

**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 3, 2021**

*We must enhance the light, not fight the darkness.*  
*A.D. Gordon, Zionist philosopher*

Dear Families,

This past week, our school was embraced with the warmth and light of Chanukah during our celebrations. It was a beautiful experience to be part of the love and happiness among children, parents, grandparents, caretakers, and teachers. The children not only had a full week of sheer enjoyment, they also learned about the story of Chanukah and how Judah Maccabee and his soldiers bravely fought against the mean king, Antiochus, and his mighty army. They fought for religious freedom – and won. When we talk to children about being brave, they usually understand it to mean that they are fearful of something and being brave takes away the fear. The children in our school studied this concept as part of their understanding of the Chanukah story. What does it mean to be brave? What are some things that you do to show that you are brave? We will continue to discuss this concept throughout the rest of the year, especially when we celebrate Purim and Passover.

We are still surrounded by the challenges of life right now. Some days, it seems dark and depressing, but the Chanukah lights remind us that together we are strong. The increasingly bright lights each night teach us that

light will always triumph over darkness. When we work together, each of us can help make the world a better place. The essence of the holiday holds great promise for all of us.

I want to thank our extraordinary teachers for their dedication and tireless work to help the children understand and appreciate the true meaning of Chanukah. Thank you, parents, for your partnership, and for helping to make each class party special and meaningful for the children. From the sounds of Chanukah music to the aromas of cooking and baking, there was joy throughout our school – indoors and outdoors!

As we light the remaining Chanukah candles this weekend, may the light, love and warmth you are experiencing this week sustain you throughout the cold winter. May the glow of Chanukah lights embrace you with happiness and brighten your year with good health, courage, gratitude and blessings.

*Shabbat Shalom*  
*Chag Urím Sameach*  
*Vicki*

## **HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER**

Friday, Dec. 3	Registration Open to the Community
Sat & Sun, Dec. 4&5	Rosh Chodesh Tevet
Tuesday, Dec. 7	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
Tuesday, Dec. 14	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
Wednesday, Dec. 15	Parent-Teacher Conferences – School Closed
Wednesday, Dec. 22	Early Bird Registration Deadline
Fri-Fri, Dec. 24-31	Winter Recess – School Closed
Monday, January 3	School Re-Opens
Monday, January 17	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – School Closed
Monday, January 17	Tu B'Shevat

## **CONNECTIONS**

**Registration for 2022-2023** – We are very excited to announce that registration began this week for the 2022-2023 school year. **The deadline for Early Bird Registration is December 22, 2021. Prices will be locked-in at this year's rate for next year's tuition.** If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

**Pre-K Program at Temple Beth-El for 2022-23** – 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.

**Parent Teacher Conferences** – Parent Teacher Conferences are held twice during the year. During this first conference, you and the teachers will set goals for your child. Please come to the conference

prepared with information that will help during this process (child's interests, needs, and any information you want to share that is pertinent to your child's growth and development). This will help the process greatly. As always, thank you so much for sharing your precious children with us.

**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, a warm jacket, snow pants and snow boots 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.

**NAEYC Accreditation** - While talking to families about our school during the registration process, prospective parents often ask me about our national accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For those who are new to our school, accreditation provides a process by which early childhood professionals and families can evaluate programs, compare them with professional standards, and identify areas needing improvement. A NAEYC accredited program has demonstrated a commitment to providing the highest quality program for young children and their families. Our school has had the honor and distinction of being accredited with the NAEYC since 2001, with re-accreditation occurring every five years since then. We are extremely proud to be considered a high-quality school and are elated that we are still the ONLY nationally accredited Synagogue early childhood school on Long Island.

**Nut-Free School** – Reminder - We are a Nut-Free and Sesame-Free School. Please do not send food with nuts or sesame seeds in any form. And please do not give any of these foods to your child on school grounds. We have many children with serious food allergies this year. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

**Mask Protocols** – Masks are mandatory for all students when indoors, except when eating, drinking or napping. Wearing masks outdoors is optional. All students are required to arrive at school with their mask on. Some days, we go directly inside; other days we stay outdoors. Because we are in close contact at the entrance area, teachers, parents, siblings and ECEC students must wear a mask in these outdoor areas when arriving and dismissing students at all times. Thank you for your cooperation.

**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** – Plain pasta, sauce, shredded mozzarella and vegetable

**Tuesday** – Baked chicken fingers and corn

**Wednesday** Pizza and Israeli salad

**Thursday**- Sliders/hamburgers, sweet potato fries and cucumber salad

**Friday** – **New Lunch** – Pancakes and applesauce

Our 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.

**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. Your cooperation is essential and very much appreciated.

**Shabbat Sing** – Every Friday, I celebrate Shabbat with the toddlers, three-year-olds and Pre-K students. We join together on Friday mornings 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. We sing, dance, and work together as a school community to create a joyous Shabbat celebration.

**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 [yperler@tbegreatneck.org](mailto:yperler@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://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/hanukkah/learn-about-hanukkah-traditions-shalom-sesame>

<https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/june-2021/what-is-rosh-chodesh>

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

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

[https://www.peacequarters.com/harvard-psychologists-say-parents-raise-good-kids-5-things/?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=Facebook&utm\\_campaign=hiylfb](https://www.peacequarters.com/harvard-psychologists-say-parents-raise-good-kids-5-things/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=Facebook&utm_campaign=hiylfb)

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/223-creating-routines-for-love-and-learning>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2019/outdoor-play-is-essential>

<https://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2010/outdoor-play>

<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>

<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/>