



THE ELECTRONIC EDUCATOR-
A weekly update of information for you and your school!
A service of the NJ Region USCJ Dept. of Education
Michelle Rich, Director of Education and Youth Activities
Nita Polay Levin, Field Worker
Lisa Harris Glass, Executive Director

Shalom,

Here we are at the end of another year! Some of you have already had your last classes and awards ceremonies and the rest of you will have them in the weeks to come. But, we still have helpful information for you to consider, especially for beginning the new school year.

I will be on summer hiatus as of June 19, but I welcome your calls and queries until that time. I will return after Labor Day. If you need to get in touch with me after that time, please contact Lisa Riley at our office and she will contact me. Her email address is Riley@USCJ.org and the phone number is (732) 738 – 4301. I will be around for most of the summer.

Meanwhile, be on the lookout for our semi-annual Lilmod Ulilamed, with lots of creative ideas for teaching about Israel as we celebrate this miraculous 6th year!

I wish you all a terrific summer break, filled with rest and relaxation, and renewed energy so that we may once again meet our challenge in the year to come.

B'virchat shalom,

Nita Polay Levin,
Education Field Worker

Thanks to Tammie Roth for these terrific interview questions!! When you are interviewing a potential teacher, try this! Tammie is a preschool director, and these are great for interviewing preschool teachers, but they are wonderful for religious school teachers, too!

The very best questions that I use were gleaned from a presentation given at Naeyc years ago by a Specialist in legal hiring practices. Since you can't legally ask certain questions these two Questions get to the heart of the issue.

Question 1.

Lets say You get this job and you are at school and and are having just a great day! You leave school feeling so competent and successful. Tell me what things might have helped you have such a great day. It could be nything, having to do with the children the staff the administration or the Parents?

Tell me what would make you have a great day?

Question 2.

Now lets say you got the job and on this day you had **Alexander's Terrible ,Horrible, No Good ,Very Bad, Day !** What things might have happened to make you leave with steam coming out of your ears? Again It could be anything from an interaction with the children to your co-teacher to the administration or the parents. What would really make you angry or upset?

You will find out all you need to know about a candidate by what she says! Often they will give you a view into how they work with other teachers parent and children. They will often lead you to know what you need to ask as well. If there is an area of concern (in their past) They will almost always let a clue slip out !

These Questions have helped me weed out possible problematic candidates who can handle the usual interview questions but really need to think on their feet for these Question. The applicants don,t even realize that they are very TELLING questions.

Good luck

Tammie

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Serene Victor, our very talented National USCJ Consultant for Synagogue Education, will be leaving USCJ after this summer. She will be sorely missed! She leaves us with some of her gems. We wish you well in your future endeavors, Serene!

Hi Everyone,

I hear over and over how difficult it is to get volunteers. The tried and true technique I have used is not to ask for chair people of vague, undefined programs, but to list very detailed tasks that have specific beginning and ending times. I have had enormous cooperation from parents when I do this because they don't feel overwhelmed by a job and then guilty that they might not do it well. This has been a win-win for everyone.

In order to do this well, you need to have a complete detailed calendar for the upcoming year and then the detailed volunteer tasks for each event you have planned. (See the form below). You then need to find someone to organize the forms (this is listed as #1 on the form itself) by making a copy, three hole punching the original and the copy, and filing them in a loose-leaf binder, a separate page for each event. For example,

#8 Local Shopper - Willing to pick up juice, crackers, etc. and deliver to school. Indicate your regular shopping day so that I won't ask you to make a special trip if I can help it.

One I have a list of parents who are willing to do this and what days are good for them, it is easy to make a phone call and ask them for help.

The advantages of this approach include:

- a) saves you a lot of time and shlepping
- b) gives parents the opportunity to participate and be helpful without adding much extra work.
- c) respects parents time by combining it with an errand that is part of their routine.

If you don't already do this, give it a try. I bet you will have success that will grow over time.

B'shalom,

Serene Victor
USCJ National Consultant for Synagogue Education

Temple Talmud Torah Parental Involvement Form 20__

Name _____ Phone _____ email _____

Names and Grades of Children _____

General Categories

- ___ 1. Sort through these involvement forms, enter data onto spreadsheet and send out confirmation cards
- ___ 2. Help make phone calls for Sunday school cancellations
- ___ 3. Serve on the school committee that usually meets the third Monday night each month
- ___ 4. Sales person for Judaica Shop, ___ Sun., ___ Mon., ___ Tues., ___ Wed., ___ Thurs, or evenings (specify)
- ___ 5. Create a phone chain for Sunday snow cancellation calls

- ___ 6. Bulletin Boards - Designing holiday boards for the aula
- ___ 7. Kitchen helper - Become authorized to use the temple kitchen
- ___ 8. Local Shopper - Willing to pick up juice, crackers, etc. and deliver to school. Indicate your regular shopping day so that I won't ask you to make a special trip if I can help it.
- ___ 9. Brookline Shopper - Butcherie, Israel Bookstore pick-ups on occasion
- ___ 10. Bargain Shopper - Do you frequent Building 19, etc.?
- ___ 11. Wednesday 5-7:30 -Office helper
- ___ 12. Be a substitute for absent teacher on occasion
- ___ 13. Organize our school pictures into albums and posters

Home Meetings

- ___ 14. Host a Home Meeting: We come to your home.
 - ___ *Gan*, Mon., Sept.15 ___ *Aleph*, Wed. Sept. 24 ___ *Bet*, Mon. Nov. 3
 - ___ *Gimel*, Mon. Sept.22 ___ *Dalet*, Wed. Nov. 5 ___ *Hey*, Tues., Oct. 7
 - ___ *Vav*, Thurs. Sept. 18 ___ 7th, Tues. Oct. 28 ___ High Sch, Tues, Nov. 18

Primary Classes

- ___ 15. Bring Refreshments for **one** of *Gan* Parents Group, 9/21, 9/28, 10/19, 10/26
- ___ 16. Bring Refreshments for **one** of *Aleph* Parents Group, 12/14, 1/11, 2/1
- ___ 17. Bring Refreshments for **one** of *Bet* Parents Group, 11/23, 12/21, 1/25, 4/5
- ___ 18. Saturday eve, Dec. 6, 6-8 p.m. -Host 3-4 families for a *Havdalah* Program
- ___ 19. Sun., April 5 - Help set up *Bet* Walk Through Seder

Gimel Families Together

- ___ 20. Sun., Dec. 7 - Provide *Chanukah* snacks for families
- ___ 21. *Shabbat*, Feb. 7 - Help shop for food

Dalet Class

- ___ 22. Bring refreshments for **one** of *Dalet* Parent Pesach Programs: 3/1, 3/8, 3/22, 3/29

Hey Class

- ___ 23. *Shabbat*, March 14, *Hey Shabbat* - Help shop for food

6th/7th Grade

- ___ 24. Sun., October 19 -Host a *Sukkot* party
- ___ 25. *Shabbat*, February 7 - *Vav Shabbat* - Help with food
- ___ 26. 6th/7th *Chevrah* - Help with light dinner on Wed. evenings or Sun. a.m. snacks
 - ___ Dec. 17 ___ Jan. 25 ___ Feb. 25
- ___ 27. Serve on parent advisory committee for 6th/7th grade *chevrah*
- ___ 28. Participate in Family Table Food Bank, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Bnai Mitzvah Orientation

- ___ 29. Sun., Oct. 26 - Bring in snacks for parents and kids (1998 group)
- ___ 30. Participate in Family Table Food Bank, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

High School Help

- ___ 31. Parent Visiting Days ___ Sun, Dec. 10, ___, Wed. Dec. 14 -- Bring coffee, *nash*
- ___ 32. Fri., May 1 -Parents of 10th graders! Please help serve at high school graduation

Miscellaneous

- ___ 33. Sun., Sept. 7 - New Member Orientation -- Bring in coffee, milk, *nash*, and welcome newcomers
- ___ 34. Help with refreshments for Special Visitors Day, Feb. 8
- ___ 35. Help organize Walk for Hunger, Sun., May 3
- ___ 36. Sunday, June 7- Serve and clean up cake, juice, etc. at concluding assembly

Community Garden

- ___ 37. Wed, Oct. 8 - Shop for and help prepare light dinner for harvesting community garden
- ___ 38. Wed, Oct. 8- Help harvest community garden
- ___ 39. Wed or Thurs Oct. 8 or 9 - Deliver harvest to Bristol Lodge Shelter
- ___ 40. Wed., May 20- Help plant Community Garden
- ___ 41. Wed., May 20 - Shop and/or prepare barbecue for planting of community garden

Book Fair

- ___ 42. Join the Sat. night party - Help with set up, Dec. 13
- ___ 43. Cashier, Inventory and Packing up, Sun., Dec. 14
- ___ 44 Join the Sun. am. set up crew
- ___ 45 Help with publicity

Passport to Israel

- ___ 44. Coordinate mailing to parents and collect checks
- ___ 45. Assist with a mailing in December/January

Sukkot/ Simhat Torah

- ___ 46. Oct. 12, 13, 14 - We can use your decorating talents in the temple *Sukkah*
- ___ 47. Week of Oct. 5 - gift wrap little Torahs for new students in religious school
- ___ 48. In October - Build a *sukkah* for the first time
- ___ 49. Be a mentor to a family building a *sukkah* for the first time

Chanukah

- ___ Wrap small gifts for Religious School children
- ___ Help with Temple *Chanukah* Party on Sunday, Dec. 20

Tu B'shevat

- ___ 50. Sun., Feb. 8 - Set up garden oasis for the greening of Temple Talmud Torah in honor of *Tu B'shevat*
- ___ 51. Sun, Feb. 8 Bring in *Tu B'shevat* Treats:, raisins, dried fruit, etc. (no peanuts, please. We have some kids with allergies)

Purim

Mishloach Manot Project

- ___ 52. Stuff envelopes in January
- ___ 53. Week of March 1 -Fill the bags with goodies
- ___ 54. Sun., March 8 - Deliver *Mishloach Manot* to limited, mapped route

Purim Carnival

- ___ 55. Sun. March 15 -Help at lunch booth

Yom Ha'atzma'ut

- ___ 56. Sun., April 26 - Help with Israel's 50th celebration

Shavuot

- ___ 57. Week of May 26 - shop for *Shavuot* dinner
- ___ 58. Sat., May 30 - Help at dinner
- ___ 59. Sat., May 30 - Teach at *Tikkun*

Shabbat

- ___ 60. Community Shabbat Days-Help with shopping, setup, etc.
___ Dec. 6 ___ Jan. 3, ___ Feb. 21, ___
- ___ 61. Feb. 6 - Host another family for *Shabbat* dinner.

Havdalah Programs

- ___ 62. Nov. 22 -Help with Dinner
- ___ 63. Dec. 6- Host 3-4 *gan/aleph/bet* families for *Havdalah* program
- ___ 64. Jan. 24 - Special Needs Program - Help with refreshments
- ___ 65. March 7 - Help with dinner

Home Hospitality

- ___ 66. Please let us know if you live within 2 miles of the temple, can serve kosher or vegetarian, and would like to host guests for a *Shabbat*. Thanks.

* * * * *

Hi Again,

While this form is not a perfect substitute for a timely permission slip before a field trip, having it in the files is a safety net for you when a child forgets to return a permission slip and the parent tells you by phone that it is okay for his son to get on the school bus. See what you think.

B'shalom,
Serene

Serene Victor
USCJ National Consultant for Synagogue Education

UNIVERSAL PERMISSION FORM 2000/2001

Temple Talmud Torah

613 Mitzvot Way

Shalom City, IL

Phone: 123-456-7890 Fax: 123-456-7899

www.TempleTalmudTorah.org

FAMILY NAME _____

I give permission for my son(s)/daughter(s) _____ to participate fully in all activities of the _____ Religious School for the 2000/2001 school year. I understand that field trips will be adequately supervised, and transportation will be arranged either by parent carpools, school buses, or walking, and that I will be informed beforehand of all such trips.

I hereby empower the _____ staff person to act for me in accordance with his/her best judgment in case of an emergency.

Family/Health Information

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Home Phone # _____ Work Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

In case of emergency contact:

Name _____ Phone # _____

Doctor's Name _____ Phone _____

Insurance Company _____ Policy # _____

Are there any medical or dietary concerns or limitations to your children's full participation in any school program?

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____

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Hi Everyone,

Serene sent a sample registration form and a sample letter inviting parents to register now for the upcoming year. Of course, adapting these to your own school goes without saying. While the letter is attached, not so the form. If you would like a copy of the form, email Nita at Levin@uscj.org.

Temple Talmud Torah
613 Mitzvot Way
Shalom City, IL
Phone: 123-456-7890 Fax: 123-456-7899
www.TempleTalmudTorah.org

Pre Registration Letter

May

Dear Parent,

As we wind down the school year, I feel eager for vacation, but also a bit sad about not seeing the fabulous kids and families of this synagogue for a couple of months. It's been a glorious year! So it makes me feel better to receive your registration for the upcoming year now, knowing that I can anticipate fresh, relaxed faces in September. (It will also get me to that vacation sooner if you get these forms to me now.) Please complete and return the enclosed forms along with a \$25 check, an early bird fee that will be deducted from your tuition if you return these forms by _____

To find the schedule of school tuition for next year as well as the book order form and costs for Shabbat dinners and special trips go on-line at www.TempleTalmudTorah.org. Click on the religious school. You will receive a bill for these class expenses and tuition in August. You will also be able to download the school handbook.

As you know the school committee has deliberated long and hard over scheduling for the coming year. We listened to all of your concerns and kept you informed every step of the way. We believe we have finalized a program that preserved the integrity of our classes and best serves our students. This schedule is also posted on line.

Student placement in the 9:00 or 11:00 *gan* class will be based on the following criteria, in the order listed.

1. Educational needs and classroom dynamics will play a strong role in deciding a students placement, as determined by the teachers and director.
2. Siblings will be kept in the same session whenever possible.

3. Students from communities outside of Lexington with limiting carpooling options will be placed in the same session whenever possible.
4. A relative balance of size and gender will be maintained.
5. Requests will be met on a first come/first serve basis.

You will receive student assignments on the 3rd week of August. As the office is closed during the summer, please do not call requesting early placement. If you have a request for placement, it must be in writing. We are not able to handle phone requests. Requests will be honor in accordance with the above criteria. If your request cannot be met, a waiting list will be maintained and we will make every effort to honor it as spaces become available. However, we will not inform you of the status of your request until just before the start of the year.

Wishing you a fun filled, relaxing summer.
B'shalom,

Dear Colleagues,

Recently I had a discussion about the pros and cons of having parents purchase the textbooks on a yearly basis, and paying an up front one time only fee for special class events such as Shabbat dinners, etc. This approach is reflected in the attached document.

To do something like this, you have to have your calendar set out in advance, and you would have to get buy-in from the parents. Some communities would rather pay once and know they are not going to be asked to shell out as they go. Others, can't afford paying up front. So before you move in this direction, ascertain the needs of your community.

From my perspective, not having to collect checks on an ongoing basis was a huge advantage. I knew in advance what my budget was for that Shabbat oneg, and I didn't have to set up a system for collections.

B'shalom,
Serene

Serene Victor
USCJ National Consultant for Synagogue Education

Family Name _____

Temple Emunah Book and Event Fees for 20__

Please return this form with a check payable to Temple Talmud Torah by September 6, 20__

Child(ren)

Grade

Suggested Fees

PTO dues support school retreats, other enrichment activities, special purchases, and teacher workshops.

\$10

Shabbat Retreat March 23-35, 2001 (4th, 5th and 6th grade only)

\$175

Book, Material and Retreat Fees by Class

GAN (K) \$75

Xeroxing
Project Fee
Celebrate with Cindy cassettes – volumes 1 and 2
Let's Learn About the Jewish Holidays Text
Snack

ALEPH (1) \$60

Xeroxing
Project Fee
Snack
Cassette for class with *tefillot* and songs
Paul Zim's *Shalom Chaverim* Cassette

BET (2) \$60

Xeroxing
Project Fee
Parent Connection Books for Class
Snack

GIMEL (3) \$130

Xeroxing
Z'man Likro Primer – volume 1
Hebrew Script Writing Materials
Hebrew Letter Flash Cards
Machberet
Being Torah Text
Yesh Lanu Lamah Text I
Siddur Sim Shalom
Project Fee
The *Gimel* class sponsors an *oneg* for their *siyyum hasafer* on Friday, May 11

DALET, HEY AND VAV:

The fees for Dalet through Vav include the ***Sensational Shabbat Retreat*** we are planning for March of this school year. Please see the enclosed letter for more information. If you would like your child to participate, we need to receive payment for this immediately. *Today!*

DALET (4) \$130

Xeroxing
The Family Participation *Haggadah*
Prayer Tapes and Hebrew Reading Materials
God's Top 10
Yesh Lanu Lamah Text II
Project Fee

HEY (5) \$130

Xeroxing
Prayer Tapes and Hebrew Reading Materials
Torah Aura C-Ha Current Events Subscription and *Mah L'sot*
Shema and its Blessing
Megillah
Yesh Lanu Lamah Text II
Yesh Lanu Lamah Workbook II
Project Fee
Hey Class Sponsors a *Kiddush* for their Service

VAV (6) \$130

Xeroxing
Prayer Tapes and Hebrew Reading Materials
Megillah Materials
Contemporary Issues Resources
Rosh Chodesh Journals
Project Fee
Vav Class Sponsors a *Kiddush* for their Service

ZAYIN (7)

\$140

Xeroxing
Projects Fee
Tanach Text
Conversational Hebrew Text
Wednesday Night Dinners

HIGH SCHOOL (8-11)

Xeroxing and Book Fee

CHET (8) \$50+ \$120 (optional fee for Wednesday night dinners throughout the year.)=\$173

Xeroxing
Elective and Special Activities
Hebrew Materials
Torah Toons II
Wednesday Night Dinners

TET (9) \$50 + \$120 (optional fee for Wednesday night dinners throughout the year.)=\$183

Xeroxing
Elective and Special Activities
Hebrew Materials
Emet V'emunah
Wednesday Night Dinners

YUD (10) \$50 + \$120 (optional fee for Wednesday night dinners throughout the year.)=\$185

Xeroxing
Elective and Special Activities
Hebrew Materials
Torah Commentary For Our Times
Wednesday Night Dinners

YUD ALEPH (11) \$50 + \$120 (optional fee for Wednesday night dinners throughout the year.)=\$185

Xeroxing
Elective and Special Activities
Hebrew Materials
Jewish Civics: A *Tikkun Olam*/World Repair Manual
Jews, Judaism and Civic Responsibility
Wednesday Night Dinners

YUD BET (12) \$60 + \$120 (optional fee for Wednesday night dinners throughout the year.)=\$181

Xeroxing
Elective and Special Activities
Jewish Civics: A *Tikkun Olam*/World Repair Manual
Wednesday Night Dinners

Replacement Purchases

Siddur Sim Shalom (required for grades 3, 5 and 6) \$30
Aleph Bet Language Book (required for grade 6) \$25
Yesh Lanu Lamah Text and Workbook (\$11)

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Hi,

Take your pick ... you have three different kinds of letters here that you can use in August when you write to parents.

B' shalom,
Serene

OPENING LETTER

Temple Talmud Torah

613 Mitzvot Way

Shalom City, IL

Phone: 123-456-7890 Fax: 123-456-7899

www.TempleTalmudTorah.org

August 21, 20__

Dear Parent,

We trust that you have had a restful and healthy summer. As we look forward to the 57__ school year, I want to be sure you receive and return all necessary information. Enclosed you will find:

1. Calendar
2. Class Assignments
3. The *mensch* chart to discuss with your children
4. Information about parking lot pick-up and safety
5. A letter from Diane ____, our family educator
6. Forms which you need to return, including
 - a) parent involvement form
 - b) universal permission slip
 - c) high holiday help form
 - d) book order forms
 - e) Family Table Help Wanted Form
7. Please also send in:
 - a) a photograph of your child(ren) for the gallery in my office
 - b) summer reading rainbow forms

Students are expected to come on the first day prepared with books and materials appropriate to their class. Texts will be distributed in class. Following is a list of materials and special instructions and information for each class. Please read this carefully.

Gan Sunday, September 7 will be an open house. Students in the 9-11 class may come to meet Shelley and the high school aides between 9:30-10:30; Students in the 11:10 class may come between 11:30-12:30. Parents are welcome to join their children.

Gan, Aleph, Bet Come with a smile, a Hebrew name and *tsedakah*. Supplies are provided through the book order form.

Gimel Bring *tsedakah*, Hebrew name, pencils, magic markers, a pocket folder, box of tissue, and plastic tub (dish pan size) for storage of books and supplies.

Dalet, Hey, Vav, Zayin (4th-7th) Bring three ring binder with attached pockets, 5 extra pocket folders, pencils, pencil case with holes for binders, notebook paper, magic markers, *tsedakah*, box of tissue, and a plastic tub (dishpan size) for storage.

Hey, Vav Please make sure your child brings a **covered** *siddur* to the first day of class and each day thereafter. It is inappropriate for students to borrow for use in class congregational *siddurim* that were specifically given in someone's memory or honor. Distinctively covering a *siddur* makes it easier to identify. It is also a way to show respect.

8th - 11th

It is required that you purchase one three inch three ring binder with tabs that will be left at the school.

Attached to this letter is a memo from the school committee concerning respectful classroom behavior. Please take a moment to read it and discuss it with your child(ren).

Once again as the new year starts I want to enlist your cooperation regarding the parking lot. Drive Slowly!! Do not encourage students to walk down to the end of the parking lot or onto Piper Road to meet you. Only pick them up in the upper perimeter of the parking lot. No student should wander down to Piper Road. Students should never be in the center of the lot.

Please remember to regulate your children's use of the snack machine. From our perspective, snacks are good before school and during *hafsakah* (break). You probably want to monitor how much and what your child is buying.

You will also find a letter from Diane _____ highlighting some initiatives in our family education program this year, as well as a flyer for the pre-high holiday classes for adults beginning on September 7. I have studied with Erica Brown so I can give my personal endorsement for her passion and teaching talent. Don't miss this rare opportunity of the entire month of September to prepare yourselves for the high holidays

I'm looking forward to a productive, rewarding year, and can't wait to see you all.

B'shalom,

Written by Robyn Perlin, Assistant Director of Rosenbloom Religious School, Chizuk Amuno Congregation, Baltimore, Md 2000. An oldie but goodie.☺

Dear _____ Religious School Family,

As I think about the upcoming school year, I am preparing for a school and synagogue community based on living a life of Jewish values, on teaching and learning Torah over our lifetimes, and on creating a comfortable, creative environment for Jewish observance, learning, fun, and the celebrations of life. I have realized that my preparations this summer are about creating the home that we (parents, students, teachers) will share here at _____.

Come with me on a tour of our _____ home:

The Study: In our classrooms, we find our students and teachers engaged in a lively, spirited, important discussions about Torah texts and mitzvot.

The Playroom: We find our students and teachers taking their learning a step further, and discovering their studies through art, music, drama, role-playing and games.

The Kitchen: We watch our students experiment with all of the ingredients they've been given (by their parents and their teachers), as they take all that they've learned and combine it into an understanding of Judaism and a passion for Jewish learning.

The Backyard: We see our students playing and using their creativity and imaginations as they participate in our youth-group activities. _____, the 3rd and 4th grade and _____ the 5th and 6th grade) provide our students with that extra, outside-of-the-classroom time to be with their friends in a Jewish setting. Watch out for our fabulous 4th grade Sollelim Shabbat Sleepover in January and our 5th grade geshet Shabbat Sleepover in February.

The Front Door: We are greeting our parents, grandparents, and other friends as they join us for special family programs and school-wide activities throughout the year. We love welcoming guests to our home, and hope that you'll join us for _____ Tikkun Olam Day in October, for Aseh Lekha Rav: Parent Study Day in November and for our School-Wide Winter Festival in December.

And we face **the Eastern Wall** of our home; we join in with Jews around the world and throughout time, in focusing our prayers towards Jerusalem. Our home has lots of different types of prayer services, and we hope you'll try us out! Junior Congregation (families of k-4th grade) meets every Shabbat from 10:45-11:45 a.m. in the Chapel. Kindergarten and 1st grade students and families meet once per month from 10:45-11:45 a.m. in the multipurpose room. 5th and 6th grade meets twice per month in *Simchat Shabbat* from 10:30-12 noon in Room 252. Come find the service that's the right fit for you and your family.

Our home has many more rooms than those listed here. But, as with any home, it's only as "homey" and comfortable as the people in it. Thank you for being part of our _____ home and for making it the warm, supportive, Jewish home that it is. It's going to be a fabulous year.

Dear Parents and Students,

I hope that you are having a restful and enjoyable summer. With the school year fast approaching, I would like to welcome you back to school. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new students and their families to our community and to which everyone *hatzlacha* – good luck ... in the year ahead. Welcome _____ and _____ and _____. In addition I would like to extend a *mazal tov* to _____, our new Education Committee Chairperson and to _____ our P.T.A. President.

ASHREI YOSHVE VEYTECHA ... Happy are those who dwell in your house."

These words taken from the Psalms, and part of the prayer service, are traditionally said upon entering a synagogue. Let me suggest that this tradition of reciting *Ashrei* would also be appropriate when entering our religious school. At Chizuk Amuno we have created an educated, proud, vibrant, and "happy" community of learners. It is not uncommon to hear remarks from our parents such as "Religious School wasn't like this when I was growing up!" "My kids love going to Religious School." "Another wonderful program. Keep it up!" How about this comment, often made by the faculty: "Yes, it can happen in an afternoon school." My person favorite is one that a particular enthusiastic parent remarked to me: "We should have religious school instruction for parents as well." I would like to suggest that the reason we have created a "happy" community of learners is precisely because, to be part of our religious school is to "dwell", indeed, to live in the synagogue, which is God's house. Our religious school provides many opportunities to make Chizuk Amuno our dwelling place: junior congregation, youth groups, family programs, school-wide activities, and holiday celebrations.

To paraphrase the words of the Psalmist: "Happy" are those families who attend Rosenbloom Religious School. So, I invite you to join me in reciting *ASHREI YOSHVEI VYTECHA* as we joyously begin the new school year.

Included in this booklet is important information for the coming religious school year. Please familiarize yourself with its contents. It will address questions you may have pertaining to such items as the school calendar, Bar and Bat Mitzvah requirements youth programming, attendance, behavior code, Jr. Congregation and Middle School Minyan information, and much more. **Please keep it in a handy place.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school office at _____.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Stuart Seltzer

Hi You Guys,

Another document you should have for the beginning of school is a safety memo to parents. Primarily this should include instructions for pick up and drop off. If this is an area of concern for you, you might want to call the police or fire department to take a look at your system and make some suggestions for improvement. Then communicate with parents and everyone else in the congregation!

A tip: if you have an executive director in the synagogue, coordinate this with him/her.

B'shalom,
Serene

p.s. Do you hold fire drills? Ask the fire marshal about your fire escape plan.

A SAFETY NOTICE TO PARENTS

With the increasing school enrollment we have begun to experience traffic problems during pick-up and drop-off times. In order to speed up the process, while at the same time ensure safety for all, we have drafted the following procedures. Please read them carefully and make sure that whoever does your child's pick-up or car pool is made aware of the rules.

Please observe our traffic pattern and the following rules for drop-off and pick-up. It is of the utmost importance to the safety and welfare of our students.

Primary grade students should be escorted both when entering and leaving the temple to assure them maximum protection. Parents should always park in the lower parking lot.

DROP-OFF: Parent should drop off all students at the lower level of the traffic circle. You should not go around the circle as this endangers students walking between the temple building and the lower parking lot.

PICK-UP: Cars should form a line starting at the pick-up area and stretching to the right side of the lower parking lot. Students may board the cars at the pick-up area which is supervised by a staff member, or they may walk along the outside of the row of cars and board at the spot where the car is in line.

Drivers should move slowly forwards, while remaining in line, to fill in gaps that are created by departing cars.

Drivers should not park their cars in the line if they intend to go into the building.

Drivers should not "cut" the line by driving into open gaps in the line.

Drivers should not form a double line along the inside of the circle.

Drivers should encourage their students to meet up with their car pool mates and board their car together, whenever possible.

Here's a great to review vocabulary: Take a sturdy paper plate and write the words on the front or back. If you want the kids to recognize the words from Hebrew to English, write the Hebrew words. If you want them to translate words from English to Hebrew, write the English words. The should be written in hap-hazardly, going in different directions.

To play this game, kids stand in a field, not too far from the teacher. Teacher tosses the plate, a la Frisbee. The student who catches it must translate the word under his/her thumb when the plate is caught. With nice weather, this can be done outside, or, go into a large social hall to play.

May 2008

Dear Educator:

Now you can find new resources on our web site to help you, your teachers, and your families use the [Look at Me](#) early childhood series most effectively.

FOR PARENTS:

The [Parent Pages for Look at Me](#) provide a parallel family experience for parents of children who use the [Look at Me](#) booklets.

You can print out and send home, or email families, the [Look at Me Parent Pages](#) from our web site. The pages include:

- Easy, quick, and meaningful home activities, for example, songs to sing and picture books to read
- Ways for families to create their own Jewish traditions and memories
- Shabbat and Hanukkah blessings in Hebrew, translation, and transliteration

A special feature called "Time for Grown-Ups" provides Jewish texts that offer parents an easy way to pursue their own Jewish learning.

Click on www.behrmanhouse.com/fortheed/itc/039.shtml to print out or email the Parent Pages.

FOR TEACHERS:

Our web site also contains the [Look at Me Teaching Guide](#). It is filled with developmentally appropriate learning activities to complement the Look at Me texts and engage students across a broad spectrum of learning styles.

Click on www.behrmanhouse.com/LAMTG/LookatMeTG.pdf to open the Teaching Guide.

Best wishes,

Terry Kaye
800-221-2755, ext. 216
terry@behrmanhouse.com

Log in to the Jewish Agency (see link below) to take a look at this huge map of Israel (described below). Very Reasonable!

The size of the map is 77" X 27"

Designed for educational purposes.

Both transliterated Hebrew pronunciation and standard English spelling cited Yerushalayim (Jerusalem). Includes a "Mini-map" of the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean.

Quality durable lamination.

Wall hangers included.

The Jewish Agency for Israel
Tel: 02-6202629
Fax: 02-6204122
Bookshop@jafi.org
<http://bookshop.jewishagency.org>

Friends,

I know that the fall holidays are the LAST thing on your mind at this moment; the absolute LAST. But, if you could take a moment to respond to this, we would appreciate it.

Many synagogues request that the religious school and nursery school students decorate the synagogue sukkah. So, we would like to put together ideas for our website and make a pamphlet of ideas SPECIFICALLY about decorating a sukkah. Do you have some tried-and-true ideas that work? We are looking for ideas beyond paper chains (in fact, that's what we will call it: DECORATING THE SUKKAH: BEYOND PAPER CHAINS!). Do you have catalogs you order from? Specific projects that particularly lend themselves to the sukkah theme (even if they come from a secular catalog)? Supplies to take the place of paper and poster boards that work because they are water- & rain-proof? Ideas that educate about the ushpizin or other concepts of Sukkot besides Hiddur Mitzvah?

If you have some ideas, please send them our way. We would love to share and help beautify all the Sukkot dotted across our region!

Todah!

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Wishing you all a wonderful summer!

Michelle & Nita