

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
February 26, 2021

“Make days of feasting and gladness and of sending gifts to one another and presents to the poor.”
Esther 9:22

Dear Families,

Today was such a wonderful celebration of Purim! Our school has been immersed in the festival all week, and we truly followed the central commandment for the holiday to its fullest. In school, we had fun making crowns, jewelry, groggers, Purim baskets, and hamantashen. The children learned the important lessons and values of the holiday, and we celebrated with much energy and enthusiasm. This morning, we experienced the excitement of Shabbat Sing in our sunny outdoor space, and each class marched to music in the hallway. What a joyful week!

This past year has been particularly challenging and topsy-turvy, yet on the most festive day in the Jewish calendar, we are forced to remember that life is fragile, and we must be attentive to what is essential in our lives. We celebrated with increased gusto this year and made sure to include lots of laughter, merrymaking, and fun. The Purim frenzy is almost over, and I hope that each one of us can find meaning and power in remembering Esther’s triumph. Esther used her skills, power and influence to save the Jewish people. These important skills are the same skills our children use every day to navigate and

interact with their world. Skills like focus and self-control, critical thinking, communication, connections and taking on challenges are built and cultivated during children's early years. Esther took on a challenge and approached King Ahasuerus with focus and self-control. She communicated her needs effectively and was able to share her Jewish perspective to the king. Ultimately, she helped the king understand a community that was not his own.

I hope that each one of us can find meaning and power in remembering the story of Purim. May the remaining days of the month bring joy, health and hope to you and your family.

Shabbat Shalom
Chag Purim Sameach
Vicki

HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER

Friday, February 26	Purim
Sunday, March 14	Rosh Chodesh Nisan
Sunday, March 14	Daylight Savings Time Begins – Set Clocks Forward One Hour
Saturday, March 20	First Day of Spring
Fri-Mon, March 26-April 5	Passover Recess – School Closed
Tuesday, April 6	School Re-Opens

CONNECTIONS

Dressing for the Outdoors – Thank you for being so attentive to the weather every day to ensure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play. We have had extraordinary experiences in the snow this year! Thank you for investing in snow pants for your child – it has made all the difference in our 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, snow pants, an extra pair of sneakers, two complete changes of clothing (to be left in school), sweaters, hats, mittens, and a warm jacket are necessary. We are outdoors when the temperature is above 30 degrees. Please label all children's clothing! Thank you.

Registration for the Summer Program – Register Now! We are very excited to announce that Karen Wasserman, our fabulous Pre-K teacher, will be our Summer Program Director this year. Morah Karen is an exemplary teacher and has taught in our ECEC for the past 15 years. She has much experience with children in school and in camp, and she is very eager and motivated to take on this new role. We are excited for you to get to know her. We are offering programs for children who are two, three, and four years old. We are excited to offer the opportunity for our students to continue their experiences at Temple Beth-El during the summer. Stress-free transitions are important for young children, and our Summer Program is a wonderful way to provide consistency and a seamless flow of the year. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email.

Registration for 2021-2022 – Don't get closed out of a class! Registrations are still coming in for the 2021-2022 school year. If you have any questions about our program for your child for next year, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

Travel Requirements – 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, it is imperative that you follow all travel-related quarantine protocols set by New York State. Any traveler coming into NYS (who traveled outside NY, PA, NJ, CT, MA or VT for more than 24 hours 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

PTC Challah Fundraising Program - We are offering an opportunity for you to order dough for your weekly challah to take home on Thursdays. This is a fun and educational way to enhance your Shabbat experiences with your children by making a fresh challah at home every week. **The Challah Program began this week. You can still sign up!** A huge thank you, to Marianna Costa and our extraordinary PTC, for initiating this wonderful experience for our children and families.

Challah Dough Details if Your Child is Absent from School – The school will put your dough in the freezer, and we will give it to you when you return. Once you receive the dough, it will need to be completely defrosted. It takes 6-7 hours to completely defrost, and then needs to be brought to room temperature before you prepare it and braid.

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.

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 (dharoooni@aol.com), Marianna (mari.mostovaya@yahoo.com) or Sam (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- Grilled cheese and vegetables - NEW

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. 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://d2gesac5hma2c2.cloudfront.net/uploads/attachment/file/1690/Winter_Thrive_Guide_2021.pdf (Ideas for Family Fun During Winter Months)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/joyful-parenting/201705/not-naughty-10-ways-kids-appear-be-acting-bad-arent>

<https://www.jnf.org> (Plant a tree in Israel for Tu B'Shevat)

https://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/09/04/teaching-children-empathy/?_php=true&type=blogs&_php=true&type=blogs&smid=fb-share&r=5

Harvard Psychologists Say: Parents Who Raise 'Good' Kids, Do These 5 Things!

<https://tinypurl.com/y97pbd6p>

35 Children's Books That Teach Empathy and Kindness <https://tinypurl.com/y5aczd6p>

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/helping-kids-navigate-scary-news-stories>

<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.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.naeyc.org/>

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

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

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