

**TEMPLE BETH-EL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER**  
**The Marjorie and Mark Gershwind Campus of Living Judaism**  
**5 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023**



# **GROWING TOGETHER**

**Vicki Perler, Director**  
**December 18, 2020**

*Don't let the light go out!*  
*It's lasted for so many years!*  
*Don't let the light go out!*  
*Let it shine through our hope and our tears. (Peter Yarrow)*

Dear Families,

There was an abundance of light, warmth, and joyfulness throughout our school this week. From the sounds of Chanukah music to the aromas of cooking and baking, there was joy in every part of the building. We missed having our families in the school to celebrate Chanukah this year, yet we are ever so grateful for the love and friendship among our families and teachers. Your enthusiastic partnership is THE essence of our school, and together, we have accomplished so much since September. Thank you, parents, for helping to make each class party special and meaningful for the children. Thank you, teachers, for your dedication and tireless work to help the children understand and appreciate the true meaning of Chanukah. Thank you to our amazing PTC, led by Dalia Hagooli, Marianna Costa, and Samantha Talasazain for providing Chanukah gifts to all our children and teachers, and for organizing a delicious lunch for the teachers. Every day of Chanukah was festive for all, and it was especially magical to celebrate the holiday for many days in school.

As this year's celebration of Chanukah ends, may the light, love and warmth you are experiencing this week sustain you throughout the cold winter, brightening the new year with happiness, good health, peace and blessings.

*Shabbat Shalom*

*Vicki*

## **HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Monday, Dec. 21         | First Day of Winter                         |
| Mon-Fri, Dec. 21-Jan. 1 | Winter Recess – School Closed               |
| Monday, Jan. 4          | School Re-opens                             |
| Thursday, Jan. 14       | Rosh Chodesh Shevat                         |
| Monday, Jan. 18         | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – School Closed |
| Thursday, Jan. 28       | Tu B'Shevat                                 |

## **CONNECTIONS**

**Revised Travel Requirements** – I hope you have a wonderful winter break. Please continue to be safe. We have been blessed with continuous in-person education for our children, and we want to continue that way until June! It is highly recommended that you do not travel unless it is absolutely necessary. If you must travel this month, it is imperative that you follow all travel-related quarantine protocols set by New York State. Any traveler coming into NYS (who was out of the state for more than 24 hours and coming from a noncontiguous state, US territory, or CDC level 2 or level 3 country) must quarantine for 14 days UNLESS they receive a negative Covid test before departure and then again on day four of their return. A 14-day quarantine is mandatory for a return to school unless two negative tests results are provided to the school in writing.

For more information on the quarantine requirements and other procedures for travelers, please see the NYS Department of Health guidance found at the following link [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/11/interm\\_guidance\\_travel\\_advisory.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/11/interm_guidance_travel_advisory.pdf)

**Pre-K Program at Temple Beth-El for 2021-22** – In order to meet the ever-changing needs of families, a few years ago Temple Beth-El generously increased the number of hours for the Pre-K (from 9-2 to 9-3), included lunch, and reduced the tuition. We are very grateful for the generosity of our Temple to help families out in this way. As you know, Temple Beth-El strives to provide an excellent Jewish early childhood experience for our toddler through pre-kindergarten children and to keep our programs accessible to our community. We have an outstanding Pre-K program, taught by exceptional and highly qualified teachers that meet and exceed New York State's Prekindergarten Next Generation Learning Standards. I hope you take advantage of this opportunity. Please register quickly for next year's Pre-K, as registration is on a first-come-first-served basis.

**Health and Safety Precautions During the Pandemic** - The health and safety procedures in the ECEC are very specific this year. Please wear your mask, stay physically distant from each other,

and never bring your child to school if s/he appears ill. We will need to send your child home if s/he exhibits symptoms. **All children in the school MUST be symptom free.** Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.

**Dressing for the Outdoors** – Please be attentive to the weather every day to ensure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play. Our goal in all weather is to keep the children warm, dry and comfortable. If they are not dressed properly, the class is unable to take advantage of the open air and the many interesting outdoor spaces around the temple building. Boots, raincoats, an extra pair of sneakers, two complete changes of clothing (to be left in school), sweaters, hats, mittens, and a warm jacket are necessary. As the weather becomes colder, we will be outdoors when the temperature is above 30 degrees. Please label all children’s clothing! Thank you.

**Yellow Zone Classification for the ECEC** - As you know, Great Neck has now been classified as a “Yellow Zone” by Governor Cuomo. Our ECEC is considered a childcare program, licensed by the Office of Children and Family Services. According to the guidelines, standards and expectations for childcare programs are unaffected by the designation of a red, orange, or yellow zone, (except if the childcare program is housed within a school). Our goal is to remain open, and we will succeed only if all of us are consistently and persistently vigilant in our personal lives away from school. Thank you for your extraordinary efforts and I implore you to stay Covid-safe during Thanksgiving.

If, unfortunately, we need to quarantine a class at home for 14 days, every teacher is ready to begin remote learning the very next day. The teachers have prepared curricula and experiences for this period of time, and the teachers will instruct you to prepare a box of supplies to keep on hand at home, just in case. Hopefully, we will not need to use this box. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

**Gathering limit** - On November 11, Governor Cuomo announced that gatherings at private residences (indoors and outdoors) is **limited to a total of 10 people**. All other gatherings are limited to a total of 50 people, this includes catered events. Please adhere to these new regulations for everyone’s safety.

**Parent Teacher Council** – The PTC is comprised of parents, teachers and lay leaders from the Temple and school community who work together to make decisions and provide ongoing support for the school. Our PTC Co-Chairs for the 2020-2021 school year are Dalia Hagooli, Marianna Costa, and Samantha Talasazain. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our school. If you would like to be a part of our exciting Parent Teacher Council, please feel free to contact Dalia ([dharoni@aol.com](mailto:dharoni@aol.com)), Marianna ([mari.mostovaya@yahoo.com](mailto:mari.mostovaya@yahoo.com)) or Sam ([stalis625@gmail.com](mailto:stalis625@gmail.com)) at any time. We are grateful to all of you for your participation.

**Inclement Weather Arrival and Dismissal Procedures** – Please arrive on time and sit in your car until the teacher notifies you. Your child’s teacher will text you to inform you that it is your turn for arrival. **By intentionally following this staggered procedure, we have created an organized and efficient arrival and pick-up.** Thank you, parents, for your help and cooperation. Please note that during these extreme inclement weather days, the designated outdoor drop-off and pick-up location for the Rabbi’s Garden Play Area is outside the Temple’s main entrance. The designated outdoor drop-off and pick-up location for the two-year-old classes is the Rudin Garden entrance.

**Shabbat Sing** – On Friday, we join together to experience a beautiful sing-along with me. It is the highlight of my week - every week. I feel very blessed to be able to teach your children beautiful Shabbat melodies. Our Shabbat Sing experiences will be different this year as they will be outdoors and physically distant. We look forward to creating joyous Shabbat celebrations every week.

**Hot Lunch Program** - The foods children eat and lifestyle habits they learn have a lasting effect on their health. Due to the overwhelming interest of our families to provide nutritious meals for lunch, we offer meat and dairy lunches for all students. As you know, one of the values of our school is to maintain the highest quality of care whenever possible. This value should also be reflected in the foods we eat.

**Lunch Menu:**

**Monday** – Pasta, meat sauce, vegetables

**Tuesday** – Baked chicken fingers and vegetables

**Wednesday** Pizza and Israeli salad

**Thursday**- Bake Ziti and vegetables

**Friday** – Baked fish, rice, vegetables

This year, the lunch is provided in individual packages for each child. We also have whole wheat bread and soy butter available to children who have not yet acquired the taste for these new foods. We hope that over time, children will discover and enjoy a variety of foods.

**Important ECEC Telephone Information** – If you have an important message and cannot reach me or Nancy on the telephone during the day, please ask someone in the main office to find us and relay the message. We hope this system will help you if you are unable to talk to us in person.

**Contact Information** - Please call, email or see me if you have anything you would like to discuss. My email address is [vperler@tbegreatneck.org](mailto:vperler@tbegreatneck.org). This is usually the best way to reach me.

**Links to Remember** – I invite you to visit the websites connected to the links below. The links relate to information about early childhood education, Jewish life and learning, and helpful hints for parents.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development>

<https://www.mommyshorts.com/2015/03/5-ways-kids-learn-at-a-reggio-emilia-preschool.html>

<https://pjlibrary.org/home>

<https://pjlibrary.org/getmedia/c63e85f1-58d9-44fd-ae8a-696825e88d25/Jewish-values-ECE.pdf>

<https://childhood101.com/an-image-of-the-child-understanding-emergent-curriculum/>

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/if-we-dont-let-our-children\\_b\\_1017485?guccounter=1](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/if-we-dont-let-our-children_b_1017485?guccounter=1)

<https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2016/04/08/children-play-nature-john-lee>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/mar2018/promoting-social-and-emotional-health>

[www.tbe-ecec.org](http://www.tbe-ecec.org)

<http://www.naeyc.org/>

<http://families.naeyc.org/>

<http://www.reggioalliance.org/>

<http://www.brainy-child.com/article/reggioemilia.shtml>