



Family Handbook

2023-2024

5783-5784

Congregation Or Tzion * 16415 N 90th St, Scottsdale, AZ, 85260

A Message From Our Education Director

Welcome to the start of the 2023-2024 school year! Roz Goodell Religious School staff are preparing to welcome students back into the classroom for a year filled with fun, Jewish growth and plenty of *ruach*. Before we venture into the specifics of the year, I want to renew our commitment to the three pillars of our school that stand as the guideposts for the experience of every child.

- 1) ***Bitachon (Safety)*** - Provide a safe and healthy environment for all. You are trusting our staff with your most prized possession. It is our duty to maintain an environment where children feel safe to grow, express and explore their Judaism.
- 2) ***Ruach (Spirit)*** - Create a vibrant learning atmosphere where students arrive excited to learn new skills, sing new songs, pray and build community. Every child should leave at the end of our sessions with a smile on their face. Or Tzion is their synagogue too, and their Judaism should come alive within its walls.
- 3) ***Kehillah Kedoshah (a holy community)*** - Build lifelong connections between children, parents and families. Everyday, our desire should be to establish a ***Kehillah Kedoshah, a holy community fostering friendship, understanding and joy.***

All RGRS staff and volunteers take the privilege of facilitating the Jewish journey of your child seriously and as a true blessing. Everyday, I promise that we will work hard to achieve these three ideas. I invite you to join us in support of achieving these goals.

Rak Hazak v'Ematz! May we go forth with courage and strength,

Andre Ivory
Education Director, Congregation Or Tzion

About This Handbook and Welcome Packet

This handbook contains important information regarding the operation of the Roz Goodell Religious School for the 2023-2024 school year. Included here you will find our policies and procedures explained in detail. Please take time to read it completely, as some policies may have changed. Keep this as a reference throughout the school year.

We want to keep the lines of communication open between your home and our school. It is our hope that you will never hesitate to contact our office for questions, updates, or concerns.

To reach us, please contact Marie E. Lewis in the office by phone: 480-342-8858, or email officeadmin@otaz.org. You can also reach via email our Education Director, Andre Ivory educationdirector@otaz.org.

School Schedule ***L'zman HaZeh (This Special Time)***

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade

Sundays 9:00 am-11:30 am

3rd-6th Grade

Sundays 9:00 am-11:30 am

Wednesdays 4:00 pm-6:00 pm

7th Grade

Sundays 9:00 am-11:30 am

8th Grade Seminar

1st Wednesday with Education Director, Andre Ivory

2nd Session/ Volunteer Activity 2nd Sunday with Rabbi Aviva Funke - Times will vary depending on volunteer opportunity.

SHUK CART FOR 2023-2024!

Students will have the ability to choose snack items from our Shuk Cart every school session. To access the Shuk Cart, families can purchase a 20 item Shuk Card for \$20. Each card has 10 punch slots good for two (2) items from the Shuk Cart. When a student's Shuk Card is nearing full use, parent(s) will receive an email notification, with an option to purchase an additional Shuk Card. All proceeds from the purchase of Shuk Cards will benefit RGRS special programs.

Elective Wednesdays

On the second Wednesday of every month, students will participate in their choice of special activities during the last hour of the day. Each experience is designed to allow students to interact with various Jewish topics in fun, meaningful ways. Announcements will be made a month prior to the elective day and students will choose their elective on the Sunday before the Elective Wednesday.

Kippot

We are an egalitarian congregation and male students are required to wear a Kippah (head covering), while females are encouraged to wear a kippah. ***Please send your student with their own Kippah each session.***

Parental Involvement

We encourage parents to join at special performances, and attend family education workshops, assemblies and activities. We always welcome volunteers for our special school-wide and grade-level activities, as well as participation as a Room Parent. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact VP of Education, Sandee Levine at sandee.levine@otaz.org.

Education Committee

School policies, curriculum and programming are discussed at the Education Committee meetings. The meetings begin at 6:30 pm the first Wednesday of the month (Please check COT website for changes). Any member of our congregation is invited to attend. If you would like to join this important committee, please contact Sandee Levine, the Vice President of Education. Sandee can be reached at sandee.levine@otaz.org. If you need virtual accommodations please contact Sandee.

Parking, Pick-up and Drop-Off

IMPORTANT: In order to ensure the safety of our students, staff and volunteers, pick up and drop-off in the alley at the rear of the building will not be offered. We request that parents utilize one of the two following options:

Parking to Pick-Up and Drop-Off

If you are participating in an Or Tzion event or need to enter the building from the front, please enter the Or Tzion parking lot exclusively from 91st street. You are welcome to park in any spots surrounding our building. Upon exiting the parking lot or garage, please drive out onto 91st street.

Cul-de-Sac Pick-Up and Drop-Off:

1. From 90th street, continue straight to the end of the cul-de-sac.
2. Stay along the curb, mindful of not blocking the driveways of other businesses.
3. Follow the curve of the cul-de-sac and pull to the Or Tzion sign.
4. A staff member will ask the name of your child, calling via walkie-talkie to have them brought out.
5. You can exit the line, and cul-de-sac, by driving straight ahead, northbound on 90th St. Please look out for cars that may be exiting the Or Tzion parking lot.

Attendance

Regular attendance is considered one of the most important elements of any successful educational program. If you know that your child will be absent for a week or more, please contact Andre Ivory, educationdirector@otaz.org.

Early Dismissal / Late Drop-off Policy

Should you need to pick up your child early, parents must come *into* the building to sign them out. Should it occur that a child is being dropped off beyond 15 minutes into the session, parents must come *into* the building to sign them in. Please do not call/text your child on their cell phone to come out of the building. Upon arrival, come into the building, let us know who you are picking up or dropping off and sign them in or out. As a matter of safety, children will be escorted to and from classrooms. You can notify the office of a change in your plans, please call Marie E. Lewis in our office at 480-342-8858, or email officeadmin@otaz.org. In the event you cannot reach anyone, please text Andre Ivory at 480.444.9114. **Students will NOT be permitted to leave the building on their own.**

Service Attendance / Chai Club / Kitah Shabbat

A Kehillah Kedoshah (A Holy Community)

Service Attendance

To further enhance your child's connection to Judaism, we encourage every student to attend ten services (10) throughout the year. This may include: Friday night Shabbat services, Saturday morning Shabbat services, Jr. Congregation, Thursday morning *minyanim*, holiday morning services (not including the High Holidays), and/or up to three *shiva minyanim*.

Jr. Congregation

Jr. Congregation meets the first Shabbat Morning of every month. This service is geared towards children in grades 3 to 7. Service will be led by Educator Andre Ivory. Service time is 10:00 am to 11:30 am. Children will join the service in the main sanctuary for concluding songs, kiddush and HaMotzi. Participants will enjoy a special kids only *oneg* following Jr. Congregation.

Chai Club

We are pleased to offer the Chai Club for students who attend at least eighteen qualifying services. These students will be recognized for their achievements with a special outing with the Or Tzion clergy and staff at the end of the school year.

Kitah Shabbat

There will be times students share Shabbat with their families and community during a *Kitah (class) Shabbat*. These *Shabbatot* (plural for Shabbat) provide a wonderful opportunity for our students and their families to mingle and celebrate together. Families will be invited to join us for an optional Shabbat Dinner, following services.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Candidates

During their B'nai Mitzvah year, we ask students to attend a minimum of five (5) Friday night services and five (5) Saturday morning services, not including their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend.

Service Attendance Dropbox

There will be a drop box in the lobby in which you can leave your student's attendance card. If you are attending a service outside of Or Tzion, please email educationdirector@otaz.org and we will note it in our system.

Tzedakah and Acts of Loving Kindness

One of our objectives is to have our students feel and act upon their responsibility to the larger Jewish community. *Tzedakah*, in the form of small change, is collected in class daily. As the year comes to a close, classes will be presented with organizations for a schoolwide vote on where the *tzedakah* will be donated.

Health & Safety

Kol Aravim Zeh L'Zeh (We Look After Each Other).

Protecting the Health of Every Child and Staff Member

The Education Director, and Education Committee work closely with our Health and Safety Committee to monitor developments with COVID-19, its variant, and other health and safety issues. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to families.

Guidelines for mask wearing are at the direction of the Health and Safety Committee and are subject to change.

*If your child has been directly exposed, and/or asked to be quarantined by their weekday school, please contact Andre Ivory as soon as possible. If your child is exhibiting any of the listed symptoms of Covid, **please keep them home.** Please be mindful that we are all susceptible to the every-day cold, seasonal influenza, and a variety of infections. We ask that if your child is **exhibiting any signs of any illness, they remain at home.***

Food - Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

*****RGRS is a NUT FREE Campus*****

A child with a serious allergy can suffer a life-threatening, anaphylactic reaction through exposure or ingesting a food containing ingredients to which they are allergic.

We ask parents to be sensitive to and respectful of the needs of all of the students in their child's class. We appreciate all religious school parents' understanding and compliance with these critically important guidelines.

Please do not send any food(s) to school that contain peanuts or tree nuts including, but not limited to: peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, baked goods containing peanuts or tree nuts, and foods containing nut sauces or flavoring to be eaten in the classroom, or snacks anywhere else in the building—either before or afterschool. Please check granola and similar snack bars. Many include peanuts or tree nuts as ingredients. While we make every effort to ensure no such nuts are present in the school, we remain a multi-use facility and cannot guarantee that children will not come in contact with peanut or tree nut residue inside the building.

Food allergies (including but not limited to eggs, dairy products, soy, seeds, sesame, fruits, honey, or gluten) will be handled on a case-by-case basis in that child's classroom. Certain restrictions may be placed on all the children in that classroom (in addition to the prohibition on peanuts and tree nuts).

If your child has a serious allergy, please confirm you included the description in your religious school registration.

Special Medical Conditions

Please make an appointment with Andre Ivory, Education Director, to discuss a medical plan.

Kashrut

The laws of *kashrut* represent an important means of sanctifying the act of eating. In order to maintain a communal standard, we ask that students refrain from bringing non-kosher meat, nor foods that contain non-kosher meat for snack. Dairy or parve (foods neither dairy or meat) are allowed if the product adheres to our allergy precaution. If a child needs a snack, please consider purchasing a Shuk Card for access to snack items in our Shuk.

Maintaining a Secure Environment

We have on-site security during all hours of religious school. Please note: that the doors to our building will be locked starting 10 minutes after the start of religious school days and unlocked 10 minutes before the end of school. If you would like to enter the building when it is locked, please press the button on the wall next to the door farthest to the left.

We will be holding at least one fire drill, lock down drill, and reverse lock down drill each semester.

B'tzelem Elohim (In the Image of the Divine)

We believe that every individual at Or Tzion and beyond is created *B'Tzelem Elohim*, in the image of the Divine. It is important to treat one another in a manner that we would treat anything created by the Almighty. We want to treat each other with respect, honor, and care. Our words and actions impact others; we should always strive to be kind to ourselves and others.

Should a student have a difficult time meeting these expectations, and if they cannot remain in class because of disciplinary issues, the student will have a discussion with Andre Ivory regarding the concern. If this occurs, parent(s) will be notified.

A second visit with the Education Director will involve an action plan. The action plan will be emailed home to the parent(s). If a student continues to visit Andre Ivory for disciplinary reasons, a meeting will be called with the student, the student's family, RGRS Administration and Rabbi Green. If you have any concerns about what your child is experiencing in the classroom, please contact Andre Ivory, Education Director.

If a student is physically violent at any time, parents must pick up their child immediately. We are all working to ensure a positive, healthy, and safe learning environment for every student.

From Strength to Strength

You are your child's first Jewish educator. We thank you for trusting us to be your partner. At the Roz Goodell Religious School, we strive to provide the best Jewish education possible for your children. We want to keep the lines of communication open and available between your home and our school. It is our hope that you will never hesitate to contact us with questions, updates or concerns. And when we are doing something great, please do not hesitate to share that with us as well.

Working together, may we go from strength to strength.

To show that you are committed to building a strong community, please have a parent/ guardian and child/children sign below.

Parent/ Guardian

Child 1

Child 2

Child 3