Dear Religious School Families:

We are so excited to welcome you back to in-person learning beginning on Sunday, September 11th. We are looking forward to seeing and hearing our classrooms come back to life with the sounds of our children learning and thriving Jewishly.

Our opening day of school will take place on Sunday September 11th. This year, we will return to our pre-covid parent program on the first day of school. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with parents from your child’s class, learn about special programs during the upcoming school year and hear from Josh Hoch, the chair of our Education Committee. Parent involvement is key to the success of our school program. **Please plan to be with us on September 11th. We will provide the bagels and coffee 😊**

**Religious School Sunday Schedule**

- 9:00-10:30 am  Preschool Through Third Grade
- 11:00 am-12:30 pm  Fourth Through Sixth Grade
- 11:00 am-12:00 pm  Seventh Through Tenth Grade (Confirmation)
- 12:00 pm-12:30 pm  Seventh Through Tenth Grade Lunch*

*We learned over the course of the last couple of years, that our teens value the time spent together sharing some food and learning about their lives and interests. We are excited to add this back to our program.

**2022-2023 Religious School Staff**

We are blessed with a talented and dedicated religious school staff:

- Preschool/Pre-K  Jenny Fisher
- Gan/K  Anna Shapiro
- Aleph/1  Ellen Tenenbaum
- Bet/2  Janette Furman
- Gimel/3  Shoshana York (Thursday) & Jennifer Flashner (Sunday)
- Dalet/4  Sara Zwicker
- Hey/5  Janette Furman & Ellen Tenenbaum
- Vav/6  Toby Wolk
- Zayin/7  Ronit Goldstein
- Chet/8  Stephanie Gertz
- Tet/9  Cantor Steven Weiss & Rabbi Eric Berk
- Yud/10
Thursday Afternoons (Virtual Through Zoom) – 4:00-5:00 pm

First day of school – Thursday, September 15th

This change to a virtual program on Thursday was determined to be the best for our families who come from many surrounding towns but implemented much quicker than anticipated due to the pandemic.

School Services

Every other week on Sunday mornings, our preschool through third grade students will participate in a short worship service led by the Rabbi and Cantor as well as Ethan Warhaftig, who will once again be assisting us with music next year. 4th through 6th grade students will participate in services on a weekly basis. We are excited to be able to worship, share stories and celebrate holidays with all our students. A complete schedule will be distributed following the opening of school.

Friday Night Shabbat Dinners & Kiddush

Throughout the fall, we will invite various grades to join for Shabbat dinner prior to services. Students will assist us with the leading of the Shabbat Kiddush at the start of the service. Dinners will be held at 6:45 pm for services that begin at 7:30 pm.

Friday, October 28 – 7th Grade
Friday, November 4 – 6th Grade
Friday, November 18 – 5th Grade
Friday, December 9 – 4th Grade
**Shabbat L’Kulam Services**

We are so proud of our students who assist with leading our Shabbat Morning worship with confidence and Hebrew skill. Our tradition is that the grade below the one leading assists with providing the Shabbat lunch following the service.

Shabbat L’Kulam services will be held on the following dates:

- Saturday, December 17th – 6th Grade/5th Grade Assists
- Saturday, January 28th – 5th Grade/4th Grade Assists
- Saturday, February 11th – 4th Grade/3rd Grade Assists
- Saturday, March 18th – 3rd Grade/2nd & 1st Grades Assists

**Shabbat Service Requirements**

Families are encouraged to worship together at Congregation Sha’aray Shalom. The Service experience combines singing and learning, promotes Hebrew fluency, along with comfort and familiarity with Jewish religious practices, and helps build a sense of commitment and community - all of which are crucial for young Jews growing up on the South Shore. Because service attendance is essential to gaining proficiency in the curriculum, **students are required to attend religious services on a regular basis**. If by March of the school year, a child is falling behind in meeting the service requirements, parents will be contacted by either the Rabbi or Cantor to discuss how to develop a plan to meet this extremely important requirement.

The following are the number of Friday or Saturday services students are expected to attend during the school year:

- **Kindergarten through 2nd Grade** – 4 services
- **3rd Grade through 7th Grade** – 8 services
- **8th Grade through 10th Grade** – 8 services including Confirmation

Only Shabbat services (Friday or Saturday) at Congregation Sha’aray Shalom count toward the fulfillment of the service requirements. Attendance and participation in Shabbat L’Kulam Services and KIDushat Shabbat (for preschool through 2nd grade) will count towards this requirement.

**Shabbat Service Check-In Procedure:**

Students will indicate their attendance at Shabbat Evening and Morning Services by checking their name off in a notebook which will be in the lobby during services. The book will be arranged by grade level and have all of our student’s names printed in it. Students will put their initials and date of the service that they attend.
Family Programs

We are excited to engage with both parents and students during our grade level family programs throughout the year. This year, in addition to Sunday mornings from 9:00-10:30 am, we will also be holding programs on Shabbat mornings from 9:00-10:15 am. A short service will follow.

Family programs will be held on the following dates:

Saturday, October 22nd – 5th Grade
Saturday, October 29th – 6th Grade B’nai Mitzvah Program – Part 1
Saturday, November 5th – 4th Grade
Sunday, November 6th – 3rd Grade
Sunday, December 4th – 2nd Grade
Sunday, December 11th – K/1st Grade
Saturday, December 17th – 6th Grade B’nai Mitzvah Program – Part 2

Madrichim “Student Assistant” Program

We are looking forward to welcoming back our new and returning Madrichim “student assistants” who provide an extremely important role in assisting our classroom teachers while also learning valuable classroom management and educational skills that will help them as they get older. Madrichim commit to assisting during specific sessions throughout the year and can be used as fulfillment of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Mitzvah project requirement. We have a wonderful group of dedicated students for the coming year. But we can always use more!

If your child is interested in serving as a Madrichim this coming year, please contact our program coordinator Julie Fox (juliebachfox@gmail.com).

Room Parents

Parent involvement is a key component of our religious school program. It is imperative that each class have a designated parent who will assist with coordination of special programs and events. Please consider volunteering! The Education Committee, under the direction of Josh Hoch (jhoch4us@gmail.com) coordinates our school volunteer program. Thank you!
Special Events

We have several special programs planned for the coming year and others in process. Programs this year include?

Sunday, October 16th – Simchat Torah Celebration with Consecration

Friday, December 2nd at 7:30 pm – Service of Installation for Rabbi Eric Berk

Sunday, December 18th at 5:00 pm – First Night Hanukkah Party

Friday, February 3rd at 6:00 pm – Tu B’shvat Seder, Shabbat Service & Dinner

Sunday, March 5th – Purim Carnival

Sunday, April 30th – Celebrate Israel’s 75th Birthday with return of the LEGO man! Join us once again as we build the walls of Jerusalem out of Legos!

We look forward to another wonderful year of learning, and celebration as a sacred community. And we especially look forward to seeing you on Sunday September 11th as we begin our new Religious School year.

L’Shana Tova!

Cantor Steven Weiss