# CAS Religious School Handbook 5777 (2016-2017)

# A Word of Welcome

Dear CAS Religious School Families:

On behalf of Rabbi Bloom, the CAS Board of Directors, and myself, I would like to welcome you to the 5777 CAS Religious School year!! For those of you I have not had the privilege of meeting yet, I am Cantor Shoshana Abrams Kaikov, your Cantor and Education Director at Congregation Ahavath Sholom. It has been a true honor and privilege to serve our Kehillah Kedosha (sacred community) for the past four years and I am thrilled to be embarking on a fifth year in this beautiful community.

The CAS Religious School is a fun, vibrant, and exciting place where our children come each week to learn, grow, and make beautiful Jewish memories that will last them a lifetime. Our faculty and I have worked very hard to create a nurturing and experiential Jewish educational program for our youth, and it is with great pride that we invite you all to join us for what promises to be yet another spectacular year ahead!

This year, each grade level will have the following schedule:

**Pre-k through 8th grades will meet every Sunday from 9:30am-12:30pm**

**9th – 12th grades will meet twice each month on Sundays from 10:30am-12:30pm**

Enclosed in the Handbook materials, you will find a full calendar with all Religious School sessions noted for each grade level for your convenience as well as special family programs. I kindly suggest you keep the calendar posted on your refrigerator as a reminder for your family of important dates.

We highly encourage your involvement and commitment to our religious school. Enclosed, please find the religious school vision and educational philosophy, guidelines for students and parents, drop-off and dismissal procedure, religious school schedule and calendar, special events, Shabbat attendance requirements, Immunization Requirements, and curriculum outline by grade.

Should you ever have any questions or concerns, I am always available to speak with you. Feel free to reach me at (817)731-4721 x113, via email at cantor.abrams@ahavathsholom.org, or by stopping by my office.

I wish you and all your loved ones a sweet new year filled with health, happiness, and success in all that you do!

Cantor Shoshana Abrams Kaikov

# Our Vision of Jewish Education

# at Congregation Ahavath Sholom

***At the dynamic CAS religious school, we strive to offer experiential, nurturing, hands-on, exciting, rich, and vibrant Jewish learning that will inspire our students for a lifetime. Our faculty of energetic and passionate educators is committed to providing our students with a world-class Jewish education by means of a cutting-edge curriculum that creatively and rigorously equips our students for meaningful Jewish journeys.***

Students graduating from our CAS Religious School will be equipped with many tools that will serve them as Jewish adults. A number of **goals/objectives** for our exciting religious school program are:

- to create a warm, inviting, and inclusive *Kehillah Kedoshah (*sacred community) within the larger context of CAS that welcomes in every Jew from diverse walks of life
- to educate our children in the customs, practices, and rituals of Judaism in order to enable them to make it relevant in their daily lives, and instilling within them and their families a lifelong commitment to Jewish learning
- to positively nourish the growing Jewish identities of our children
- to encourage students to perform *Mitzvot* (commandments/good deeds) and *G'milut Hasadim (*acts of loving kindness) and integrate them into their daily lives
- to celebrate Shabbat, Jewish holidays and learn the history and roots of the Jewish people
- to become acquainted and comfortable with Jewish life cycle events
- to learn the Hebrew alphabet and read, comprehend, and write in Hebrew as well as gain the ability to navigate and master the Jewish prayer book

# Student Guidelines

1. Please put on a *Kippah* (yarmulke) when you enter the synagogue.
2. Please come to class on time.
3. In Judaism, we have a custom of giving *Tzedakah* (charity) for those who are less fortunate. Please bring money (as little or as much as you are able to give) to put in to the classroom *Tzedakah* box each week. As a school, we will have an ongoing *Tzedakah* project to decide where our raised money will be donated.
4. Please remember that CAS is a house of God, and we should dress appropriately and act respectfully at all times.
5. Please exercise *Derekh Eretz* by being polite to everyone around you at all times.
6. Please make sure to complete the brief homework assignments given by religious school teachers each week.
7. No pushing, shoving or running in the building.
8. We will provide snack each Sunday during *Hafsakah* (break) at religious school. Please do not bring food into the building.
9. If you are absent, please speak with your teacher to make up what you missed.
10. You are expected to attend at least 70% of religious school sessions.
11. You are expected to attend at least one Shabbat service (evening and/or morning) per month as well as special religious school Shabbat programs. During the year before you become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we highly recommend that you attend Shabbat services (evening and morning) as often as possible so that we can invite you to lead parts of the service and become comfortable with being on the *Bima.* We want you to feel relaxed and confident on your big day. Please remember to always dress and act appropriately.
12. You are expected to participate in *Tefillot* (prayer) each Sunday morning at 10:30am in the Chapel. Each class will be assigned to lead parts of this fun and musical service.
13. At the end of religious school, you may come to Cantor Abrams Kaikov's office (with your teacher) and tell her something that you learned that day and she will give you a piece of candy.
14. Be sure to read the synagogue newsletter. In each edition, you will have the chance to answer a fun Jewish trivia question. If you know the answer, you may tell Cantor Abrams Kaikov for a prize.
15. Throughout the school year, we will have fun celebrations to recognize classes with best attendance and academic achievement.
16. At the end of religious school each Sunday, please follow your teacher's instructions and leave the classroom all together. Your teacher will wait with you until you have been picked up.
17. HAVE FUN!!!!!

# Parent Guidelines

1. Please make every effort to get your child(ren) to religious school on time.
2. Please make sure that your child(ren) completes their brief weekly homework assignments (10-15 minutes). Please try to make yourself available to help your child(ren) with these assignments. In the event that you have any questions or concerns, please contact Cantor Abrams Kaikov.
3. In Judaism, we have a custom of giving *Tzedakah* (charity) for those who are less fortunate. Please send your child(ren) to religious school with money (as little or as much as you are able to give) to put in to the classroom *Tzedakah* box each week. We will decide as a school where to donate the money we have raised.
4. Please make sure your child(ren) attends at least 70% of religious school classes.
5. We will provide snack each Sunday during *Hafsakah* (break) at religious school. Please do not bring food into the building.
6. Please accompany your child(ren) to at least one Shabbat service (evening and/or morning) each month as well as special religious school Shabbat programs. During the year before your child(ren) becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we highly recommend that you and your child(ren) attend Shabbat services (evening and morning) as often as possible so that we can invite him/her to lead parts of the service and become comfortable with being on the *Bima.* We want him/her to feel relaxed and confident on their big day. It is crucial that you attend services with your child(ren), as it sends the message that you also value Jewish prayer and tradition.
7. Your involvement in the religious school is highly encouraged. Please sign up to be a room parent by seeing Cantor Abrams Kaikov.
8. Please make sure that your child(ren) is appropriately dressed for religious school.
9. If you need to pick your child(ren) up from  religious school early, please send a note to your child(ren)'s religious school teacher.
10. If you should ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Cantor Abrams Kaikov.

# CAS Immunization Requirements and Health Standards

Dear CAS Religious School Families,

I hope that your new year is off to a wonderful start. As you know, safety is always our top priority at the CAS Religious School. I kindly ask that all families please submit immunization records in accordance with the Texas state minimum requirements to the synagogue office in hard copy or via email no later than **Sunday, September 18th, 2016 at 9:30am**. In the event that we do not receive these records by then, your child(ren) will not be permitted to attend class and will be sent home until these records have been submitted.

Additionally, in order to protect all children and teachers in our school, your child should stay home if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms, and may not return to school for 24 hours after becoming symptom free:

- Oral temperature of 99 degrees, within previous 24 hours
- Intestinal disturbance, accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting within the previous 24 hours
- Any diagnosed rash
- Sore or discharge from eyes or ears
- Profuse, thick, or colored nasal discharge
- Impetigo, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, contagious diseases (e.g. chicken pox, sore throat with fever, head lice, unknown rash)
- Illness that prevents child from participating comfortably in school activities
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other students.

If your child develops any of the above symptoms while at school, we will isolate him/her and you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible.

If a child contracts a contagious disease, the school office must be notified immediately. After any serious or communicative illness, parents are required to bring a re-admitting slip from the child's physician that indicates that the child is ready for normal activity. Any infectious disease, or infestation, must be reported to the school office so that we may take the necessary precautions and inform parents as dictated by state guidelines.

Should your child require medication while at school, the staff will only be able to administer medication if the medicine is accompanied by a signed authorization. The medication must be brought to the school office in the original prescription bottle where it will be kept in a safety cabinet. Please do not send medicine in your child's backpack for the child to administer him/herself.

For your convenience, I have provided a link to the Texas Minimum Vaccination Requirements which is also in line with FWISD requirements:

http://www.fwisd.org/files/_rNJmk_/a403db0b4ea9b5a83745a49013852ec4/2013-2014_Texas_Minimum_State_Vaccine_Requirements_for_Students_Grades_K-12.pdf

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (817)731-4721 x113. I am also always available via email cantor.abrams@ahavathsholom.org and in person. Thank you for your cooperation in this serious matter.

Cantor Shoshana Abrams Kaikov

# Drop-Off and Dismissal Procedure

At the CAS Religious School, safety is our highest priority. We **DO NOT** want children running across the parking lot at any time. Please make sure to deliver and pick up your children at the South Entrance of the building (the pre-school entrance), so that we may welcome and dismiss children at the curb in a safe and orderly fashion.

At the conclusion of religious school, we kindly request that you form a line of cars at the curb in order to pick up your child(ren). Teachers will walk out to the curb with students after religious school and wait until each child has been picked up.

Thank you for your cooperation!

# CAS Religious School Schedule

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|---|---|
| **9:30am-10:25am** | ***Ivrit* (Hebrew)** |
| **10:25am-10:30am** | **Walk to the Chapel** |
| **10:30am-11:00am** | ***Tefillot* (prayer in the Chapel)** |
| **11:00am-11:15am** | ***Hafsakah* (Snack Break)** |
| **11:15am-12:30pm** | **Judaics** |

## ***Shira* (Music)**

**Please note, one Sunday per month your children will have the privilege of having a fun and celebratory music session with our fantastic accordion player, Eli Davidsohn. Last year, your children had the chance to meet with him on a couple occasions and it was such a hit, that we have decided to bring him back once each month. Students will learn festive Jewish holiday songs, Jewish classics, and new modern Jewish melodies.**

# CAS Religious School Theme For 5777:

## *B’tzelem Elokim*

## *In God’s Image*

As a Jewish people, we believe that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. That is not to say that God has human-like features, but rather, it means that God bestowed special honor unto humankind. As a school, may we always be guided by this notion that we are holy and that our actions and words should always come from a place of love and kindness. All that we do should emanate God’s ways, for after all, we were created in God’s image.

# Congregation Ahavath Sholom Religious School Curriculum Outline 5777 (2016-2017)

## Gan (Pre-K/K): Celebrations

Introduction to Hebrew Letters and Words

Parts of the Body in Hebrew

Holidays Including Shabbat

Basic Prayers, Blessings, and Songs

Bible Stories

## Kitah Alef (1st grade): Sacred Time, Sacred Objects, Sacred Stories, Sacred Language

Hebrew Reading Preparation: Letters, Vowels, and Words

Holidays Including Shabbat

Basic Prayers, Blessings, and Songs

Bible Stories

## Kitah Bet (2nd grade): Middot/Values and Mitzvot/Commandments – Tools For Jewish Living

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Hebrew Reading

Torah

Jewish Values and Commandments

Holidays Including Shabbat

Prayers, Blessings, and Songs focusing on Kabbalat Shabbat

Synagogue Discovery

## Kitah Gimel (3rd grade): The Jewish Homeland

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Hebrew Reading

Jewish Symbols and Customs

Modern Israel

Holidays Including Shabbat

Prayers, Blessings, and Songs focusing on Friday Night Ma'ariv

Torah

Siyum Project

## Kitah Dalet (4th grade): God

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Reading Hebrew

Holidays Including Shabbat

Reading and Understanding *Tefillot* (Prayers)

God

Prayers, Blessings, and Songs focusing on Friday Night Ma'ariv

Torah

## Kitah Hey (5th grade): Living A Jewish Life

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Holidays Including Shabbat

Jewish Life Cycles

Midrash/Commentaries

Prayers, Blessings, and Songs focusing on Shabbat Morning Service

Reading and Understanding *Tefillot* (Prayers) and Structure of Services

"Geography" of the Torah

Trope

**Kitah Vov (6th grade): Jewish Identity – Self and Community**

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Holidays Including Shabbat

Reading and Understanding *Tefillot* (Prayers)

Prayer-Leading Skills

Holocaust

*B`Nai Mitzvah* Preparation

Sacred Community

Trope

**Kitah Zayin (7th grade): Becoming a Jewish Adult**

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Conversational Hebrew

Prayer-Leading Skills

Holidays Including Shabbat

Jewish Heroes

Reading and Understanding *Tefillot* (Prayers)

*B`Nai Mitzvah* Preparation

Sacred Community

Trope

## 8th Grade : Where We've Been, Where We Are, And Where We Are Going

*Tefillah* (Chapel)

Conversational Hebrew

Jewish History

Jewish Current Events

Tough Questions Jews Ask

## 9th-12th Grades: Trimesters

Our teen classes will be divided into trimesters of five sessions each.

1. **Jewish Art** – Students will be creating a Jewish mosaic project for Gan Ahavath Sholom with artists in our community. In the process of creating this artwork, students will learn about the seven species native to the land of Israel and bring a bit of Israel to our own garden at CAS. Once the project is completed, there will be a special ceremony for the community to attend where the project will be unveiled.

2. **Jewish Food For The Jewish Soul** – Back by popular demand, students will have the opportunity to cook authentic Jewish recipes while learning about the origins, history, and significance of each recipe.

3. **History of Israel/Jewish Sects** – Students will learn about the rich History of the Land of Israel as well as the varying Jewish sects around the world.