

**Sinai Temple Religious  
School  
Parent Handbook  
Policies and Guidelines  
5779-5780  
2019-2020**

Dear Parents,

*Shalom.* It is our pleasure and honor to welcome both you and your children, on behalf of Sinai Temple, to our Religious School.

The centerpiece of the Jewish tradition is education. Learning transmits our ideals, solidifies our values, sharpens our minds, and elevates our soul.

We at Sinai Temple take each of our students seriously. It is our mission to help them understand the ancient tradition of our people. We believe that educating your children is a sacred trust. We will do our best to be worthy of that trust.

We are excited about the coming year and look forward to meeting you and your children and spending many hours in joyous learning together.

Sincerely,

Rabbi David Wolpe

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Dear Parents,

*Shalom!* Our focus is to give our children an understanding, appreciation and love of their Jewish heritage. We also hope to instill a desire to practice Judaism both in the home and in the community. To meet these goals, we have created an environment that is challenging, but which also captivates the imagination and enthusiasm of the students. We want our children to develop a passion for learning, a connection to Israel and the desire to continue their Jewish studies as an adult, from generation to generation, "*M'dor L'dor.*"

We are eager to create a partnership with you, and look forward to your participation in this learning endeavor.

Warmly,

Danielle Salem Kassin  
Director of Religious School

# Sinai Temple Religious School

## Policies and Guidelines

### STARS MISSION STATEMENT

Sinai Temple Religious School is committed to instilling a strong connection to Jewish tradition, Israel and the Jewish community at large. Students engage in the study of Torah, Hebrew, and Tefillah (prayer) to nurture their developing Jewish identity.

### POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

#### PROGRAMS AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

##### K- 2<sup>nd</sup> GRADE PROGRAM

- Our K- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade program is on Sundays from 9:30 am -12:30 pm. Students are also eligible to register for the K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade enrichment program on Wednesdays from 4:00-6:00 pm.
- Students are invited to join in Stars Shabbat services (generally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month Oct-June).

##### 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> GRADE PROGRAM

- According to the Sinai Temple policy (for Bnei Mitzvah), students are required to attend on Sundays from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm and on Wednesdays from 4:00 – 6:00 pm. To get the full benefits of Religious School, students should be on time and stay for the entire class.
- Students are required to attend 7 Stars Shabbats per year (generally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month Oct-June).

##### 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE NA'ASEH PROGRAM

- According to the Sinai Temple policy (for Bnei Mitzvah), students are required to attend on Sundays from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
- Students are also required to attend weekly POD class on either Mon, Tues, or Wed (depending on parent choice and class availability) for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Students must be on time and stay for the entire class. Once the school year begins, there will be no switching of pod days and no exceptions.
- Students have a sleepover and a weekend retreat.
- Assessments will be done throughout the year.

#### ATTENDANCE

Attendance on a regular basis is a basic requirement of the students. When a child is ill, please call or email the Religious School Office or your child's teacher.

- Regular attendance is important for your children's learning. When a child misses classes, comes late or leaves early, parents are responsible to be in touch with the teacher to make up missed work.

#### STARS SHABBAT SERVICES

STARS Shabbat Services are a mandatory part of our program. Please check the schedule for dates and times. (They are almost always the second Saturday of the month.) Families with students in 3<sup>rd</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> grades must attend seven services per year. Please dress appropriately for synagogue. We encourage all families to join us for a sponsored lunch following the service.

We offer the opportunity for families to sponsor the lunch. Please call the Religious School office at (310) 481-3271 for details.

#### BAR/BAT MITZVAH REQUIREMENT

All bar/bat mitzvah dates are scheduled through the Cantor's office at (310) 481-3235. Please request a copy of the Sinai Temple bar/bat mitzvah requirements if necessary. You may also go to [www.cybermitzvah.org](http://www.cybermitzvah.org) for more information.

#### BAR/BAT MITZVAH INVITES

We encourage families to invite their entire class to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We are a community and do not want students to feel left out. Please contact us for a full roster.

#### BEHAVIOR

Good behavior will be expected from each student. Respect for the teachers and peers is of primary concern. We acknowledge good behavior with *Derech Eretz* and Kindness Awards which we give out twice per year. If there is continuing misbehavior, parents will be notified immediately so that the problem can be solved together with the staff and child.

Appropriate conduct goes beyond the classroom. We see it as a part of teaching our children "Derech Eretz" – the difference between right and wrong. We should act according to the 4 R's of *Derech Eretz*:

- Respect for people
- Respect for property
- Respect for class time
- Respect for learning
- Respect for God

כבוד

### דָּרֵךְ אֶרֶץ קִדְמָה תּוֹרָה School Rules

Make Safe Choices

אֲנִי בּוֹחֵר נְכוֹן

Try Your Best

אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה אֶת הַטּוֹב  
בְּיוֹתֵר

Use kind words and kind actions

אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר יָפָה וְעוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים

Respect yourself and others and our School כָּבוֹד לְעַצְמִי, כָּבוֹד לַחֲבֵרִים וּלְכָלֵם

#### DISCIPLINE POLICY

The teacher will work with each student on an individual basis to handle any disciplinary problems. The Religious School Director will become involved if the problems continue or the student becomes a disruption to the class. Parents will be notified when a student is sent to the office. At that point, parents may be asked to attend a meeting with the teacher, Religious School Director and their child. When problems are serious or continuous, the Religious School Director has the option to suspend or expel the child from school.

### CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In an effort to build community and focus during all times at religious school, we have instituted a new policy regarding cell phones. We want our students to talk to each other at breaks and recesses and focus on learning during class time. Therefore, cell phones will not be allowed during religious school times (Sundays 9:30 – 12:30, Tuesdays 4:00 – 5:15 pm, Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:00 pm). If parents need to speak with their children, or get any message to the children, they must call the office at 310-481-3271.

If a teacher sees a cell phone during class time or recess, no warnings will be given. The teacher will take the phone and turn it into the office.

- 1st infraction: Parents must come to the office to retrieve the phone.
- 2nd infraction: Parents must come to the office to retrieve the phone and sign an acknowledgement regarding the next steps if there is a third cell phone violation.
- 3rd infraction: The phone will remain in the Religious School office safe until the next religious school day.

Exceptions: If a teacher has asked students to use their phones to play Kahoot, or do research, the phones will be allowed out for educational purposes only and monitored by teachers. If students are found using their phones for non-educational purposes, the phone will be taken.

Students 5th – 7th grade will sign a form at the beginning of the school year to ensure knowledge of policy and consequences.

### LEARNING CHALLENGES

If the child has any learning disabilities or challenges, parents are responsible to inform the teacher, as well as the Director, in writing at the beginning of the school year. We enforce this policy to ensure the best possible learning environment for our children. We also have a program called *Beit Bracha* for children with special needs. If you are interested in more details, please call Rabbi Guzik (310) 481-3234 or Danielle Kassin at (310) 481-3271.

### GUESTS

Students may not bring visitors to class. If you know a family/student who is interested in joining our religious school, please contact the Religious School office and we will be happy to meet with or talk to the prospective congregants and set up a trial day for prospective students.

### HOMEWORK

Our policy is that homework will be given if it is appropriate to a subject. We realize the pressure of the secular school homework assignments and are sensitive to the situation. Homework is at the teacher's discretion. If parents want homework for their child they should request it directly from their child's teacher. Students who spend some time with Hebrew at home consistently advance their Hebrew skills more.

In all grades, we highly recommend that Hebrew reading be reviewed at home on a regular basis (even if a parent does not read Hebrew; just listening to the child read will improve the child's reading). There will be school "Prayer Challenges" throughout the year, where students will learn a prayer and practice at home until fluent. Please encourage your child to participate!

### DOG TAG INCENTIVE PROGRAM

To help students learn the Aleph Bet, we have created the Dog Tag incentive program. Students are encouraged to study at home with a guide that's available in the office. When they have studied and their teacher feels they are ready (and they feel ready), students can take the test in the office. There are four different dog tags they can earn. Aleph, Bet, Gimmel, and Daled. Each level increases in difficulty. When a student passes the test, they receive a dog tag for their level, have a photo taken and posted on our Dog Tag Board, and receive a mention in our weekly newsletter.

### KIPPOT

Boys are to wear Kippot at all times. We encourage girls to wear them too. We encourage children to bring their own kippah, labeled, from home.

### PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are required to volunteer for 5 hours per year. Please choose a volunteer opportunity on the volunteer sheet in the registration packet. Parents may donate \$200 to the Religious School in lieu of volunteering.

## **STUDENT DROP OFF/PICK UP**

All cars must have the most current Sinai car sticker in order to enter the garage. Please contact Aliya Slepko in the temple membership office at (310)481-3246 if you require a new car sticker. Please have your license plate number available when you call.

### **CARPOOL DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP POLICY**

Sinai Temple Religious School students should be dropped off and picked up on P-1. Parents dropping off on Wednesdays *between 3:20- 3:40pm* must follow the Lainer School Carpool rules (you may not make a left and must drive to the end of the carpool line). Please be courteous to the security and carpool staff.

The only other alternative is for parents to park their cars on P-2 through P-4, get out and take the elevator up to drop off or pick up and retrieve their children from the classroom in person. No parent should use the Beverly Glen entrance to drop off. To do so is both dangerous and illegal. Los Angeles City Parking Control officers will be called and parents will receive a citation for up to \$300.00.

### **LATE FEES FOR PICK-UP**

If parents come more than 15 minutes after dismissal time on more than three occasions, a late fee will be assessed.

### **SIGNING OUT EARLY/COMING LATE**

Early dismissal requires a note. If you wish to have your child leave class early, please send a note to inform the teacher, then parents must go to the Religious School office to get a slip. After parents have filled out a slip they can go to the class and give it to the teacher to pick up their child. Please allow time to find your child, as we utilize the building and they are not always in their assigned classroom.

PLEASE NOTE: If you wish to have someone pick-up your child who is not listed as an authorized pickup on the card, please send a note with the person's name and relationship to the child (e.g., friend, relative). The person may be asked to show identification if the teacher does not recognize this person.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **EMERGENCIES**

If a child should receive a minor injury while at school, it will be handled appropriately. In more serious cases, the parent will be notified immediately. In any injury in which we feel it necessary for the child to have medical attention and we cannot reach you, we will call 911.

EACH CHILD MUST HAVE UPDATED MEDICAL FORMS IN STARSNET.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

In the case of an earthquake, fire, or other emergency, our staff is prepared with an Emergency Evacuation Plan. Students will be moved to the safest possible area. They will be supervised and cared for until pick-ups are safe and possible. There is no student pick-up during an emergency drill.

### **INFECTIOUS DISEASE**

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is sick or has lice. Please notify the school if your child contracts any infectious disease, especially lice or Chicken Pox.

If your child becomes ill at school, we will call you to come pick him/her up. If there is no fever, the office will take whatever measures it can to comfort the child.

### **ELEVATORS**

Children may not take the elevator unless they are with an adult, teacher, or have special permission from the office.

### **SUPERVISED AREAS**

Students must be in a supervised area (with an adult present) before and after school. Students are not allowed to walk around the building. They are always welcome to wait in the office.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are formally held once a year. However, teachers are available to meet with you throughout the year. We encourage you to contact your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding progress, class work, etc., or let us know of any special needs/circumstances.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Student progress reports are issued once a year for K-2<sup>nd</sup> grades and twice a year for 3<sup>rd</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> grades. The progress report includes a summary of what has been covered in the class, as well as an evaluation of your child's achievement and work habits. If a child receives an NI (needs improvement), it is important for parents to contact the teacher for a conference appointment. Progress reports can be viewed and printed from your child's record on STARSNET <https://sinaitemple.myschoolapp.com>

### **PARENT PARTNERS**

If you are interested in being a Parent Partner (Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grade only), please indicate your interest on the STARS Volunteer Form. The Religious School office will confirm availability with you at the beginning of the year.

### **PTA & PTA DUES**

The PTA will collect \$50 of PTA dues per child in the beginning of the year as part of the registration process. This money covers teacher gifts and special events throughout the year.

### **E-MAIL**

Each Thursday the office sends out our Yom Hamishi (Thursday) parent email. Please make sure you give us your e-mail address and check it often. In interest of saving lots of time and money, we do not do mailings. If a parent does not have an e-mail address, we will ask that they come to the office on a regular basis to pick up the e-mails that are being sent.

### **FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM/WEBSITE**

Please "Like" the Sinai Temple Religious School facebook page at [www.facebook.com/religiouschool.sinaitemple](http://www.facebook.com/religiouschool.sinaitemple) to view updates and pics of happenings at Religious School.

Visit our website at [www.sinaitemple.org/stars](http://www.sinaitemple.org/stars) for Religious School information, online registration, and links to temple events.

Follow Sinai Temple Religious School on Instagram @ SinaiTemple\_ReligiousSchool

## **TZEDAKAH (CHARITY)**

Students will be encouraged to make contributions of canned food for the needy or to the school *Tzedakah* Fund. The amount is not as important as their continuing responsibility in caring for the needs of others who are less fortunate. During the year, the students will discuss and determine the distribution of funds.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ROSTERS**

Rosters are available on STARSNET <https://sinaitemple.myschoolapp.com> in the Directory. They include email address, address, phone number and parents' names. We encourage you to contact other parent to set up playdates outside of Religious School hours.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

We encourage you to take all textbooks home at the end of the year to start a Jewish library for your reference. At the beginning of the school year, please take the time to look at your child's textbooks with them.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS/PARENT PARTICIPATION

Family Engagement Programs are geared to strengthen Jewish education of the family as a unit. This is a priority for our synagogue and our school. Please note when your child's family program is scheduled to take place and save the date. It is important that a parent or relative accompany their child to programs when they are requested. The more support and emphasis the parents give to their children's Jewish education, the more the children will be involved and thrive!

### **ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Services Attendance Policy 2019-2020**

Dear Families,

We have designed our ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Services as a learning experience to encourage and to help students and families prepare for their bar/bat mitzvah at Sinai Temple. Attendance is a required part of our program for **3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade** students. **Even though it is not a required part of our program, we encourage and invite all families of students in K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade to attend services with us.**

The following is to clarify the ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Services requirements:

1. ST☆RS Shabbats are scheduled the second Saturday of the month throughout the school year. Students must attend **seven** ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Service per year.
2. If ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Services fall on a date which you will be attending a bar/bat mitzvah at another synagogue, you will be required to provide us with a note signed by a parent, and a copy of the invitation to be excused from our ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Service.
  - This note will be filed and you will be excused from that ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Service without having to make it up.
  - A bar/bat mitzvah can also be used as a make-up for our ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Service if it is on a different date.

**6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> graders and their families:** We have heard the concerns of our community and have modified the requirements for 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> graders, as we understand that this year adds yet another challenge as students are preparing (or starting to prepare) weekly with the cantor for their own bar/bat mitzvahs.

You must attend seven Saturday Shabbat services either at Sinai Temple or at another synagogue. If students are attending Bar/Bat Mitzvahs they can bring the invitation to the office (and this will count for credit). If students are attending services at Sinai Temple they can email the office the date and time of the service. We suggest you attend Torah in the Round service, which usually meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month or Family Minyan services.

☆ **Shabbaton-** Camp Ramah Family Weekend Retreat- 2 credits towards requirement.

☆ **Retreat-** Weekend Retreat for 5<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Classes- 2 credits towards requirement.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us in the office at (310) 481-3271.

**We look forward to seeing you at ST☆RS Shabbat Morning Services.**

Sincerely,

Danielle Kassin  
Religious School Director