

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
October 21, 2022

Dear Families,

The holidays of Tishri are officially behind us, and many of us are looking forward to a more rhythmic cycle of the week. Throughout the holidays, our students, teachers and families became deeply engaged in meaningful celebrations. These were truly “times of joy” (Mo'adim l'simcha) and “holidays and times for celebrating” (Chagim u'zmanim l'sasson). With authentic materials all around - creating decorations for our Sukkah, reciting the appropriate blessings for the lulav and etrog, and celebrating a consecration ceremony with our families in the temple's Sukkah – we emphasized the true meaning of the holiday. This Shabbat, we scroll back to the beginning – Creation – and we don't only begin, we begin again.

The story of Creation – Bereisheet - is also the story of the creation of humankind. So important is this concept, that “Tzelem Elohim – Divine Image” is one of our school's most valued principles. We strongly believe that each child is created in the image of G-d, and this translates into respecting and holding them in high regard. Children are capable, competent, and creative thinkers, and bring a wealth of knowledge to their educational setting. The heart of our curriculum originates from the children's own ideas and interests. Once their interest is captured, it is pursued. Because children create their knowledge from prior experiences and through current exploration, their interests continually deepen with ongoing investigation. Inquiry and problem-solving are a major focus of our ECEC. Play encourages the children to engage joyfully in the process of learning and truly to have fun.

Working hard to maintain a developmentally appropriate school for early education is a continuous process. As a Reggio-inspired NAEYC accredited school with deep Jewish values, our teachers and I are well-aware of quality and excellence in preschool and what it takes to accomplish our goals. It is validating to read articles that strongly and intelligently endorse our approach. Research now cites the Perry Preschool Project, and the related studies that followed for forty years, as one of the best examples of success. An author, Dr. Karen Nemeth, writes, “Children who attended developmentally appropriate preschools that supported child-centered learning, free choice and play grew up to achieve higher levels of education, higher levels of employment, and less dependence on costly funded programs such as special education and welfare.”

Dr. Nemeth also said, “No educator or policy maker should begin to talk about rules and requirements for preschool until they have read the central guidance for our field: [Developmentally Appropriate Practice as compiled by the National Association for the Education of Young Children](#). This research-based guide reminds us that children under the age of six years learn best through the rich, creative, exploratory, hands-on discoveries and interactions that happen during play. When early learning happens in this kind of play, it grows, lasts and creates the strong foundation children need to succeed later in school. It is the foundation on which successful accomplishment of future standards will be possible.”

As we wind down from this past month’s dynamic schedules, I hope that 5783 is a year of peace, blessings, accomplishments and growth, for you, your children, and your loved ones.

Shabbat Shalom
Vicki

HAPPENINGS & DATES TO REMEMBER

Tues & Wed, October 25&26	Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan
Tuesday, October 25	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
Tuesday, October 25	Yoga Class for Adults begins (8 classes) – 9:00 am
Tuesday, November 1	Pee Wee Pros for 3s and Pre-K
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
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

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.**

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.

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- Quesadillas, cucumbers, salsa and sour cream
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@tbgreatneck.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.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.naeyc.org/>

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

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

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

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