

Beth Shir Sholom Religious School

2009–20010

Philosophy

The goal of Jewish education within the Reform Movement is the deepening of Jewish experience and knowledge for all liberal Jews in order to strengthen faith in God, love of *Torah* and identification with the Jewish people through involvement in synagogue and participation in Jewish life.

At Beth Shir Sholom we believe that Jewish education should foster within each child the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to participate comfortably in the Jewish Community. We take great pride in the members of our excellent teaching staff, who provide our students with a rich understanding and appreciation of Judaism. We are excited about our well-rounded curriculum, which focuses on the Jewish family, Jewish values, Hebrew, prayer, *Torah* and history, rituals, customs, Israel, Jewish ethics, *tzedakah* and social action, in addition to our wonderful Family Education Days. The staff works in partnership with parents through our educational process, and provides materials for our students to take home and share with their families. Also provided are many *mitzvah* opportunities for our classes and families to participate in.

Goals

- To nurture a positive Jewish identity
- To create an enriching and uplifting Jewish educational experience
- To provide many opportunities to enhance and encourage Jewish family life
- To provide an understanding of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), and encourage student and family participation in *mitzvot* opportunities

- To provide an opportunity to enhance your child's self-esteem through Jewish peer relationships at Beth Shir Sholom
 - To develop an understanding of basic Jewish concepts in *Torah*, history, rituals, holidays, prayer and Hebrew
 - To encourage our students' understanding and its people of Israel
 - To encourage a lifetime commitment to Jewish life and Jewish communal involvement
- To create LifeLong Jews

*It is said in the Talmud that for one who teaches a child,
it is as if they created him/her.*

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share in your child's Jewish education.

Religious School Hours

Sundays	Kindergarten through Third Grade	9:00–11:00 a.m.
	Fourth through Seventh Grade	11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Tuesdays	Fourth and Fifth Grades	3:45–6:00 p.m.
	Confirmation (Tenth Grade)	5:00–6:00 p.m.
	Teen Tuesday (8 th –12 th Grades)	5:00–7:15 p.m.
	BeSSTY YG's (8 th –12 th Grades)	
Wednesdays	Sixth and Seventh Grades	3:45–6:00 p.m.
	Jr. BeSSTY (6 th & 7 th Grades)	(integrated into class)

Attendance and Promptness

All students are expected to attend all class sessions. If your child is absent, we ask that you leave a message in our Religious School office at 310 453–3361, so that the teacher will be informed. If your child is absent more than two sessions in a row, the teacher will contact you regarding the assignments that your child has missed. We expect that your child will arrive on-time to school. **If your child has an excess amount of absences, and falls behind in Hebrew, your child will have to be privately tutored at your expense.**

Early Dismissal

No student will be allowed to meet their parent early without that parent signing their child out in the Religious School Office or at the front desk. Parents are not allowed to go directly to the classroom. You must sign your child out first. No student may leave the building during school hours without being signed out by the parent or an appointed person. (Written permission for this person from the parent must accompany the child).

Drop-off Procedures

All students must be dropped off in front of the Temple on California. There will be teachers and teacher aides to greet our younger students and walk them to their classrooms on Sunday Mornings. There will be a security guard at the front doors during school hours. At all other time the doors will remained locked for security purposes. If parents would like to park and walk your students to their classes, you **MUST** park legally on the street.

Pick up Procedures

We will be forming a carpool line south on 19th street making a right onto California. You will not have to park to pick up your child. Your child will be brought to your car and we ask that you pull away promptly so you do not hold up other parents. **Please be patient!**

Rainy Day Pick up

In case of rain, all parents must park and walk in to pick up their child in the entrance lobby area. **NO** students will be dismissed without the parent physically coming in and picking up their child.

Dress Code

Students must dress appropriately for Religious/Sunday School. Students **should not wear tank tops without proper covering**, cannot have their stomachs showing, or wear inappropriate t-shirts. Students should be dressed in a way that shows respect to the Temple.

Discipline Policy

All staff, students and parents will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with *derech eretz* (proper behavior) at all times. The staff is responsible for implementing all discipline procedures conducive with an orderly, safe and productive learning environment. When it is recognized by any staff member that a student is behaving in an inappropriate way, one or more of the following will be implemented: 1. The teacher will talk to the student in a private conversation, 2. The teacher will refer this student to the Director of Education for a further discussion, 3. The parent(s) will be contacted for a personal meeting with the Director to discuss the behavior and talk about expectations of the student, 4. To be determined based on each student individually.

Tzedakah

A fundamental principle in our Religious School is the intent to do *ma'asim Tovim* (good deeds) and that includes *tzedakah* (righteous behavior). One way we are committed to living out this value is by contributing to our weekly *tzedakah* collection in the each classroom. An appropriate weekly amount to be sent with your child is between 25 cents and one dollar. At the end of the school year, our students will determine where this money will be donated.

Friday Night Shabbat Services

All of our students Kindergarten through Sixth Grades are required to attend their grade level Shabbat Service once a year, and an additional two throughout the year (for a total of 3 Shabbat Worship experiences). In addition to that, Fourth graders through Sixth graders are required to attend an additional two Shabbat Services during the year, which bring the total Shabbat requirements for Fourth through Sixth graders to five Shabbatot (4 Friday night Shabbat worship and one Saturday morning). Seventh Grade requirements are listed in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Handbook.

Guests

Students may occasionally bring a visitor to our school with prior permission from the Director of Education.

Snacks

Sundays: The students will be provided with challah and juice, which parents will be asked to provide on a rotating basis. You will be contacted by your child's teacher when it is your turn.

Weekdays: If your child has not signed up for pizza and drinks (see enclosed form) snack will be available for purchase at \$1/day. Please send \$1 with your child each week to purchase a snack. In addition to candy and chips, healthy snacks will be available per the request of the parents.

Family Educational Opportunities

The Religious School of Beth Shir Sholom has a commitment to empower and enable the entire family to comfortably participate in our Jewish community. Each grade will have one Family Education Day in which the parents are expected to come to school with their child. There will be other special days offered during the school year which will be open to the entire Beth Shir Sholom community. The staff of Beth Shir Sholom is always available for your personal questions.

Family Shabbat Opportunities

Our Sunday and Religious School students will be participating in a grade level Shabbat. Please join us for this wonderful Shabbat experience. The First Friday of each month is our Family Shabbat Service geared for ages Preschool through Third Grades. The Second Friday of each month is our Ice Cream Shabbat and is geared for our Fourth Graders and above.

Education Committee

Our Education Committee is under the leadership of Vice President of Education. This committee is the support group for the Director of Education and our entire school. This committee will set goals, review policy and curriculum, and act as a liaison for the school. If you would like further information about this committee, please contact the Director of Education.

Room Parents

We are looking for some wonderful parents to become involved as room parents for their child's classroom. If you would like to volunteer for this, please contact our Director of LifeLong Learning.

Kol Ha Shalom Youth Choir

Our Youth Choir is under the direction of our Cantor. All of the students in our Religious School will be taught the choir songs and prayers during Sunday School. They all will have the opportunity to sing in the Youth Choir at our Family Shabbatot, holiday services and community outreach events.

BeSh²TY Youth Group (Beth Shir Sholom Temple Youth)

We at Beth Shir Sholom are proud of our Youth Programming, which we have been working very hard to rejuvenate. Our youth groups consist of social, social action and Religious programming in an informal and fun setting.

Senior BeSh²TY YG's (8th through 12th grades) are associated with NFTY, the National Federation of Temple Youth. We will provide teens with social, social action and religious programming, as well as helping develop their leadership and organizational skills. As a high school member of Senior BeSSTY, they are eligible to attend the many NFTY conclaves and conventions throughout the year.

Junior BeSh²TY YG's (6th & 7th grades) will have the opportunity to socialize during our Youth group events, which is integrated during Religious School at Beth Shir Sholom. They will also have the option of attending several Sunday events outside of Beth Shir Sholom throughout the school year.

Mini BeSh²TY YG's (4th & 5th grades) is an integrated part of our Religious school program. Once a month our students are provided with socialization while at Religious School. This is an opportunity for all the students to get to know each other, as well as learning that Religious School can also be “fun”, and educational at the same time.

Beth Shir Sholom
Religious School Curriculum
2009–2010

Chaverim (K–3rd Grades)

Kindergarten

Students are introduced to basic Jewish symbols, *tzedekah and mitzvot*, holidays, Jewish values and Bible characters. They are exposed to the Hebrew letters. This class provides opportunities for the child to enrich his or her Jewish experience through in-class activities that may be continued at home as part of ongoing Jewish living and expression. Parents are an important part of this course and are encouraged to extend course work to the home environment through stories, rituals and activities.

First Grade

Students will be introduced to the *Torah* through an exploration of the personalities and stories in Genesis and Exodus. They will examine more closely the holidays and Jewish values. They will also be introduced to Jewish ritual, practices and religious objects. Hebrew letter recognition and their sounds will be taught.

Second Grade

This curriculum takes an in-depth look at the Jewish calendar: its months, seasons, holidays and events. Art, music, cooking and stories will help explore each holiday, and investigate its meaning and practice within Jewish tradition. Our students will also be reinforcing the Hebrew letters and their sounds, and putting these sounds together for form simple words.

Third Grade

This course will complete an in-depth exploration of Jewish values through Biblical and Rabbinic stories, as well as tales from Jewish folklore. The class will discover important values that enhance their religious and secular lives. Students will also learn about Israel, its past and its present. The Hebrew component will build on the prior year with emphasis on reading words and prayers.

Hebrew and Religious Curriculum

Chalutzim (4–7th Grades)

Fourth Grade

Our Fourth Graders will explore God and the question of “how we live as God’s partner”. Our students will also discuss the significance of Jewish values and how they relate to growing up Jewish today. Our Hebrew program teaches additional prayers, and students will learn modern Hebrew words such as colors and family members.

Fifth Grade

Students will study and experience the Jewish life cycle, with its emphasis on making all of life’s moments holy and meaningful. Students will begin at birth, and continue through *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, Jewish weddings and a discussions through death and mourning practices. Parents will play an integral part of this experience. Our Hebrew program continues teaching prayers and broadens the scope of modern Hebrew words and simple sentences.

Sixth Grade

Our Sixth Graders will explore their family history, study Israel’s role in the world, and learn about and discuss various aspects of the Holocaust. We will discuss what it means to be a Jew today living in America, and how it differs from what their ancestors experienced. Our Hebrew program expands, teaching all additional prayers necessary for *B’nai Mitzvah*, as well as further modern Hebrew.

Seventh Grade

Students will return to the study of *Torah* in preparation for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The students will have the opportunity to discuss and analyze various *Torah* portions and will be introduced to their *Haftarah*. The curriculum includes Jewish philosophy, moral and ethical issues, Synagogue skills and continued Hebrew.

Beth Shir Sholom

Teen Tuesday

Eighth Grade through Twelfth Grade

Our high school program for this year was designed around the goal of attracting and keeping our students involved in Temple life after the completion of their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Our new, exciting curriculum is constructed as an rotation of the following themes: Jewish View on Teen Issues, Conversational Hebrew and Jewish Arts. We will explore the challenges of growing up as a Jewish teen today and how to deal with difficult situations when they arise. Students will learn a range of conversational Hebrew phrases that will come in handy when they have the opportunity to go with their peers to Israel, or just to converse with their friends in the Temple. Fun will be had by all when students experience various arts such as Jewish cooking, Jewish arts and Jewish Karate.

Tenth Grade Confirmation

This course is about life skills with the opportunity for our students to study closely with Rabbi Neil Comess–Daniels. Students will explore what being a Jewish adult means and how it will shape their future. Rabbi will challenge the students to call upon their years of learning in our Religious School program, and translate those values, insights and concepts into real world goals and objectives.