

**Congregation Beth Shalom  
Rabbi Michael Beals  
Cantor Ruth Ross  
1801 Baynard Blvd.  
Wilmington, DE 19802  
(302) 654-4462**

# **Parent Handbook**

**5772/2011-2012**

**Dina Lipschultz  
Education Director**

**[www.bethshalomwilmington.org](http://www.bethshalomwilmington.org)**

“Oh how good it is when brothers and sisters  
can dwell together in harmony.” – *Tehillim* (Psalms) 133:1

Congregation Beth Shalom  
Parent Handbook

Table of Contents

1. Welcome Letter from Morah Dina	Pg. 3
2. Congregation Beth Shalom Mission Statement	Pg. 4
3. Family Education Programs	Pg. 4
4. A Note About the Hebrew School Calendar	Pg. 4
5. School Policies and Procedures	Pg. 5
6. Junior Congregation	Pg. 6
7. “Jewry” Duty	Pg. 7
8. Behavior And Safety For Students And Parents	Pg. 8
9. Contacting The School	Pg. 9
10. Welcome To Kadima	Pg. 10

September 1, 2011

Dear Parents and CBS Community Members,

This Parent Handbook is designed to give you insight into the ideas and dreams we have for the Jewish education of your children. By giving you a concrete view of our educational aims, through the sharing of our curricular goals, it is my hope that you will see that at Beth Shalom we truly see Jewish education as a life-long process.

The Beth Shalom Hebrew School is a congregational school that serves every part of our community. Parents are strongly encouraged to provide feedback, thoughts, and suggestions and thus work with the Director of Education on developing and maintaining a high quality education for all of our children. Graduates of our Hebrew School and other children in our synagogue community also have an important role in our school. Many teenagers are in our Ozrim Program (Student Teaching Program) and serve as role models for younger students. The Hebrew School offers classes for children from pre-school through 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and a confirmation program for 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. We also actively encourage other youth programs including Kadima, Jewish summer camps (especially Ramah, the Conservative movement camp), cooperative programs with the youth from other area synagogues, Israel experiences, etc.

Education does not come from textbooks alone. Education happens when a relationship is created between students, parents and teachers. This relationship leads to discovery of and excitement about Judaism. Our school is a place that facilitates a solid foundation in Jewish learning, connections between families and traditions, and relationships that form life long bonds with Judaism and the Jewish Community.

I look forward to a positive, fun year as we together learn our history and traditions, taste our recipes, sing out our songs, and read and write the language of our ancestors. Thank you for choosing Beth Shalom to be a partner with you in the Jewish education of your children.

Shalom,

Dina Lipschultz  
Education Director  
Congregation Beth Shalom  
Wilmington, Delaware

## **Congregation Beth Shalom Mission Statement**

Congregation Beth Shalom is an egalitarian, Conservative synagogue committed to the worship of God, to the ideals and precepts of Torah, and to lifelong education. We are a welcoming Jewish community that promotes the observance of sacred times, the celebration of life cycle events, and acts of loving kindness. We are committed to social justice, interfaith dialogue, and the perpetuation of the State of Israel.

### **Family Education Programs**

Family education sessions are scheduled two-three times each year to bring together parents and children for joint learning. This is an opportunity to teach to both generations together, and to complement some aspect of the grade curriculum. Children from the same grade at AEA, and their parents, are invited to each session. In previous years, some teachers have taught lessons on a wide variety of topics including Hebrew names, blessings, family recipes, the Jewish calendar, Massada, Kristallnacht, Bedouins in Israel, etc., in addition to many that focused on holiday customs and traditions.

The dates for these sessions will be posted on the Hebrew School calendar as soon as they are set.

### **A Note About the Hebrew School Calendar**

The most current version of our Hebrew School Calendar can always be found on the Beth Shalom website. We try to follow the calendar as written and keep changes to a minimum, but inevitably there will be some changes as the year progresses. Often these occur because of other conflicts within the synagogue or community, sometimes because of planned teacher absences. We will always try to notify you of changes in a timely manner.

New this year, the Hebrew School calendar will be a Google calendar which you can access by going to [now@BethShalom](mailto:now@BethShalom) on the Beth Shalom website. In the upper right corner is a toggle switch to view the synagogue calendar, the school calendar, or both.

## **School Policies and Procedures**

### **Communicable illness, including head lice**

If a child shows signs of any communicable disease, including but not limited to fever, pinkeye, head lice, vomiting or flu, the child will be removed from the classroom and isolated, and parents will be called to pick up their child. Children will be allowed back into class when they are free of the symptoms, or in the case of head lice, after they have been treated.

### **Books and other school supplies**

It is very important that children bring their folders and books with them to school each day. We generally do not have a lot of extra texts on hand. Some books remain in the classrooms and are not sent home. Although we include the cost of texts in the tuition for each grade, parents may purchase an additional set of text for their child if they wish to.

### **Snacks**

We serve snack (often fresh fruit and juice) to children at around 5:15 on Tuesday and around 10:40 on Sunday. We suggest providing your own snack for your child(ren) in carpool on Tuesday afternoons.

### **Food in the classrooms**

Normally we do not allow eating in the classrooms, only water bottles. The only exception is when the food is part of a class activity. Gum chewing is not allowed.

### **Food and Medicine Allergies and Sensitivities**

For your child's safety, information that you have supplied to us on the registration form regarding allergies or sensitivities will be posted in a public location unless you request otherwise.

### **Monthly Parent Letters and Progress Reports**

Each month you will receive an email update from the teachers. Twice each year, in January and in May, you will receive your child's progress reports.

### **Shabbat attendance**

We encourage Shabbat service attendance on Friday nights and on Saturday morning. On Sunday mornings, the teachers will check for attendance that weekend. Please be sure to have your child let the classroom teacher know if he/she attended services at Beth Shalom or any other synagogue. If you attend with your child, you will be showing by your own example how important this is!

## Junior Congregation

A Shabbat morning junior congregation can be a strong asset for a synagogue and a school. Children will become familiar with the Shabbat service, gain skills in leading parts of the service, and develop a habit of regular synagogue attendance. Parents may come to junior congregation and learn along with their children, or may take the time to participate in some of the “adult” congregation.

Junior Congregation will be held approximately every two weeks beginning in October from 10:30-12:00. Check the school calendar for the exact dates. In addition to the service, with Torah reading, junior congregation will include a skit or discussion based on the parsha of the week, and maybe a story. Older post-b’nei mitzvah children will be recruited as volunteers to help the younger children.

Many synagogues have requirements for children to attend Shabbat services each year, usually beginning around second grade. This requirement builds up to the pre-B’nei Mitzvah year, when children are required to attend a large number of Shabbat services. Beginning in 2011, we are setting the following standard for children at Beth Shalom.

2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	4 Shabbat services
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	6 Shabbat services
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 Shabbat services
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 Shabbat services
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 Shabbat services

This standard can be met by junior congregation, including on our shabbaton days, or by any other Friday night or Saturday morning service. Attendance will be taken on Sunday mornings.

## **“Jewry” Duty**

Parents, we need your help as volunteers in our school, and we ask that each of you sign up to assist us on two sessions during the year, either on Tuesday or on Sunday. Here’s how you will be helping us and your children.

1. Set up, serve, and clean up our daily snack. You’ll get to know the children and teachers, see lots of smiling faces, and know that you’ll be freeing up some time for our Hebrew School Assistant.
2. Be an extra adult in the building, available to help a teacher or a student for whatever unexpected situation arises. If it’s a really calm day, you can relax, sit with a book or your laptop, or just pop into some of the classes and see for yourself what goes on each week.
3. You will help provide an extra measure of security for our children.

When your children see that you are giving your own time to support the school and the synagogue, it tells them that you consider their Jewish education a priority for your family.

***I guarantee that this will be a more pleasant experience than jury duty!***

**The Parent Association will have signup sheets so that you may choose your dates to serve your “Jewry” duty.**

Today rabbah, thank you so very much!

## **BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

There is a Jewish value called *Dereh Eretz*, which literally means the path or way of the land. It usually refers to proper behavior, something much more than just manners. In the Beth Shalom Hebrew School, we believe that by teaching our children a way in which they are expected to behave we will all have a much more positive experience. In addition, this behavior will promote the safety of all of our children.

Children at Beth Shalom Hebrew School are expected to behave in a manner which shows respect to other children, teachers and all staff members, and others in the Congregation. Children are also expected to respect our newly renovated building and property.

### **Rules for Students**

Respect the bodies and belongings of others.  
Follow safety rules and instructions.  
Be polite. Teasing and bullying will not be tolerated.  
Do not leave a class or school activity without permission of a staff person.  
Running and wild horseplay within the building or in the garden are not allowed.  
Children may not wander in the building unsupervised.  
Cellphones are not allowed, nor is gum-chewing.

### **Rules for Dismissal**

Wait inside the building until a staff person is outside.  
Remain on the sidewalk until given permission to leave. Children will only be allowed to go to one of the first 3 cars (up to the post). Children may also play in the garden, but jumping off the rocks is not allowed. Children will not be dismissed from the 18<sup>th</sup> St. door.  
Parents, you may wait in the carpool line, or you may park your car and go in to get your child(ren). Do not instruct your children to go beyond the post. If you are in carpool line and need to wait for a child, you may be directed to move your car up so as not to hold up the line.  
If you need to pick your child up early, a note, email, or phone call is very helpful.  
Please come in to pick up your child and sign your child out on the clipboard at the front door. Children may wait inside the atrium for pickup, but under no circumstances can they wait outside alone.

September, 2011

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Child

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Parent

## Contacting the School

Main Synagogue Number: 302-654-4462  
Morah Dina – extension 19  
Morah Rachel (Hebrew School) – extension 22  
Direct Hebrew School Line – 302-654-0154

Note that the main synagogue number will go directly to voice mail after 5:00 on weekdays and for the entire weekend.

During school hours, if you cannot get through any other way, you may try Dina on her cell 302-584-2831.

Dina - [dina@cbswilmde.org](mailto:dina@cbswilmde.org)  
Rachel - [RMussaf@cbswilmde.org](mailto:RMussaf@cbswilmde.org)

In case of inclement weather please tune to WDEL 1150AM for “Snowatch” updates and closure information. Hebrew School will close whenever Brandywine School District is closed or has early dismissal.

# WELCOME TO KADIMA!

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Kadima is the middle school age affiliate of [United Synagogue Youth](#) and [The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism](#). Kadima is Hebrew for "forward."

Kadima at [Beth Shalom](#) is a new, fresh, hip youth group designed for Jewish 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the greater Wilmington area.

This past spring we sponsored two very successful events, a game day at Beth Shalom and a havdallah/ice skating Saturday night. We're planning on doing lots more fun, social events, with some good, cool Jewish pieces added in.

Some ideas about possible programs include:

- Paintball
- [Blue Rocks games](#)
- Beach Trips
- [Movie Nights](#)
- [Phillies games](#) (baseball)
- Pool Parties
- [Water/Amusement Parks](#)
- Sleepover at UDE Hillel

... and co-sponsoring events with JCC Youth and other Kadima chapters and youth groups in the Wilmington and Philadelphia areas.

How do you make a Blue Rocks game a Jewish youth group event? Funny you (or your parental unit) might ask. Let's catch a Blue Rocks game on a Saturday night... and precede it by doing Havdalah together at Beth Shalom for 15 minutes before we carpool over! Or let's talk about the Noah story and play silly Jewish bus games as we head over to Six Flags!

Together we can plan out all sorts of cool activities. It's simply about Jewish kids hanging out with other Jewish kids doing fun, social, and easy-on-the-super-religious stuff. Together. (B'yachad, in Ivrit, y'all).

For more information, contact [Kadima@bethshalomwilmington.net](mailto:Kadima@bethshalomwilmington.net).