

**MAKOM:**  
**The Place to BE!**

***Parents Handbook***  
**2018-2019 5779**

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## The MAKOM Vision

The Makom model is a combination of opportunities to experience Judaism in the moments when Judaism is lived infused with ruach (spirit) and choice. Through project-based learning, use of multiple modalities, and reflective, student-centered methodologies, our program will promote life-long learning, spiritual and educational growth through active, relatable, values-based, real-time and community-building Jewish learning experiences.

## Adath Israel Mission Statement

At Adath Israel, our educational vision is to foster a community where Judaism is meaningful to each person, that links generation to generation, and leads to life long learning and Jewish living.

Our mission is to provide diverse Jewish educational experiences for families and individuals of all ages, according to the views of Conservative Judaism as they relate to Torah and Mitzvot, prayer, the Hebrew language, the people and State of Israel and relationships between people and with God.

Among our central values we strive to promote:

Kavod Habriot / Menschlichkeit - כבוד הבריות - cultivate respect and care for oneself and others by participating in acts of:

Tikkun Olam

תקון עולם

(Repairing the world)

Tzedakah

צדקה

(Acts of giving)

Gemilut Hasadim

גמילות חסדים

(Acts of kindness)

Talmud Torah - תלמוד תורה, to instill a love of Jewish learning and to aid in the development of skills for full synagogue participation and Jewish practice.

## Tzedakah and Gemilut Hasadim

*Tzedakah* (justice) and *gemilut hasadim* (acts of loving kindness) are two *mitzvot* that are central to Judaism. *Tzedakah*, in the form of giving spare change or small dollar amounts, is collected regularly at Makom. At the end of the year the students select an organization or cause to support with their collected funds.

*Gemilut hasadim* take place in various ways, including grade-level and Makom-wide *mitzvah* projects.

Please remind your child to bring *tzedakah* to Makom (except on Shabbat).

## Youth Programs

At Adath Israel, we understand that a sense of belonging is as essential to building a strong Jewish identity as learning about topics and ideas. We strive to accomplish this sense of belonging at Makom, and this is also the primary function of our youth groups. Youth groups combine the social with the religious, the social action with the educational, all with an added layer of fun.

Participation in youth groups is a wonderful way for children to develop and maintain strong Jewish peer connections. We have a **Kadima** chapter for our 5th, 6th and 7th graders.

We welcome all students to participate and for parents to become involved in all Makom and youth activities



## Hebrew

In order to better assist the students in acquiring the skills needed to read Hebrew, the educational staff will administer a Diagnostic Reading test in the fall to all 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> graders and in spring to all 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The test will help with the diagnosis of individual strengths and weakness in letter and vowel recognition, letter and vowel sound discrimination and word recognition. Teachers will use the results of this test to determine how to best meet your child's learning needs.

**Mastery of Hebrew can only be achieved through practice at home.**

Such practice is a great way to be involved in your child's learning. **Please listen to your children's Hebrew reading** and discuss their progress with them.

## Special Needs

We attend to the special needs of our students on an individualized basis. In consultation with parents, teachers, and any other involved professionals, each child requiring an individual focus on Hebrew needs will receive tutoring. At times this work will be in small groups, and at other times this will be accomplished through individual sessions with a tutor. The goal is to enable each child to comfortably participate in Hebrew groups with grade-level peers.

In order to help us appropriately educate your child, please provide us with any relevant information regarding special needs. If your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), please submit a copy to the Makom Director. This helps us to best accommodate your child's learning needs.

## Makom Books

Students will receive books during the first week of class. In the event that your child's book has been lost, please notify the teacher or the Makom Director immediately so that a replacement can be ordered. Parents will be asked to pay the replacement fee. Please label all books with your child's name.

## Prayer Experiences

**Shabbat** "services" are different.

On Shabbat morning:

11:15 – 11:45am, **all** children are invited to participate in one of the following options:

### Mini-Minyan

Mini Minyan is for families with young children (up to age 5) and takes place in the Sklaroff every Shabbat during the school year at 11:00am. It is led by parent volunteers, and several times through the year, Andi Joseph, the Musical Mommy.

### Tefillah Time

Tefillah Time is for children in grades K – 6 and takes place in the Tuttleman Chapel. It is led by Rabbis Yanoff and Markowitz, though children are empowered to take on leadership roles as well. This service focuses on mastering the words, tunes and choreography of the prayers, combined with time devoted to discussion, high-energy activities, and other ways of forming personal connections with the prayers.

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### Sundays

Each Sunday session of Makom we gather for Havdalah led by our Rabbis. This service focuses on separating between Shabbat and the week days and has a lot of fun singing and based on our main senses.

### Wednesdays

Each Wednesday session of Makom we gather for Mincha, the afternoon service, led by Rabbis Yanoff and Markowitz. This service also focuses on mastering the words, tunes and choreography of the prayers, though students know to expect some high-energy fun as well.

## Shabbat Attendance

One of the greatest ways to connect to Adath Israel and to strengthen one's Jewish identity is through the experience of Shabbat. In addition to traditional observance and spending time with friends, coming to Shabbat services at AI is a wonderful opportunity to put your child's learning into practice. In fact, your children may even be able to teach you! We welcome their participation and expertise, not only in children's services, but in the main service as well.

Each grade level will have the opportunity to lead a service and/or Torah study during the course of the year. Please note these dates on the Shabbat calendar.

We encourage and expect children to attend a certain number of services per year and record them in the special white folder next to the Talit stand at the entrance of the sanctuary. They can do so in a variety of ways:

- Friday night, including **Friday Night Alive** or other special services
- Saturday morning **Prayer Experiences, including the main service and Tefillah Time**
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah services at Adath Israel or another synagogue
- **Class Services** - each class from Gan/Alef through Vav will lead its own Service.

**The expectation for Sunday Makom students is:**

- All Alef and Bet (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>) students - attend 2 Shabbat services.
- All Gimel and Dalet (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>) students - attend 5 Shabbat services.
- All Hey and Vav (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) students - 5 Shabbat services.
- All Zayin (7<sup>th</sup>) students—one Shabbat service per month.



## Food and Class Parties

On Wednesdays, the Adath Israel Gift Shop sells snacks before Makom until 4:10. You may set up a debit account with the gift shop for your child.

If your child is bringing a snack from home or food to share with the class, please be sure that it is **kosher**. At Adath Israel, the Laws of Kashrut are strictly enforced. Eating snacks will be permitted until 4:30pm, to avoid disturbing the learning process. If you have a question, contact either the Makom Coordinator or one of the rabbis.

Acceptable Kosher certificates/ symbols are:



On Saturdays and Sundays, your child will be provided with a snack.

**Please note that we are a "peanut aware" school. No provided snacks will contain nuts, nor should the snacks brought from home.**

If your child has food allergies and has an Epi-pen, please inform the Makom Director and the classroom teacher.

You may be asked to provide your child with a snack.

**Chewing Gum is NOT permitted in the school building.**

## Birthday Parties

To reinforce the religious objectives of our school and to be sensitive to the observance of others, please do not schedule birthday parties on Shabbat (Friday evening through Saturday afternoon), or on Jewish holidays. Please also be aware that the foods you choose to serve may prevent some children from being able to partake. In addition, we request that any Sunday parties begin well after 12:30 PM dismissal time, as to not interfere with the Makom schedule.

## Health Concerns

Members of the school administration and staff are not permitted to dispense medication of any variety to a student unless the medication has been approved for us by the parent and is accompanied by a doctor's note. All medications should be labeled with the student's name and brought to the Makom Director.

## Arrival and Dismissal

We ask that all 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade students be **dropped off at the Religious School entrance** alongside the Girsh Auditorium in the back of the parking lot. For all Gan-2nd graders, please park and walk your children to their classrooms.

All classrooms are located on the 3rd floor.

**All students** will be dismissed through the school entrance.

**Please place a placard on the dashboard, passenger side of your car with the names of the children in your carpool**, printed large enough for the teachers to read easily.

**Pull around the side of building and form 2 lines** by the school entrance. A teacher will be posted there to call out the names of the children. If a student is delayed in exiting the building, please pull into a parking space to wait.

Please drive **SLOWLY** and carefully out of the parking lot.

### School Closing Policies:

On Wednesdays if Lower Merion Schools are closed, Adath Israel schools are also closed, even if the weather improves during the day.

#### **Our school closing number is 439.**

- Listen to KYW 1060 on Sundays or if the weather deteriorates during a particular day.
- If there is a school closing you will receive an email from our school office.
- We will do our best to anticipate weather for Shabbat school, and be in touch on Friday. We will always be open for Shabbat services, and will provide age-appropriate activities for all children who are present.

## Education Committee

The mission of the Education Committee is to oversee and govern Makom. This is done in cooperation and advisement with the Rabbis and the Makom Education Coordinator. A member of the faculty is also invited to participate on the Education Committee.

The Committee is made up of members of the congregation who have demonstrated an interest in and commitment to maintaining high standards of excellence. Anyone who has such an interest is encouraged to contact the Chairperson of the Committee about becoming a member. Additionally, parents are strongly encouraged to bring any concerns or questions they have to any member of the Makom committee or to the chairperson, listed below.

### MAKOM Education Committee

2018-2019 5779

#### **Education Vice President –Youth and Teens (K-12)**

Meredith Krain—meredithkrain@gmail.com

#### Education Committee

Sara Jaffee—sara.jaffee@gmail.com - Co-Chairperson

Mindy Civan—mindycivan@yahoo.com - Day School Representative

Abby Contract—acontract@mac.com

Laurie Hart—lem3868@hotmail.com

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Scott Nelson—scott.ryan.nelson@gmail.com

Oreet Schwartz -oreet@sharqui.com

Linda Herring-Hill - Teacher Representative

#### Director of Community Education

Na'ama Yarden nyarden@adathisrael.org

## PTA

The mission of the PTAs of the Schools of Adath Israel is to serve the needs of the students by fostering a partnership among the parents, the faculty, the Makom Director, and professional staff through communication, social and educational programming, and financial support.

### TO PARENTS - OUR PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

The best way to ensure that your child's Jewish education "sticks" is through continued engagement and reinforcement at home. You are our true partners in creating the best possible educational experience for your child.

□□□ **Prepare your child for our program.** Impress upon your child the value of learning and the influence it will have on making them a better, more knowledgeable Jew and person.

□□□ **Make sure that your child is present and on time.** Our time together is limited— regular attendance and punctuality are essential in order to achieve continuity and foster a meaningful religious and educational experience.

□□□ **Take an interest in the materials and notices that your child brings home.** Your interest can be incredibly motivating to your child.

□□□ **Look for emails from the Director or teachers with updates from Makom.** Ask your children what they learned and experienced, and discuss how it connects to everyday living.

□□□ **Encourage your child to read Jewish books and participate in Jewish cultural activities.** There are many opportunities outside of Makom, including *Kadima*, and *PJ Library*. Ask us for more information

□□□ **Bring Judaism into your home by displaying and using ritual objects.**

□□□ **Participate in Jewish learning as a family.** Attend Shabbat services, and join us for holiday celebrations and special programs. Offer your own talents and interests to the Makom community.

□□□ **Keep the lines of communication open.** We are always eager to hear feedback, and to discuss together how to best meet your child's learning needs and interests. Any problems that come up in Makom should first be discussed with your child's teacher, and then with the education professional staff and/or the clergy. We are always happy to hear from you.

□□□ **Further your own learning.** Ask your children what they're studying, and discuss it together. Participate in one of our Adult Education classes, Parenting the Parasha (on Shabbat mornings), or family programming.

□□□ **Celebrate Shabbat and the holidays at home.** Prepare special foods, light candles, and recite Kiddush. Sharing a special family meal with challah and grape juice

## Discipline Policy

We are committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment in our school. If students demonstrate an unwillingness to abide by the rules established for their classroom, then the following steps will be taken:

- The teacher will develop an action plan for those children in conjunction with guidelines provided by our Makom Director, who will identify possible alternative approaches that the teachers can institute. The children's parents will be informed of the contents of this plan and will be updated on the classroom situation.
- If children continue to be disruptive, they will be asked to meet with the Makom Director and their teacher to discuss the situation.
- If the situation does not improve, the child's parents will be asked to meet with the Makom Director, the child, and the teacher.
- If there is no observable improvement, the child will be unable to attend Makom unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Any further infraction will result in the child's suspension from school.

**Please read and discuss this discipline plan with your child. If you have any questions about the policy, the Makom Director is always available to speak with you.**

### Classroom Visitation

**Adath Israel Religious School welcomes visits to the school by pre-arrangement only.** Requests should be made directly to the school office. There will be several opportunities to come into the school through participation in special Makom activities throughout the year.



## Attendance

While we aspire to 100% attendance, we understand that absences are often inevitable and unavoidable. Students with 70% attendance or below will require to take home assigned work. Learning new concepts, especially Hebrew, requires consistency. If your child's attendance is sporadic, we will be in touch with you to discuss alternative arrangements, such as private tutoring (which would come at your own expense).

As our time with your child is limited, every minute counts. Please do your best to minimize tardiness and early pick up, as it is also disruptive to other students and activities.

Class schedule is:

**Wednesday** - 4:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. – Gimel through Zayin

**Saturday**—9:00—12:00 p.m.—Gan/Alef—Vav Classes

**Sunday**, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Gan/Alef - Vav Classes

**Sunday**, 10:00 - 12:30 p.m. – Zayin students

Should you find that early dismissal is required, please follow this procedure:

1. Send your child to school with a signed note explaining the reason for the early dismissal request.
2. Please do not go to the classrooms to pick up children. Parents must come into the school office to sign the student out. Students will be sent to the office for dismissal.
3. Students will not be dismissed before a parent/guardian arrives. The student may not wait outside for early dismissal.

Please be in touch with your child's teachers to catch up on missed work in the event of an absence.



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## Code of Conduct

### Guidelines and Expected Behavior

Students will:

1. Attend Makom regularly.
2. Arrive on time at the beginning of each session.
3. Come prepared with all supplies necessary (books, pen or pencil, head covering, etc.).
4. Use only appropriate language and gestures.
5. Act with Kavod (respect) toward others.
6. Act with Kavod (respect) toward school and individual property.
7. Work toward Sh'lom Bayit (Peace in the Home) by resolving any disputes with respect and kindness.
8. Remain with class unless otherwise specified.
9. Leave chewing gum, phones and other electronics at home, or inside backpack.
10. Dress appropriately. Boys should wear a Kippah. Revealing clothes or T-shirts with inappropriate comments or symbols should not be worn at Makom. Attire respectful of Shabbat is expected at Shabbat school.

Additionally, each class will jointly develop its own set of rules for the creation of an optimal learning community. Each family will be asked to sign a Brit (covenant) to insure this code of conduct is agreed upon.

### Cell Phones

During Makom hours, there is no reason for a child to be using his or her cell phone. The school has adopted the policy used by Lower Merion School District which follows the Pennsylvania School Code S13-1317.1 which provides:

Cell phones shall be permitted under the following circumstances:

They cannot be visible in the classrooms.

They cannot be used in the classrooms, unless the teacher allows it for educational purposes..

They cannot disrupt the classroom.

A student cannot be late to class because of a cell phone call.

To that end, children must place their cell phones in their backpack. The phones must be turned off during Makom hours. If a child is caught using a phone during school hours, the teacher may confiscate it until the end of the day. If this continues, you will be contacted.