

**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**  
**November 4, 2022**

Dear Families,

The story, [The Little Engine That Could](#) by Watty Piper, has always been a favorite of mine, and is a valuable resource for children as well as adults. The book tells the story about a little blue train engine and its attempt to make it up a mountain to bring toys to children on the other side. As the engine huffs and puffs, it continues to repeat the words, “I think I can, I think I can.” When the little engine finally reaches its destination, it puffs steadily down the mountain saying, “I thought I could, I thought I could.” This beautiful story illustrates that expectation and confidence are based on strong beliefs, and positive expectations and beliefs lead to positive outcomes.

Children usually listen very carefully during the telling of this story. They easily perceive themselves as the engine and relate to the difficulty the engine has in getting up the mountain. The development of a child’s level of persistence and our ability to monitor how hard each child works when confronted with a problem or obstacle helps us set goals for each child’s success. I cannot emphasize enough the value of teaching children how to set goals. Using positive words of encouragement to accomplish the goals are critical. During our parent-teacher conferences next month, we will work together to create specific goals for your child for the year. I’m confident that you and the teachers will be persistent in insuring that the goals will be achieved. By placing emphasis on the process of achieving goals, children and adults are free to have fun and enjoy the journey. And by

encouraging the children throughout the process, we are helping them to take risks, make mistakes, and build their willpower and perseverance skills.

This week, we are reading the Torah story about the journey of Abraham and Sarah, the first of many journeys of the Jewish people. We have had an exciting beginning to this year's journey. We look forward to a beautiful year of experiencing the excitement of learning and the exhilaration of accomplishment.

*Shabbat Shalom*  
*Vicki*

## **HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER**

Sunday, November 6	Daylight Savings Time Ends – Set Clocks Back One Hour
Tuesday, November 8	Election Day - School Closed
Tuesday, November 8	Professional Development for Teachers
Friday, November 11	Veterans Day – School Closed
Saturday, November 12	Pajama Havdalah for Families and Children 2-6 years old – 5:30 pm
Tuesday, November 15	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
Tuesday, November 22	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
Wednesday, November 23	Thanksgiving Recess – School Closes at 1:00
Thurs & Fri, Nov. 24&25	Thanksgiving Recess – School Closed
Thurs & Fri, Nov 24&25	Rosh Chodesh Kislev

## **CONNECTIONS**

**Parent Teacher Council** - The PTC is comprised of parents and teachers who work together to make decisions and provide ongoing support for the school and temple community. Please volunteer your time to help make our PTC strong and vibrant this year. If you would like to be a part of this exciting Parent Teacher Council, please feel free to contact me. We look forward to having our first meeting in November.

**Class Parents** – We need one or two class parents for each classroom. Volunteer to be a Class Parent and please let your child's teacher know that you are interested. Thank you!

**November is Jewish Book Month – Have You Read a Jewish Book to your Child Lately?**

**Professional Development for Educators** - Our teachers are always learning, too. We are looking forward to our Professional Development Day on Tuesday. Continuous training in and out of the classroom assures that our teachers are updated with strategies and tools to give children what they need to reach their potential. Our professional educators are constantly planning and implementing strategies to give our children the best possible learning experiences. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential.

**Dressing for the Outdoors** – Please be attentive to the weather every day to ensure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play. We go outside every day for long stretches of time, unless it is raining, or the temperature is below 30 degrees. 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. 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 continue to be outdoors. It's a good time to start purchasing waterproof snow pants, jackets, snow boots and mittens for the winter. **Please label all children's clothing! Thank you for your cooperation.**

**Pre-K Program at Temple Beth-El for 2023-24 – It seems as though many parents are not familiar with our highly regarded Pre-K program. In order to meet the ever-changing needs of families, a few years ago Temple Beth-El generously reduced the tuition significantly, increased the number of hours for the Pre-K (from 9-2 to 9-3), and included lunch.** We have an outstanding Pre-K program, taught by exceptional and highly qualified teachers, and our school meets and exceeds New York State's Prekindergarten Next Generation Learning Standards. Our students are very well-prepared for kindergarten. As you know, Temple Beth-El strives to provide an excellent early childhood Jewish experience for our toddler through pre-kindergarten children and to keep our programs accessible to our community. We are very grateful for the generosity of our Temple to help families out in this way. **I hope you take advantage of this opportunity. If you would like a tour, please contact me to arrange a date. We are proud to show you our dynamic Pre-K class in action. Registration begins on December 7.**

**Hot Lunch** - 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 with sauce on the side, and vegetable
- Tuesday** – Baked chicken fingers, French fries and vegetable
- Wednesday** Pizza and Israeli salad
- Thursday**- Cheese quesadillas and beans
- Friday** – Grilled chicken, rice and vegetable

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** – Wash your hands!! Hand washing, when done correctly, is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Good hand washing technique is easy to learn and can significantly reduce the spread of infectious diseases among both children and adults. The health and safety procedures in the ECEC are very specific as we strive to reduce the spread of infection in our school. **Do not bring your child to school if s/he appears ill.** We appreciate your cooperation at all times.

**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.

**Shabbat Sing** –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. Our Shabbat Sing experiences are outdoors, especially during these beautiful days. Singing and music is a vital part of education, and we embrace the language of music as often as possible.

**Shabbat with the Rabbi or Shabbat with the Cantor** – This year, we are also blessed with having Rabbi Stoller and Cantor Adam share beautiful Shabbat experiences with the children in our Chapel every

week. Having meaningful relationships with the Rabbi and Cantor are one of our goals this year, and we look forward to creating joyous and memorable Shabbat celebrations with them every week.

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

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/04/12/report-debunks-earlier-is-better-academic-instruction-for-young-children/?noredirect=on>

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

[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/>