



Neve Shalom
Hebrew School
PARENT-Student
HANDBOOK
2012-2013





Neve Shalom Hebrew School Goals

The primary mission of Neve Shalom's Hebrew School is to develop a positive attitude about being Jewish and to teach a fundamental understanding of our religion, our people, our Hebrew language, our culture, our history, our prayers, our holidays, Israel and ourselves as Jews.

The goals of our school are designed to offer each student the opportunity to:

- * **Develop the reading and writing skills necessary for understanding basic Hebrew and synagogue participation**
- * **Gain a sense of spiritual and cultural kinship with Israel and the Jewish people**
- * **Develop the skills and foster the desire to participate in services, holiday celebrations and rituals at home with his or her family and in the synagogue with the larger community**
- * **Encourage a sense of involvement in Jewish community life through curricular and extra-curricular activities as well as opportunities to perform "acts of kindness" (*G'milut Chasadim*), contribute to "righteous causes" (*Tzedakah*) and follow "God's commandments" (*Mitzvot*)**



AWARD WINNING SCHOOL

We are very proud that Neve Shalom's Hebrew School has been deemed one of the finest in the country. We fulfill every requirement of the Conservative Movement's accreditation program, Framework For Excellence, which evaluated our curriculum, goals, materials, staff, test scores, attendance requirements and other aspects of our programs.

We have an award winning USY Youth group. Our Nursery School continues to receive accreditation from the National Academy of Early Childhood programs. Our Adult Education department has won the Silver National Award for Adult Education and the Gold Award for our Cultural and Musical events.

Our services are participatory and we host many activities through our Sisterhood, Men's Club, Youth Groups, Hadassah groups, Choir, Schools and many Committees. Neve Shalom is an exciting place but only if you take advantage of it. We encourage you to join us often for services and programs and to bring your friends and neighbors.

If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me any time at 732-548-2238x14 or can2r11@aol.com.

We look forward to a wonderful year and to working together to maintain an excellent school and synagogue which meets the needs of every one of our children and families.

Hazzan Sheldon Levin

Schedule

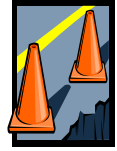
Gan K'tan (Kindergarten)	Sundays	9-11am
Ken (1 st Grade)	Sundays	9-11am
Kita K'tana (2 nd grade)	Sundays plus some online Homework during the week	9-11am
Aleph, Bet, Gimel & Daled	Tuesdays and Thursdays Sundays	4:15-6pm 9-11am
Hai	Tuesdays Thursdays	5:45-8:30pm 4:15-6pm
Hebrew High (8th-10th grades)	Tuesdays	6-8:30pm
Midrasha (11 th -12 th grades)	<u>Sundays</u> (once per month)	11am-noon

*Information regarding the teachers and their assignments
will be available at the beginning of the school year.*

Bet class and older will have more than one teacher, will be moving to different rooms and will be following set schedules. A bell will sound to announce starting, ending and class changing times.

Arrival and Dismissal:

Our parking lot is a busy place, especially during drop-off and pick-up times. Please exercise extreme caution driving through our parking lot and walking with your child to and from the building.



Children get excited when they see their parents or their carpool at the end of the school day. They want to go and they are not always mindful of rules or safety. Keep your cars away from the dismissal area. **Do not drive your car, stop, stand or park in the lane closest to the rear door of the building.** It is too dangerous to have moving vehicles in this area during drop off and pick up times. **You or your child must use a swipe card, available from the office, to enter the building on weekdays.**

When picking up, parents are required to **park their cars in a marked space and to escort their children** back to the car. Please do not encourage children to run across the parking lot. As you leave the parking lot, please leave through the exit driveway only. **Parents of children in grades K-4 MUST go to their child's classroom to pick up their child! Children in these grades will not be released without an adult.**

Attendance:

Regular on-time attendance is vital to the success of your child's Jewish education. If your child will be absent due to illness please call the office (732-548-2238 ext.11). If your child will be absent for a family vacation or other reasons please contact the office in advance. Notification will allow your child's teacher(s) to prepare effective lessons and classroom activities. **If a student's absences are excessive, he or she will be required to meet with the Educational Director.**

Before School on Weekdays

Children who arrive prior to 4:15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays will have a supervised quiet space available to do their homework (starting at 3:30pm). Our computer room will also be available for anyone who wants to "play" learning games which can teach about Jewish holidays, Hebrew grammar and vocabulary, as well as Israel and Jewish history. We do ask that every student be in their classroom, ready to learn, when the 4:15pm bell sounds.

Class Services and Meals



Several grades of the school will have special services in the Sanctuary which will be led mainly by those students. Aleph & Bet classes will learn Shabbat evening prayers, Gimel and Daled classes learn Shabbat morning prayers, Hai class learns weekday as well as Shabbat evening and morning services. The Confirmation class (10th grade) leads the Festival service. There may be a family dinner, desserts, or luncheon associated with that class service. Parents are also encouraged to participate with Torah readings, honors, English readings, and other parts.

Computer Room

A successful innovation is our computer room. A bank of computers are available, equipped with learning games and programs to teach about holidays, history, Israel and Hebrew. A specialist is available during afternoon and Sunday morning sessions to help students work on individualized learning programs. Some of our children who have completed their classroom assignments can work in the computer room when their classmates are reviewing materials. Other students who have special learning needs or different learning styles will have access to the teacher or a tutor during "Hebrew" periods. Students who arrive before school can also "play" on these computers. Some classes may use the internet for special research projects from time to time. If you would like to contribute to a fund to purchase equipment or computer programs, please speak with the Hazzan.



Curriculum

A detailed booklet listing our curricular goals, texts, vocabulary, prayer lists and programs is available on-line at **NeveShalom.net**. <http://metuchen.u36.uscjhhost.net/hebschoolgoals.htm> Every family should read this booklet and see how our well designed program will introduce new material each year and review things from previous years. We will happily provide you with a printed copy if you request one.

Discipline:

If a child is disruptive, the teacher will send him or her to the Educational Director. The following actions will be taken:

- The first time a child is sent out, he or she will receive a warning from the Educational Director.
- The second time, there will be a call made to the parent(s).
- The third time we will arrange a conference for the parent, child, Educational Director and teacher to discuss solutions.
- The fourth time there will be a meeting with the family, Educational Director and Rabbi, and a course of action will be arranged.

Dress Code

We will follow the basic dress code of the area public schools. The Jewish concept of “*s’niyut*” (dressing with modesty) is very important for our children, teachers and *madrichim* (teen assistants) to follow:

- T-shirts or jackets with offensive language or off-color remarks are not suitable for the school environment.
- Low-cut tank tops, mesh or shirts which show bare midriffs are not permissible. Students may wear a T-shirt under a tank top if they wish. Straps must be wider than three fingers.
- Shorts must be of reasonable length. The rule of thumb will be that while standing the hem should not be shorter than your fingertips with your hands at your sides.
- Sagging/baggy pants are acceptable as long as they are fastened at the waist and do not present a personal safety issue. Additionally, underclothing or bare skin should not be revealed above the pants.
- Athletic shoes with cleats are not allowed inside the building.
- Baseball caps are not a substitute for a *Kippah* (see page 9).



Early Dismissal:

- Students must come to class with a note from their parent.
- Parents/designated adults are required to sign them out filling in a card with their teacher before leaving the building.
- Students are to **remain in class** until they are picked up.

Family Education

We will be planning several special trips and programs to which parents are invited and encouraged to attend. The Gan and Ken classes will do a holiday oriented project and parents will spend some time in activities with their child. The Aleph class parents, on the morning of the Aleph Consecration, will have an adult oriented session on the history of the Hebrew language and the Hebrew goals of our school. The Daled families are urged to join their children at the World Wide Wrap to learn about *tefillin*. *Pre-B’nai* Mitzvah families have a series of “clinics” with the Rabbi to discuss the Shabbat morning service and connections between the *Torah* and *Haftarah* portions. Periodic Java Nagilah workshops, trips and special events are being planned.



Food In The Classroom

No drinks, food or chewing gum will be allowed in the classrooms, sanctuary, beit midrash or computer room during school hours.

If a child has any special needs regarding bathroom, food, or drinks, please discuss this with the Educational Director. If your child has any food allergies, please make sure the Educational Director, classroom teachers and the office are aware of these.

Junior Congregation:

Attendance at Junior Congregation, Family and Holiday Services are vital and important aspects of our school program. We will be awarding points, stars and other incentives to make participation a positive and joyous experience. Those who attend Shabbat morning Jr. Congregation receive snacks at the service and a chance each week to win prizes.

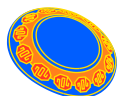
Students may fulfill their requirement by attendance at Junior Congregation, Mini-Minyan, Friday night Family Services, and Adult Congregation services when Junior Congregation does not meet. Credit may be awarded for attending services at another synagogue with permission of the Educational Director. Hai class students are expected to attend services in the Sanctuary or complete a comparison form to receive credit for attending other synagogues.



Junior Congregation (grades 3-6) meets on Saturday morning from 10:15 am – 11:45 am in room 5. “Mini-Minyan” (grades Kindergarten -2) meets in Room 3. Students are responsible for putting stickers in the books, which are located in the services rooms. Attendance books will have a page for each child to place stars and stickers each time they attend a service. **There is no record of attendance if the student does not put the star in the book.**

Students in grades Aleph-Daled are required to attend at least 10 services annually. Gan, Ken and Kita K'tana students are required to attend at least 5 services each year.

Kippot:



Baseball caps and other street hats are not appropriate for Synagogue wear. A *kippah* is the only appropriate head covering when in the synagogue building. The school office will supply a *kippah* for any child who does not bring a *kippah* from home.

All men and boys are required to wear *kippot* in the synagogue. *Kippot* are optional for women and girls. However, everyone who comes to the front of the sanctuary (boys and girls, men and women) is required to wear a head covering (this includes Jr. Congregation, Family Services and all other services).

Maccabiyah:

The final few weeks of the classes in the Spring, will feature a series of exciting and fun learning activities for the Bet-Daled classes. Teams will be selected and points will be awarded for contests using Hebrew words and Bible information, singing and creative activities, posters and even outdoors events for *Lag B'Omer*. Winners will be announced on the last day of school and prizes will be given. This “color-war” like program brings a lot of enthusiasm and energy to the children at the time of the school year when otherwise interest and attendance tends to wane.



Materials:

Students should come to class prepared with books, notebooks and a pencil. The school will supply all texts and other materials. Workbooks will be sent home at the end of the school year and **we will collect and reuse all of the textbooks.**

Report Cards:

Report cards are issued two times yearly, once at the end of winter recess and at the end of the academic year for grades Gan-Hai.

Parent Teacher Conferences:

Parents should not wait for a formal conference to ask about their child's progress.

Our teachers are asked to be in regular telephone or written communication with parents about students. There is no reason why parents should not seek contact with teachers regularly to inquire about their children and to discuss issues that pertain to the classroom.

Please be advised that the teacher's contract time does not extend beyond dismissal so you need to arrange an appointment in advance so the teacher can set aside time for your meeting.



Point System



Attendance at Hebrew School is a minimal expectation of each of our children. We would like to encourage them, in positive ways, to make service attendance, mitzvah projects, Jewish cultural events, holiday celebrations, Shabbat retreats and other wonderful Jewish programming an on-going part of their lives. We will be giving stars in a book to every Neve Shalom student for every hour of Jewish activity they participate in outside of the classroom. The Haz-zan or teachers will place these stars next the child's name as soon as possible after each event. At the end of the school year awards will be given for those who have accumulated a large number of points. If you did a program outside of our building email the Educational Director can2r11@aol.com with that information. Points can be earned (approximately one point for each hour of Jewish activity outside of class time) throughout the school year.

Rabbi Zelizer

Rabbi Zelizer visits every class, grades Gan-Hai, twice each year to answer the children's questions and teach important lessons. He is a regular instructor of the older grades of the Hebrew High and the principal teacher of the Midrasha (11-12th grade) program. He runs Bar/t Mitzvah family education clinics and teaches wonderful adult education courses. The Rabbi is a strong supporter of the quality educational programs run by Neve Shalom for every age from Nursery through Adult Education.

School Closings

Hebrew School will be closed whenever the public schools in Edison or Metuchen are closed or dismissed early due to inclement weather. Please listen to radio station WCTC 1450 for all announcements. School closing information will also be available by calling the **Hebrew School Message Line** at 732-548-2238 ext. 3 or going on-line to www.weatherclosings.com.



**Call the Message Line for
Closings and Updates
732-548-2238 ext. 3**

WEBSITE

We are in the process of redesigning the synagogue website and there will be special parent and school sections. We will keep you informed when the new site will be launched.

Trips and Events

Several educational and exciting trips and events are being planned for the coming year. We invite parents to chaperone and participate in some of these wonderful experiences. Signed permission slips will be required in order for the children to attend any program that leaves our building. We will try to keep costs to a bare minimum. Our Youth groups will also be running retreats and regional programs which are important social and Jewish experiences and we hope many of our children will participate. Scholarship funds may be available for older teens to travel the country with USY on Wheels or to visit Europe and Israel with a variety of Jewish teen trips. Check the calendar, monthly Happenings and weekly emails for trips and special events as they are planned.

Tzedakah

We invite students to participate in the mitzvah of giving *tzedakah*. The amount of donation is left to the parents, but a few coins is enough. All *tzedakah* money will be given to needy causes which are decided by the classes.



Youth Groups

In addition to our school programs, Neve Shalom runs exciting informal Jewish activities for students grades 4-12. Hanoar (4th-5th grades), Kadima (6th-8th grades) and USY (High School) members participate in synagogue and regional social, religious, mitzvah, sports and fun programs. Contact Stacey Sern, sern@alumni.upenn.edu, our Youth Committee chair for more information. The **After Shul Fun Program** meets periodically on a Saturday afternoon for grades 3-6.

**Join our
Youth Groups!**

Neve Shalom Hebrew School CONTACT INFO

Neve Shalom	732-548-2238	Website	www.NeveShalom.net
		<i>synagogue ext.</i>	
Closings and Announcements	3		
Service Times	7		
Hazzan Sheldon Levin, can2r11@aol.com	14		Educational Director
Jeanne Cowhey, JC2061@aol.com	11		Hebrew School Secretary

*During afternoon Hebrew School hours call **extension 11**
if you need to send a message to your child*

At the NeveShalom.net site you can find a lot of information under the “Education” banner. You can also listen to the chanting of many prayers for synagogue and home use and even download them to MP3 devices.