

TEMPLE ISRAEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

TIRS
Parent
Handbook
2016 - 2017

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We're on Facebook www.facebook.com/TIRSottawa

**Please note that TIRS is a nut free zone.
Several students have life-threatening allergies.**

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK 5777

Welcome to Temple Israel Religious School! I am very excited to be your Principal and to be a part of so many wonderful changes coming to our school. I am looking forward to another amazing year of partnering with families, our volunteer School Committee, as well as with Rabbi Morais and the rest of the professional team at Temple Israel.

My vision for TIRS is to create Ottawa's premier center for Jewish learning for JK through Grade 12. Your children (and grandchildren) will be a part of a positive and interactive learning environment as we partner to create the best possible Jewish education we can offer using the most up-to-date resources for student-centered lessons and experiences.

This year, thanks to Jewish Federation of Ottawa's P2G and Geshar Chai programs, TIRS will further strengthen our bond with Israel by:

- a. Twinning with a school in Israel's northern region, introducing the "Friends Across the Sea" curriculum with the support of "Jerusalem Ed Tech Systems." This program looks at Jewish Identity and Peoplehood through dilemmas that Jewish children face all over the world including Israel.
- b. Welcoming two "Shinshinim," Canaf and Noga, who are Israeli teens between high school and the army on "Shnat Sherut" (a year working abroad). They will be working at TIRS on Wednesdays from January to June. Noga will be working with us at Temple Israel on Shabbat mornings from April to June.

I am thrilled to announce that TIRS has established a partnership with Torah High. As the only high school programs in Ottawa, our partnership will allow TIRS to offer 2 credit courses and to expand our school through Grade 12. For Torah High, they will gain a satellite location which widens their catchment area.

As we celebrate Temple Israel's 50th anniversary year, our school will have many special activities such as "50 Random Acts of Kindness." At the beginning of the school year, we will open the time capsule made at TIRS many years ago and add contributions from our current students.

Our classes will continue to be active participants in Shabbat services. Younger students will have opportunities to learn and interact with older students (i.e. on Simchat Torah when our high school students will present Torahs to new students at Consecration on October 23rd at 6:00 pm).

This year, we will offer classes for adults to learn Conversational Hebrew or to improve their reading skills so that parents are better equipped to nurture their child's education or just for fun! We will continue to support children living outside of Ottawa through online learning with a commitment to thinking "outside the box."

I am always open to receive feedback. We are part of a team, working together to ensure success for our children in a safe, inviting, inclusive, and engaging school. Last year's energy was so high throughout the year that we are already seeing an increase in enrollment. There is nothing more powerful than word of mouth. Please continue to spread the word!

Shana Tova U'metukah --- Wishing you all a sweet and happy New Year!

Sue Potechin,
TIRS Principal

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

This spring the Jewish Federation of Ottawa undertook a survey of young families. I was so pleased to see that close to 90% of the respondents who attend our school program would recommend the program to their friends and family. Additionally, 90% of respondents also felt that our school is a warm and welcoming community.

Over the past year our school has undergone a wonderful transformation. Our students are happy and excited to attend. I so enjoy saying hello to everyone on Sunday mornings as families arrive at school. It is great to welcome our students to Temple.

We continue to innovate and develop new programs and ways of engaging our students and families in Jewish education. We have introduced our partnership with Torah High that will enable our students to receive High School credit for our classes. We have also introduced many new curricular and programmatic changes and upgrades.

You, our parents, are our most important partners. We look to you to help us continue to foster a fantastic Jewish experience for you and your family. Our research shows us that a creative, hands on, inclusive, holistic Jewish education program, combined with Jewish activities and celebrations at home, creates the best possible Jewish experience for our students and their families.

I am looking forward to seeing you at school. I will be a regular visitor in the various classrooms and once again I will be teaching the Grade 7 B'nai Mitzvah and Grade 9/10 Confirmation classes.

Shalom,
Rabbi Morais

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Welcome to Temple Israel Religious School where students find a range of engaging activities from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12!

Grade	Day	Arrival and Dismissal
JK – Grade 6	Sundays	9:30 am – 12:30 pm
Grades 7 – 12	Mondays (incl. Torah High course)	6:30 – 8:30 pm
Grades 2 - 6	Wednesdays	4:30 – 6:00 pm
Grade 9 - 12	Wednesdays (Torah High course)	6:00 – 8:15 pm

Introducing our 5777 team of amazing teachers:

Karli Speevak – JK & SK	Marian Morrill – Gr. 5	Rabbi Rob Morais – Gr. 7 & 9/10
Ranit Braun-Demorest – Gr. 1/2	Jenny Burns – Gr. 6 (Sun)	Ranit Braun-Demorest – Gr. 8
Sigal Baray – Gr. 3	Hillel Taub - Gr. 6 (Wed)	Michael Parkin – Gr. 9/10
Corinne Baray – Gr. 4	Lisa Rossman – Gr. 7	Larry Tarof – Music (Sun)

And our TA's:

Maya Avshalomov, Stephen Angel, Oren Baray, Jordan Jason-Byerley, Nathan Jason-Byerley, Dario Chaquin, David Khazzam, Kaitlyn Morrill, Maya Ruckenstein, and Sarah Stern

Arrival & Dismissal

All students and parents should enter and exit the school through the back door, off the Temple parking lot. For safety's sake, we request that parents accompany their children to and from school. All classes begin promptly at their scheduled times. Students are expected to be on time for class. Please notify your child's teacher at the beginning of class if there is to be an early departure.

TEMPLE ISRAEL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL: JK – GRADE 6

Students enjoy preparing for holidays, learning about Israel and Hebrew language, engaging in biblical stories and the weekly Torah portion, and practicing Shabbat t'fillot (prayers) that are part of Temple Israel's Shabbat services. Music is a highlight of Sunday mornings. Each class will be participating in a Friday evening service, which links students to their Temple Israel family and puts their learning into action!

Consecration October 23, 2016: (Senior Kindergarten, Grades 1 & 2)

Your child's formal welcome to TIRS and the beginning of his or her Jewish education is celebrated during the Simchat Torah evening service at Temple Israel. Our tradition is to invite all new students to participate in Consecration. Each child will receive a consecration certificate and their own little Torah. The presentation will be made by a high school student linking our two programs. All TIRS students and their families are invited to join the celebration of Simchat Torah and Consecration.

Textbook and Curriculum Information for Grades 1 – 6:

TIRS uses a variety of resources for teaching Hebrew, T'fillot (Prayers), Torah, Prophets, Jewish History, Israel, Jewish Ethics and Values, Lifecycle, Jewish Holidays, etc. The following are some of our textbooks and resources. Your child's teacher may use additional resources. We will be introducing several new texts and resources this year in keeping with our promise to have the most up-to-date materials for our students, teachers and parents.

Friends Across The Sea Curriculum	Living Jewish Values (Volumes 1-4)
Aleph Bet Quest with CD-Rom	The Book of Jewish Life
Shalom Aleph Bet Pre-Primer	Israel Repairing the World
Shalom Ivrit – Welcome to Modern Hebrew (1, 2 & 3)	Our Place in the Universe
Kol Israel – Prayers of Our People (1, 2 & 3 w/CD)	Our Land of Israel
Let's Talk Now! Hebrew for Teens	Min Ha'aretz – Making Meaning from our Food
The Jewish Holiday Treasure Trail	Parasha Plays
Jewish Holiday Pak for JK – Grade 3	The Explorer's Bible (Books 1 & 2)
Jewish Holiday Pak for Grades 4 – 6	Parashat Hashavua - Reading Genesis
Rediscovering the Jewish Holidays	Parashat Hashavua - Exodus to Deuteronomy
Jewish Holidays Jewish Values	

In addition, we use the Union for Reform Judaism's CHAI Curriculum and MITKADEM Hebrew Program. The CHAI Curriculum is designed to facilitate lifelong Jewish learning in Reform congregations. It is designed for Religious School students in Grades 2 – 7 with a focus on Gemilut Chasadim (acts of loving kindness). Chai curriculum lessons aim to nurture "enduring understandings," and values that have lifetime meaning for all Jews.

TIRS – HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 7 - 12

Grade 7 B'nai Mitzvah Year: "Me, My Judaism, My Community"

Our year will be broken up into 3 focus areas of study:

1. Bar/Bat Mitzvah Boot Camp: A great opportunity for students to sharpen their understanding of the deeper meaning of the synagogue service.
2. Holocaust: An in-depth study of the Holocaust.
3. Jewish Identity - Seventh grade is often a time of searching for self-understanding. We will explore what becoming a Jewish adult really means.

In addition, the curriculum will include life cycle events, understanding the greater Jewish community through tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world) projects and field trips to places like the Ottawa Kosher Food Bank and "In From the Cold."

Looking forward to a fantastic B'nai Mitzvah year!
Rabbi S. Robert Morais and Lisa Rossman

Grades 8 for 5777:

The Grade 8 program is designed to be interactive and engaging, providing many Jewish experiences. Students will participate in project-based units on Jews of the Diaspora, Jewish life and Jewish role models, Historical Jewish Ottawa, Modern Jewish History and the Shoa, as well as being part of Temple Israel's Caring Community. The students will participate in field trips to a variety of locations in the Ottawa area and will participate in tzedakah / tikun olam (charity and repairing the world) programs.

We hope you will be there to join us!
Ranit Braun-Demorest

Confirmation Class:

Being a 9th/10th Grader at Temple Israel brings with it the opportunity to participate in our Confirmation Program. This year will be an incredible opportunity you will not want to miss! We promise a very special year of Jewish experience and learning which, for the first time will include a high school credit through our partnership with Torah High. This course is open to students in the 9-12th grades who wish to receive Ontario High School Credit. There will be 2 tracks for this class, one leading to Confirmation and the other for those taking the class for general credit.

The Confirmation class will meet on Monday evenings. Students will have the opportunity to explore with Rabbi Morais and with our wonderfully talented teacher, Dr. Michael Parkin, issues that are important to them in search of their Jewish Identity. Insights from Jewish tradition will be explored and examined and ideas will be freely exchanged on topics of ethics, social media, relationships and so much more!

We have a wonderful year planned and look forward to teaching this new course.
Rabbi S. Robert Morais and Dr. Michael Parkin

GENERAL INFORMATION (continued):

Teacher - Parent Contact

Teachers will provide your child with contact information (phone numbers and/or email). Teachers will periodically contact parents during the school year to discuss student progress. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teachers first if they have any concerns or questions. Should issues persist, please feel contact the Principal.

"Hafsakah" (Recess):

Please send an adequate and nutritious snack to school with your children especially on Sundays. It is a long morning and our little students do get hungry. Recess is a time to snack and socialize. Weather permitting, outdoor recess will be scheduled.

Homework:

Homework will be assigned for the purpose of reinforcing skills learned and for reviewing information. No new work will be assigned as homework unless a student has missed classes. TIRS students are always encouraged to practice their reading skills at home 10 – 15 minutes per day. When absent, teachers will send homework by email.

Attendance:

We request parental cooperation in ensuring that all of our students arrive punctually and attend classes regularly. We have only a few precious hours to impart an entire heritage as well as another language. We, at TIRS, do our best to provide a stimulating Jewish curriculum to capture your child's interest and encourage his/her involvement in Jewish life. Please make sure that your child arrives on time.

TIRS Library:

We have a large selection of picture and chapter books on a wide range of topics from Jewish folktales to stories about Jewish History. "Special Guest" readers from the Temple Israel community are invited to read to the students on special occasions.

Respect for our surroundings:

We ask parents to ensure that students demonstrate their respect for learning in a religious school in their manner of dress and overall behaviour. This is especially important when they enter the sanctuary. We expect all students to demonstrate 'kavod' (honour) for their surroundings, themselves, and each other through their actions. Temple Israel belongs to all of us. It is our religious home, and we hope that students will develop a strong connection to it through their experiences here.

In case of Multiple Absences:

When a student misses 2 or more classes, the teacher will provide homework. In the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year, the student should not miss more than 10 classes = 1/3 of the year unless a private tutor is being used.

Snow Day Cancellation Procedure:

It has been the practice that when OCDSB school buses are cancelled we cancel TIRS. However on Sundays or when there is a snowfall after school begins we will use the following procedure:

1. If there is a snowfall overnight from Saturday to Sunday we commit to cancelling school by 7:00 am.
2. For Mondays and Wednesdays we will make a decision by 1:00 pm.
3. A notice of school cancellation will be sent out by email to all families.
4. School cancellation announcements will be placed on the TIRS Facebook page and Temple Israel website.

In Case of Fire:

When the fire bell sounds, teachers and students line up in an orderly fashion, and close windows, doors and proceed quickly to the assigned exits.

JK/SK - Main stairs
Grade 5 - Main stairs
Grade 6 - Main stairs

Grade 1 - Back door to parking lot
Grade 2 - Back door to parking lot

Grade 3 - Back stairs to kitchen
Grade 4 - Back stairs to kitchen

Please make sure that your child has shoes or slippers at school during the winter months. We ask that boots be left on the carpets provided. In case of fire, all students and staff must be wearing footwear.

GOALS OF REFORM JEWISH EDUCATION

The goal of Jewish education in the Reform Movement is to deepen the Jewish experience and knowledge for all liberal Jews, in order to strengthen faith in G-d, love of Torah, and identification with the Jewish people, through involvement in the synagogue and participation in Jewish life. We believe that Judaism contains answers to the challenges and questions confronting the human spirit, and that only a knowledgeable Jew can successfully discover these answers.

The Commission on Jewish Education, therefore, calls upon every synagogue to provide a program of Jewish education, which will enable children, youth, and adults to become:

1. Jews who affirm their Jewish identity and bind themselves inseparably to their people by word and deed;
2. Jews who bear witness to the *brit* (the covenant between God and the Jewish people) by embracing Torah through the study and observance of *mitzvot* (commandments) as interpreted in the light of historic development and contemporary liberal thought;
3. Jews who affirm their historic bond to *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel;
4. Jews who cherish and study Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people;
5. Jews who value and practice *t'fillah* (prayer);
6. Jews who further the causes of justice, freedom and peace by pursuing *tzedekah* (righteousness), *mishpat* (justice) and *chesed* (loving deeds);
7. Jews who celebrate Shabbat/Festivals and observe Jewish ceremonies that mark significant occasions in their lives;
8. Jews who esteem their own person and the person of others; their own family and the family of others; their own community and the community of others;
9. Jews who express their kinship with *K'lal Yisrael* by actively seeking welfare of Jews throughout the world; and
10. Jews who support and participate in the life of the synagogue.

Such Jews will strengthen the fabric of Jewish life, ensure the future of Judaism, and the Jewish people, and approach the realization of their divine potential.