



TALMUDICAL ACADEMY OF BALTIMORE  
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Dear Lower School Parents,

It is with great anticipation and excitement that we await the return of our *talmidim* to our yeshiva for the first time in close to 6 long months! We are full of simcha and joy as we plan for a safe and successful school year, under the close guidance of our Vaad Harabanim, Medical Advisory Team, The American Academy of Pediatrics, and additional government guidance, and coordinated by the incredible untiring efforts of our Executive Director, Rabbi Yaakov Cohen.

Our administration and staff are working tirelessly to ensure that the start of school will be as safe, sustainable, smooth, and seamless as possible. We are depending on our partnership with our parent body now more than ever. This school year will require a team effort each and every day. We thank you for your understanding and flexibility as we strive to create the most optimal environment for chinuch habanim and fostering the growth and learning of our most precious talmidim.

We wish to bring your attention to a few key points about the upcoming year. As we move toward the end of the summer, we will continue to communicate with you with updated COVID related policies.

#### **DAILY SCHEDULE and LEARNING MODALITIES**

We will follow the standard daily schedule as much as possible. In order to create the safest environment possible, and to protect each class/cohort, schedules within the school day will be adjusted as necessary. More details regarding schedules, procedures, and safeguards will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. This school year, we will constantly be monitoring the local and communal health conditions. There may be times when we need to alter our approach and even possibly our schedules. However, we are committed to provide consistent and engaging chinuch, no matter the medium of learning! To this end, we are working diligently to prepare for various models of learning so if the need to change gears arises, we can do so as seamlessly as possible.

#### **PARENTS' ROLE**

This year, more than ever, our parent body will be an integral partner in each and every day of school. During these last weeks of summer break, you will be preparing your son for the new school year both physically and emotionally. Additionally, we will be relying on our parents to complete daily health questionnaires, be available to pick up ill students or those displaying symptoms, and other necessary procedures. This school year will not be possible without a strong school-parent partnership, and we are grateful for our special community of TA families.

It is important for the talmidim to know and understand that their parents, rebbeim, teachers, and administration are united in fostering their wellbeing and encouraging their chinuch. As always, we welcome your input and observations and look forward to collaborating in the interest of your child's success.

In addition, please recognize that when your child enters a new grade and, thereby, a new environment, he will need time to acclimate. This year, after being out of the school building and a regular schedule for so long, an extended acclimation period is expected. Remember *kol haschalos kashos*, all beginnings are difficult. Your child may need your support while he adapts to his new class, grade, and the COVID related adjustments to the school day. Your calm and understanding manner during this time will certainly help to create a smooth and successful transition. Allowing a bit of time to pass, while guided by caring rebbeim, teachers, and parents, is often all it takes.

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## ORIENTATION

On our Lower School calendar, Parent Orientations are listed as follows:

- **Tuesday, September 1st - 1<sup>st</sup> grade**
- **Wednesday, September 2nd - Early Childhood**
- **Wednesday, September 9th- 2nd - 5<sup>th</sup> grades**

Orientation schedules and procedures will be sent in upcoming communications.

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

**Our first day of school will be on Thursday, September 3rd.** First day of school procedures will be sent in upcoming communications.

## HELPING OUR TALMIDIM ADJUST

This year, more than ever, we understand that students may need more time than usual to adjust and may be experiencing anxiety and other emotional struggles. Rabbi Norman Lowenthal, MS Ed., MSW, LCSW-C is our Lower School Guidance Counselor, and he will be spearheading our efforts to ensure the emotional and mental wellbeing of each and every talmid. If you have a specific concern, please feel free to reach out to Rabbi Lowenthal for guidance. The School Counseling Program supports and enhances the school's educational program by addressing the needs of children comprehensively and systematically. Rabbi Lowenthal consults with parents and teachers and interacts with students through classroom guidance lessons, small group counseling sessions, and individual counseling. Parent consultation regarding parenting concerns are always welcome. During the school year, students can communicate directly with Rabbi Lowenthal through a special mailbox located in the Elementary lobby. Additionally, when possible, Rabbi Lowenthal provides mentoring to school counseling interns who assist in supporting our school counseling program.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

We are fortunate to offer Lamdeinu special education services at our school with the support of SHEMESH, an educational support program for students with learning differences. Mrs. Rivky Danziger, TA's Lamdeinu Learning Center Director, leads a team of special educators who are employed by TA, with partial funding from SHEMESH. Students can be referred for services by teachers and/or parents, and children with identified learning differences are serviced through specialized learning plans. Students also receive support from the services offered by Mrs. Sara Ottensoser, Shemesh Executive Functioning Coach. Additionally, our Early Childhood benefits from the SHEMESH services of Mrs. Debbie Logue, reading specialist, and Mrs. Michal Tessler, behavior specialist. Mrs. Stacie Arfa, our Elementary reading specialist, works with small groups of students with identified lags in reading skills on a daily basis. Mrs. Helen Hexter, our Early Childhood kria specialist, works with Early Childhood students to ensure their kria skills are developing and up to par.

## COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

TA primarily uses **email** and **text message notifications** to update and inform parents of school related announcements regarding inclement or questionable weather, emergency closings, school trips, or other unusual circumstances (including school related Covid matters). Follow the below instructions to sign up for the TA Text Message Notification System. We have several text notification groups - **parents need to sign themselves up** to be added to a group. Please sign up for **each group** that applies to your family:

1. Send a text to phone #: 81010
2. To join any of the following groups, type the bold text below in the body of the text message:
  - **@talmudic**: General TA Updates for All Divisions
  - **@ycctapre**: Early Childhood (Grades Nursery-Kindergarten)
  - **@ycctaelem**: Elementary (Grades 1-5)

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## ELEMENTARY PROPER HYGIENE AND ATTIRE

TA Elementary does not have a school uniform. However, we believe that appearance and hygiene influence a student's work habits and general performance. A student whose physical hygiene is poor is a target of ridicule by his peers. We expect our students to be clean and look well-groomed. Recognizing that appearance can affect one's attitude towards yeshiva and derech eretz, we encourage our parents to dress their children in conservative clothing. **Yarmulkes** only should be worn in the classroom, not hats or caps. Students are encouraged to wear **white shirts** on Rosh Chodesh.

### **Student Dress code:**

- Shirts must have a collar and at least 2 buttons.
- Dark colored pants should be worn.
- We recommend that students in grades 4 and 5 **not** wear shorts.

### **Prohibited clothing/styles:**

- Articles of clothing with logos, graphics, or wording
- Blue jeans, denim, dungarees, jeggings, jean type material pants, or pants with "ripped out" knees
- Track pants (such as Adidas Tiros)
- Jewelry, cologne and styles that are attention-seeking or excessively informal
- "Wheelie" shoes and crocs

## SAFETY AND SANITATION:

Elementary Students should please bring the following to school EVERY DAY:

- 3 masks (1 to wear and 2 to leave in school as spares)
- 1 personal sized bottle of hand sanitizer
- 2 filled bottles of water

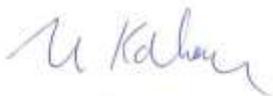
In keeping with our dress code guidelines, please choose masks that do not have logos, graphics, or wording (if a mask is deemed inappropriate, the child will be issued a plain mask from the school). Please note that additional supplies for sanitation and safety may be necessary, and parents will be updated closer to the beginning of the school year.

## SUMMER PACKETS

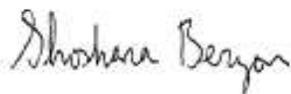
Summer packets were sent home at the end of June in an effort to support the learning your son completed this past school year. Rebbeim and teachers put tremendous thought into designing the packets so that the boys will begin their new school year with success. When the students return to school in September, summer packets will be collected by the rebbeim and teachers, and prizes will be awarded to those students who completed their packets.

In closing, we would like to express our appreciation for the joint efforts of our faculty, administration, and parent body in continuing to elevate our Yeshiva to higher levels. We also recognize that for a thriving institution such as ours to exist and function properly it takes more than educational administrators at the forefront. With this in mind, we would like to express our sincerest *hakoras hatov* to our Leadership, Administrative Division, Maintenance and Kitchen Staff, and the P.T.A. who work so closely with us to offer the best possible *chinuch* for our *talmidim*. We are looking forward to another successful year as we continue to strive toward *aliyah* in *derech eretz*, *yiras shamayim*, *limud haTorah*, and excellence in education. It is our *tefilla* to *Hashem* that He continue to shine His countenance upon us so that we may accomplish our goal of having each and every child reach his greatest potential.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Nachman Kahana  
Menahel



Mrs. Shoshana Berzon  
General Studies Principal



Mrs. Beily Rosen  
Early Childhood Director