

# Congregation Jewish Community North Jacques C. Shure Religious School

5400 Fellowship Lane

Spring, Texas 77379

281.376.0016

[www.cjcn.org](http://www.cjcn.org)

## PARENT HANDBOOK

2012-2013

5773

Rabbi  
Principal  
President  
Rabbi Emeritus

Jonathan S. Siger  
Jennifer Siger  
Gale Saltzman  
Robert S. Sharff, D. Min.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## School Philosophy

Our students at the Jacques C. Shure Religious School will become a part of:

- A positive and nurturing environment;
- A challenging and interactive learning experience;
- Extra-curricular programs and activities.

That will:

- Nurture a strong Jewish identity.
- Develop a feeling of belonging to the congregation and community.
- Create long lasting friendships.
- Instill Jewish values and *mitzvo*t that create a meaningful way of life.

How to achieve this:

- Know that learning is a gradual process that doesn't occur overnight.
- It has to be nurtured, reviewed and shared with others.

So Remember:

- Students - Become consistent learners at school.
- Parents - Be a partner in your children's education.
- Families - Participate in Jewish programs, worship services, holiday celebrations, and family rituals, whenever possible.

## Class Sessions

Students are placed in classes according to their grade in public school.

<b>Religious School</b>	–	Grades K through 9 Sunday mornings	9:30 am – 12:15 pm
<b>Menschkateers</b>	–	Ages 3 through 5 Parent and child participatory program offered 6 times throughout the Religious School year. Contact the Religious School Office for registration and more information.  Sunday mornings	9:30 am – 11:00 am
<b>Midweek Hebrew</b>	–	Grades 5 through 7 Wednesday evenings Bar/Bat Mitzvah training	7:00 pm – 8:00 pm 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
<b>Teacher Aides</b>	–	Grades 11 and 12 Opportunities are available for our Confirmation graduates in wanting to continue their connection to our Religious School. Sunday mornings	9:30 am – 12:15 pm

# SCHOOL POLICIES

## **School Time Schedule**

**School begins promptly at 9:30 am and ends at 12:15 pm.**

Please keep in mind that our time is very precious: when you add up the days, school is in session for approximately for just one month. One month of learning is a small amount of time in which to accomplish all our educational goals. It is therefore imperative that you make an effort to see that your children are in school on time.

## **Proper Attire**

Students are expected to come to Religious School dressed as they would for public school. Remember, we are in our Sanctuary on Sunday mornings. We appreciate your discretion in seeing that your children are appropriately dressed.

## **Drop Off and Pick-Up**

Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students must be escorted into the classrooms by a parent and must be picked up from the classroom at 12:15 pm.

## **Early Pick-Up**

Student safety is always our primary concern. If any student needs to be picked up early, please come into the building. Students will not be allowed to leave the building unescorted.

## **Visiting the Classrooms**

Parents are requested not to congregate in classroom areas while classes are in session. However, there will be occasions for you to visit your child's classroom. While always welcome, if you wish to visit a classroom, please contact Jennifer Siger.

## **Absences**

Our students are expected to keep up with classroom lessons and to complete any homework assignments. If a student has frequent absences, they may be assigned work to complete at home so they can keep up with the rest of the class.

## **Snack**

In the spirit of community, K – 4 families are required to give \$20 per student to cover the cost of snack for the entire year for the classroom. In addition, if your child has dietary restrictions, please provide their own snack. This fee will cover a healthy snack and drink.

*All grades will enjoy special foods at holiday celebrations and special programs.*

**Please inform the student's teacher and the Principal of any food restrictions or allergies.**

## **School Closures**

In the event of severe weather or other emergencies, school may be cancelled. You will receive an email or phone call.

## **Lost and Found**

Students' lost and found items will be kept in the Religious School Office. Please mark all personal items with your child's name. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the end of the year.

## **Library Books**

Books should come back to school when completed, so another can be checked out. All library books must be returned by the end of the year. Families are responsible to get another copy of a lost book for the library or pay the library for the lost book.

## **School - Home Communication**

### **Parent Update Letters**

Communication with our families is very important. Twice a year letters are sent home from the teachers describing lessons, classroom activities, and upcoming events.

### **Hebrew Progress Reports**

Progress reports will be sent home twice during the course of the year in Hebrew studies. Students will be evaluated on concepts being taught and overall behavior in the classroom.

### **Illness**

Teachers and Principal will gladly dispense band-aids, ice packs and TLC, but will not administer any oral or topical medication to a student (including Neosporin, aspirin and Tylenol). When necessary, teachers or the principal will contact the parent or other emergency contacts that have been provided to pick up a student who is not feeling well.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

[www.cjcn.org](http://www.cjcn.org)

Rabbi	Jonathan S. Siger	<a href="mailto:Rabbi@cjcn.org">Rabbi@cjcn.org</a>
Principal	Jennifer Siger	<a href="mailto:Principal@cjcn.org">Principal@cjcn.org</a>
President	Gale Saltzman	<a href="mailto:President@cjcn.org">President@cjcn.org</a>
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Security		<a href="mailto:Security@cjcn.org">Security@cjcn.org</a>

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Kavod “Honor” and “Respect”

Students, teachers and parents are expected to uphold a key Jewish value of *kavod* (“honor” and “respect”). Students have the right to learn and teachers have the right to teach; anything interfering with this process will be addressed in an appropriate way.

Our faculty will make every effort to help correct disciplinary situations in a positive and productive manner. Each instructor will discuss with the class his/her expectations and goals; including proper behavior. Occasionally, however, such efforts may prove inadequate for the particular situation. In that case, the following measures may be taken:

1. **Warning** – a telephone call from the principal and/or teacher.
2. **Parent Conference** – a letter or call from the principal and/or teacher requesting a conference with the parent. The student may or may not be included.
3. **Parent Participation** – at times, if deemed appropriate, a parent may be required to attend class with their child
4. **Suspension** - disruptive behavior still persists, suspension may be considered
5. **Expulsion** – in extreme circumstances, if the student’s improvement is not considered sustained, expulsion from school will be a final measure.
6. **Special Circumstances** – other procedures or exceptions to the above may be taken by the Religious School Principal in consultation with the Rabbi, Principal and the VP of Education.

### Disruptive Behavior and Other Offenses

**A parent will need to remove their student immediately from school in case of the following offenses:**

- Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, harmful or dangerous objects
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Smoking
- Violence or threat of violence to others
- Placing self and/or other students in danger
- Extreme disregard of Religious School Code of Conduct and/or of classroom rules

*Removal is at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with the President and Rabbi.*

### Confiscated Items

Please note: A teacher or the principal will confiscate any toys, electronic devices, cell phones, or any item that may cause a distraction to the learning process. Confiscated items will be returned to the parent at the end of the Religious School day.

### **Behavior**

Students are expected to behave appropriately at all times, especially regarding other students and faculty. Students are expected to treat all CJC/N property with respect. This includes the building, its contents, and the grounds surrounding the building. Students are not allowed outside the building, except with their class, while school is in session. Incident reports will be administered as necessary.

# GENERAL CURRICULUM

## Mission & Overview

A whole school curriculum of Jewish holidays, *Tefilla* (prayer), *Kehilla* (community) Israel, *Mitzvot*, and *Tzedakah*, in addition to the regular objectives for each grade, are the core of the Jacques C. Religious School. Students, depending on the class, will experience art, music, story time in our library and visits with the Rabbi. As a member of our community and a student of the Jacques C. Shure Religious School, students will use the building blocks of their knowledge and experience of rituals and values to help form a Jewish identity.

## Menschkateers

### **3 through 5 year old children**

Parent and child participatory program offered six or seven times throughout the Religious School year. Activities are focused around the Jewish holidays.

Time: **Sunday mornings from 9:30 am – 11:00 am**

Dates: **September 30, October 14, December 2, January 13, February 24, April 21**

## K – 8<sup>th</sup>

The Whole-School lessons make up a spiral curriculum in which each lesson focuses on a different aspect of Judaism. The entire school is learning the same subject on the same day, with different focus depending on their grade level. Students have a unique experience each year, while studying the pillars that make up our Jewish identity

## Ninth Grades - Tolerance and Tradition

Our goal is to give the student a comfortable setting to discuss and learn on a higher level about Judaism; the past, present, and future of the world and how it affects us as Jewish people. **Ninth grade** focuses on comparative religions.

## Tenth Grade – Confirmation

In Reform Jewish tradition, Confirmation is a significant life cycle event which is shared by students, families, and the community. This ceremony, often tied to the celebration of *Shavuot*, is both a graduation from the Jacques C. Shure Religious School at the end of tenth grade, and a public confirmation of students' commitment to Judaism.

Confirmation has become firmly related to the festival of *Shavuot* with its dual celebration of the giving of "first fruits" and the giving of the *Torah* on Sinai. So, the students, these "first fruits", or the best that our families have to offer, accept their responsibility in Judaism on the same day that Israel accepted God's *Torah* in mutual consent.

Confirmation should be a culmination of a student's years of attendance at Religious School, becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and a spiritual quest finding direction and guidance, if not always precise answers.

# Hebrew

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## Overview

Hebrew Classes at CJC/N focus on learning traditional liturgy. The students will focus on blessings and *Shabbat* worship services. The study of the *Torah* Service and the meaning and relationship we have to *Torah* are another integral part to this curriculum.

## Goals of the Hebrew Program

1. Learn the central role prayer and Hebrew language play in our heritage.
2. Learn the name and sound of each Hebrew letter and vowel of the Hebrew alphabet.
3. Sight-read any Hebrew text with phonetic accuracy and fluency.
4. Read assigned prayers and blessings with accuracy.
5. Recognize universal Jewish values in specific Hebrew words.
6. Identify and translate key Hebrew terms.
7. Comprehend concepts from selected passages found in our *siddur* (prayer book).
8. Understand the structure of *Shabbat* services.

*Besides learning Hebrew and prayers, immediately following your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, there will be a post B'nai Mitzvah class "Introduction to Conversational Studies" titled "Ulpan Alef" and "Ulpan Bet".*

## Goals of the B'nai Mitzvah Program

1. Read in Hebrew and understand their appropriate *Torah* and *Haftarah* portions.
2. Conduct services as determined by the Rabbi.
3. Read and understand the Hebrew prayers.
4. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Ceremony is not the culmination of formal Jewish education, but rather one of the many customs and ceremonies that lead to the beginning of an "adult" Jewish way of life.

Specific policies regarding *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* preparations and eligibilities can be found in our *B'nai Mitzvah Handbook*.

*In accordance with Congregation Jewish Community North's goal, to provide as complete a Jewish education as possible for every student, those completing their Bar/Bat Mitzvah year are expected to continue in their Jewish education through Confirmation.*

## Midweek Hebrew

The 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> grade students meet for an additional midweek Hebrew Class to reinforce instruction given during Sunday at Religious School. Individualized prayer reading and Jewish holiday studies are an important part of the midweek Hebrew program. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades will be evaluated on their prayer reading accuracy and prayer comprehension before moving into their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* studies.

Students within six (6) months of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ceremony (usually 7<sup>th</sup> grade students) receive an extra hour of Hebrew studies on Wednesday evening. As the actual ceremony approaches, students will begin studies with the Rabbi. These sessions with the Rabbi are scheduled individually. Once the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Ceremony is finished, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students continue studying on Sundays only.



## **Junior Youth Group (JYG)**

JYG is a part of the Religious School curriculum for our 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Programs present social events and Jewish experiences that reinforce Jewish community and identity. For more information, please contact [JYG@cjcn.org](mailto:JYG@cjcn.org)

## **Library**

Every child will visit the library during Religious School hours. It is a special time for these children when they are able to hear a Jewish themed book and then allowed to check one out to take home.

Please set aside time to read and discuss the book they choose. The book should come back to school when it is completed so they may check out another one. All parents and CJCN members are also encouraged to use our library on Sunday mornings. The library has so many wonderful books for children and adults.

## **Senior Youth Group (SPRIFTY)**

Senior Youth Group or SPRIFTY, Spring Reform Federation of Temple Youth, is affiliated with the nation-wide URJ Temple Youth of NFTY. Events include local get-togethers and weekends in other cities or at Greene Family Camp. Students may become national group officers. Both groups depend on the availability of volunteer leadership from CJCN. Members are from the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Contact [SPRIFTY@cjcn.org](mailto:SPRIFTY@cjcn.org) for more information.

## **Gesher**

The *Gesher* Program is also an important part of the curriculum. This program unites suburban congregations throughout our southwest Texas area. Students gather to participate in camp style activities with themes on Jewish values, identity, and community. Jacques C. Shure Religious School programs and participation in youth groups help inspire students' commitment to Judaism and their community. Contact [Gesher@cjcn.org](mailto:Gesher@cjcn.org) for more information.

## **Special Jewish Holiday Celebrations**

In honor of our Jewish holidays, festive, interactive, and learning activities will take place for our students, faculty and families during Religious School hours.

## **Tzedakah**

Giving is an important *mitzvah* ("commandment") of Jewish life. In each class, money for *tzedakah* (means "charity", literally translated as "righteousness") is collected from the students. Please take time to discuss with your grade the *mitzvah* of giving *tzedakah*.

## **URJ Experiences**

Students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> have the opportunity to attend Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, Texas, a program of recreation, education and growth in a fun, supportive, Jewish environment. KUTZ Camp National Leadership Center in New York strives to prepare teens to be leaders in our society. Travel programs present opportunities for our 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to visit Israel and Eastern Europe. Call the Religious School Office or go to [www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org) for more information.

Please check your emails, announcements and website for the most current and up to date information