannot attend midweek Hebrew must make other Hebrew study arrangements with our Rabbis. Additional information regarding our Hebrew and B'nai Mitzvot programs can be found on the following websites: www.templebethelofpensacola.org and www.bnaiisraelpensacola.org or by calling our Curriculum Director.

Confirmation

Confirmation is a commitment to study post B'nai mitzvah.

All students who participate in our Religious school through the 10th grade are eligible for confirmation. 10th grade Temple Beth El Students are also required to join a confirmation study group with Rabbi Shapiro to complete their formal Jewish education. This group will study and focus on a specific area of Jewish learning (chosen by Rabbi) and culminates in a special confirmation service celebrated on or near the holiday of Shavuot in the spring.

Youth Group

Youth Group Advisor for TBE and BI High School students (2011-12) is:
Sarah Casner

All 9th – 12th grade students have the opportunity to participate in High School Youth Group, NFTY and USY programming. This is a wonderful chance for our High School students to have fun and socialize with their Jewish friends. All High School Students are welcome and encouraged to attend all Youth Group planning meetings!

Days and Hours of School Operation

Grade	Time	Location
Pre K – 9 th grade	9am – 12:15	TBE Aug - Dec BI Jan – May

PreK-9th grade meets on **Sundays** during the school year. Separate calendar will be created for 10th grade students.

3rd grade – B’nai Mitzvah students also meet for additional Hebrew instruction on Sunday afternoon and Tuesdays at B’nai Israel or Wednesday afternoon at Temple Beth El. A specific calendar is developed each school year.

Tuition

\$200.00 -Religious School - Members in good standing at Temple Beth El and B’nai Israel

\$400.00 -: Religious school - Non-members **of either congregation**

\$80.00 - Mid Week Hebrew Program (Grades 3rd – B’nai Mitzvot) - Members in good standing Temple Beth El and B’nai Israel

Registration

We encourage all students to be registered at least one week ahead of school start dates. Checks and registration forms can be mailed to:

- Temple Beth El, 800 N. Palafox St., Pensacola, Fl 32501. Att: YJCS **or**
- B’nai Israel Synagogue, 1829, N. 9th Ave, Pensacola, Fl 32503, Att; YJCS.

Checks should be made payable to: YJCS

Student registration forms can be found online at the Temple Beth El web site

<http://templebethelofpensacola.org/study/school/> and at www.bnaiisraelpensacola.org

Paper copy forms of YJCS materials can be picked up or mailed to you. Contact either Kathy Smith at (850) 438-3321 at Temple Beth El or Jeannie Morsch (850) 433-7311 at B’nai Israel.

Service Attendance Requirements

Grade Level	Number of Services/type
K-3	2 Family Night and 2 regular Shabbat
4-6	2 Family Night and 6 Shabbat – can be Regular Shabbat or Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service
7-9th	3 Family Night, 7 Services per school year - can be Regular Shabbat or Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service

YJCS Staff

We have a wonderful teaching staff at YJCS! They are chosen based on their commitment to learning, their love for children and their desire to help foster a love of Judaism in the next generation. We hope you take time to get to know your child's teachers on Sunday mornings and through the many other opportunities provide to you.

This year's teaching staff and grade combinations are:

Rabbi Rick Shapiro (Interim Rabbi Temple Beth El) – B'nai Mitzvah Hebrew and 10th grade confirmation class

Rabbi Jordan Gerson (B'nai Israel Synagogue) - B'nai Mitzvah Hebrew

Pre-K – Jordan Marcus

Jan Suhrbier – K/1st

Vicky Goldstein – 2nd/3rd

Philip Davies - 4th/5th

Elissa Erskine – 6th/7th

Phylis Bearman – 8th

Howard Erskine – 9th

Marty Lisner –Hebrew – Wednesday at TBE

Sarah Tucker, Sarah Sacks - Hebrew – Midweek and Sunday

David Tucker – Hebrew – Sunday

Parent involvement

Parents are encouraged to join us every Sunday morning for breakfast and Tefillah. Both breakfast and Tefillah are an integral part of the school day. After breakfast you will hear important school announcements and often, an “instant Jewish lesson.” We also ask parents to stay connected to their child's learning by attending school meetings, getting to know your child's teacher and **joining our committees**. We need you to be involved to make this the best school it can be.

Family Education

An additional component of YCJS is Family Education. Parents are requested to attend 4 educational and informational sessions during the 5771-72 school year where we will expand our understanding of Judaism and thereby increase learning for our students. Topics may include comparative Judaism, celebrating the holidays, and “eating Jewishly.” We think you will find it both enlightening and enjoyable! A calendar of dates for Family Education will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Classroom Visitors

Occasional guests are welcome. However, **please call your child’s teacher to let them know when a guest will be attending** so they can make any necessary arrangements. Guests are expected to adhere to the same rules of conduct as all other students.

Student Requirements for grade level advancement

For your student to benefit from the year’s program of study, regular attendance at school is essential. This includes being in the Shul or Temple building on time and for the duration of class. If absences exceed 30% of the school calendar year, a request for extra assignments can be made to the teacher or directors. Students must complete approved make up work provided by their teacher to be considered completing a full school year at YJCS. Make up Hebrew classes must be discussed with the Rabbi.

If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please let your child’s teacher know.

Student Behavior

All students are expected to behave in manner appropriate for a religious school setting. Teachers reserve the right to control inappropriate behavior by handling it first within the classroom, then by asking for assistance from school director(s). Students who cannot behave properly in our school will be removed from the classroom and parents will be called to intervene.

Please discuss behavior with your student and let them know our expectations (and yours).

Tzedakah

Part of belonging to a caring Jewish community involves helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Students are encouraged to bring a contribution to the Tzedakah fund in their classrooms each school day. Money donated will go toward a project (Ronald McDonald House, etc) that has been deemed important to the children.

Field Trips

Each time a class wishes to leave the YCS grounds for any reason, the teacher must inform the Curriculum Director or Administrative Director.

Parents will be notified in writing or by phone of a field trip. Each child must wear a seat belt and use only adult drivers. Field Trip permission slips are included in our registration forms and are kept on file in our administrator's office.

Library

The Temple Beth El Jewish Library is available to all grades to check out books from our growing collection for a two-week period. Library time is incorporated into our student's class schedules for grades K - 6. The library is also available for the older grades to work on research projects. Please encourage your child to bring home books and share their reading experiences.

Conferences

Our Rabbis, teachers and directors are always happy to meet with the families of our students. Please arrange conferences by contacting our school directors, Melissa Sontag at (850) 501-1245 or Wendi Ochs at (850) 449-1667. Please keep in mind that school hours are not always the best times for conferences.

Student Dress

Students are asked to dress appropriately and respectfully for school. This means:

- No short shorts
- No tank tops or strapless shirts, dresses
- No ripped jeans or shorts
- No inappropriate sayings on t-shirts (dealing with alcohol, drugs, etc.)
- No bare midriffs

Cell phone and electronic device policy

Out of respect for our teachers and others who are learning together students are asked to keep their cell phones and all electronic devices on “off” during class time. Teachers reserve the right to ask students for their cell phones and electronic devices if they use them during class time. Students who do not obey this rule will have their cell phones given to the school directors and parents will be contacted for intervention.

Please discuss our behavior expectation (and yours) with your student.

Traffic issues - Drop off/Pick up

The parking lots of B’nai Israel Synagogue and Temple Beth El are very busy places and can be dangerous when families are arriving and/or leaving.

Drop off

All students will meet in the social hall at 9am.

Students in K-3rd must be walked into the social hall or school building by parents or older siblings. These same students will not be allowed to go into the parking lot of BI or TBE unless accompanied by a parent or older sibling at dismissal time. *Please try to avoid parking in disabled parking spaces.*

Semester 1: August – December at Temple Beth El

Students will enter and exit the building through the TBE social hall entrance in the parking lot.

Semester 2 – January – May at B’nai Israel Synagogue:

CAR LINE INSTRUCTIONS:

Students will be released at 12:15 each Sunday from the sanctuary door entrance (next to Bearman Bldg) This allows cars to line up and students to safely get into cars without crossing a street.

Cars should approach B’nai Israel Synagogue according to the following route:

Turn West on Monroe St., Drive one block to 8th. Make right on 8th, Drive two blocks to Avery, Make right on Avery.

Enter B’Nai Israel’s side street parking lot behind Bearman Building where students will be released from the Sanctuary entrance. All cars should exit onto Mallory St.

School Calendar for year

Yaqaq Jewish Community School and Mid Week Hebrew School Calendar 2011-12

**Sunday Religious
School - ALL**

**Wed Hebrew
School (BI)**

**Wed Hebrew
School (TBE)**

TBE	8/28		
Sept	9/11 9/18 9/25	9/14 – First day! 9/21	9/07 – First day! 9/21
Oct	10/02 10/9 10/16 10/23 10/30	10/5 10/12 10/26	10/5 10/12 10/26
Nov	11/06 11/13	11/2 11/9 11/16	11/2 11/9 11/16
Dec	12/04 12/11	12/7 12/14	12/7 12/14
TBE Jan	1/8 1/22 1/29	1/11 1/18 1/25	1/11 1/18 1/25
Feb	2/5 2/12 2/26	2/1 2/8 2/15 2/22 2/29	2/1 2/8 2/15 2/22 2/29
Mar	3/4 3/25	3/28	3/07 3/28
Apr	4/1 4/15 4/22 4/29	4/4 4/18 4/25	4/18 4/25
May	5/6 5/20	5/2 5/9 5/16 5/23 5/30 last day!	5/2 5/9 5/16 last day!

June 3rd – Picnic Day!

