

Congregation Beth El RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027
5786-5787



Rabbi Nogah Marshall
Educational Director

MISSION STATEMENT

Beth El Religious School, which is affiliated with the Conservative movement, is a supplementary educational program for children from Kibbitz & Kids (Pre-K) through Confirmation (grade 10). In a rich learning environment that is dedicated to their moral and spiritual well-being, students explore and develop a strong, positive Jewish identity grounded in the study of Torah, T'fillah (prayer) and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of kindness). Beth El Religious School, in partnership with its families, nurtures, motivates and inspires its students to pursue a life-long commitment to Jewish learning, the practice of Mitzvot, the continuity of Klal Yisrael (the Jewish people), and a deep attachment to the State of Israel.

GREETINGS

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Beth El Religious School family. We offer an exciting, creative and stimulating educational experience for your children. Our staff is dedicated to imbuing our students with the necessary tools to become learned, interested, concerned Jews and caring members of our Jewish community. Our myriad of programs for all grade levels, family education, and Shabbat programming give our school its unique flavor. We invite you to participate and grow with your children. We value your input and commitment and look forward to your involvement. Together we can accomplish all our goals. We look forward to watching your children blossom from young children to sophisticated, educated young Jewish adults.

Thank you for allowing us to teach your children.

B'Shalom,

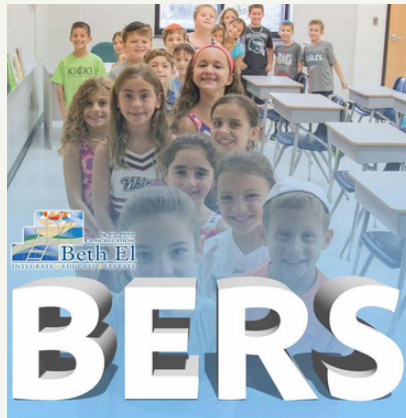
Rabbi Nogah Marshall
Educational Director

Karen Danziger & Renee Picot
Religious School PTG Committee Chairs



A MESSAGE FROM RABBI DAVID ENGLANDER

"Educate a child in the way they should go, then in their old age they will not depart from it." This verse from the Proverbs is in some ways a summary of important goals for our wonderful synagogue. First, a community has the responsibility to provide Jewish education for all who seek it, at any age, prior background, or learning need. Second, is that there are impacts of early learning that will have long-lasting effects which is why we have to consider carefully what experiences we provide. Lastly, it is our strong hope that Jewish learning will be a lifelong pursuit of students who interact with our schools at Beth El, which means that parents, grandparents, and others in the "older generations" can and should also have the opportunity to model this cornerstone of Jewish life. Education has sustained us through every era of our history, giving hope in bleak times, direction in better ones, and always inspiring us to develop closer connections to the pillars of Jewish identity: God, Torah, and the people and land of Israel. Thank you for the chance to "educate our children in the way they should go", and may none of us depart from the path that includes substantive and fun learning together with and at Beth El.



CLASSES

Elementary Department: (Grades K-6)

Kibbitz & Kids = Pre-K

Gan= Kindergarten

Aleph= 1st Grade

Bet= 2nd Grade

Gimmel= 3rd Grade

Daled= 4th Grade

Hey= 5th Grade

Vav= 6th Grade

Project Lev-Special Needs

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

You may contact our Religious School Office at 856-675-1166

Sundays: 8:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Tuesdays: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Wednesdays: 10:30 AM - 6:30 PM

Thursdays: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Fridays: 10:30 AM-3:00 PM

HEALTH POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Health and Safety of our participants and staff is the highest priority. Below are the policies & procedures.

Medications: Any child needing an epi-pen will be required to provide a set to be kept in the school office for the length of time their child is participating. All medications will require a physician signed Medication Authorization form prior to the start of school. Medications brought to Religious School must be in their original bottles with prescription and dosage details.

Health Screening: Parents should closely monitor their children's health at home. If your child(ren) are exhibiting any signs and symptoms or are simply not feeling well, they should not attend our program. All children and staff will complete a health screening using Remini prior to the start of school. Any child with a temperature of 100.4 or greater, and their siblings, will be sent home for the day.

Hand Washing: Participants and staff will be required to frequently wash hands and hand sanitize throughout the day. At a minimum, children will be required to wash their hands: In between each activity period, after each bathroom use, and before consuming food. Staff for each group will provide hand sanitizer to ensure easy access and frequent use.

What if my child is not feeling well? If your child is not feeling well, they will be placed in an isolation space and be required to be picked up. Any child or staff member that goes home with a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher must be fever free for 72 hours without fever reducing medicine to return. A doctor's note must be submitted to the office.

Arrival/Dismissal/Parking/Drop Off

Drop off will take place for at the Religious School entrance from 8:45am-9:00am on Sunday mornings from 3:45pm-4:15pm and on Wednesday afternoons. Please wait for the car in front of you to proceed. Proceed through the circular driveway and out through the back of parking lot. The driveway closest to the building will be kept one way, for **ENTRANCE** into the circular driveway. All cars **MUST EXIT** through the back of the parking lot. Late Drop Off will be directed to the office. Parents may also walk their children up to the front entrance.

Pick Up:

Students will will be picked up at the school entrance. Students will not be permitted to walk across the parking lot alone to their cars.

Early Pick-Up:

In the event you need to pick up your child(ren) early, you can do so. Our security guard will guide you. Upon arrival outside you will be greeted by an office staff member. You will announce the child and age group. We will call for that child and have them brought outside. From your car you will sign them out for the day.

Under no circumstances may a parent go directly into the classroom to pick up a child. If an individual other than the usual adult is going to pick up your child early from school, notify the school office in advance, IN WRITING. For reasons of safety, the office staff will not dismiss a child to anyone other than the regular adult unless notified.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Together we can reach our goals and objectives.

Our children who complete the Beth El Religious School program will...

Feel comfortable actively participating and leading in synagogue services.

Internalize the values inherent in the Torah by cultivating respect and care for oneself and others.

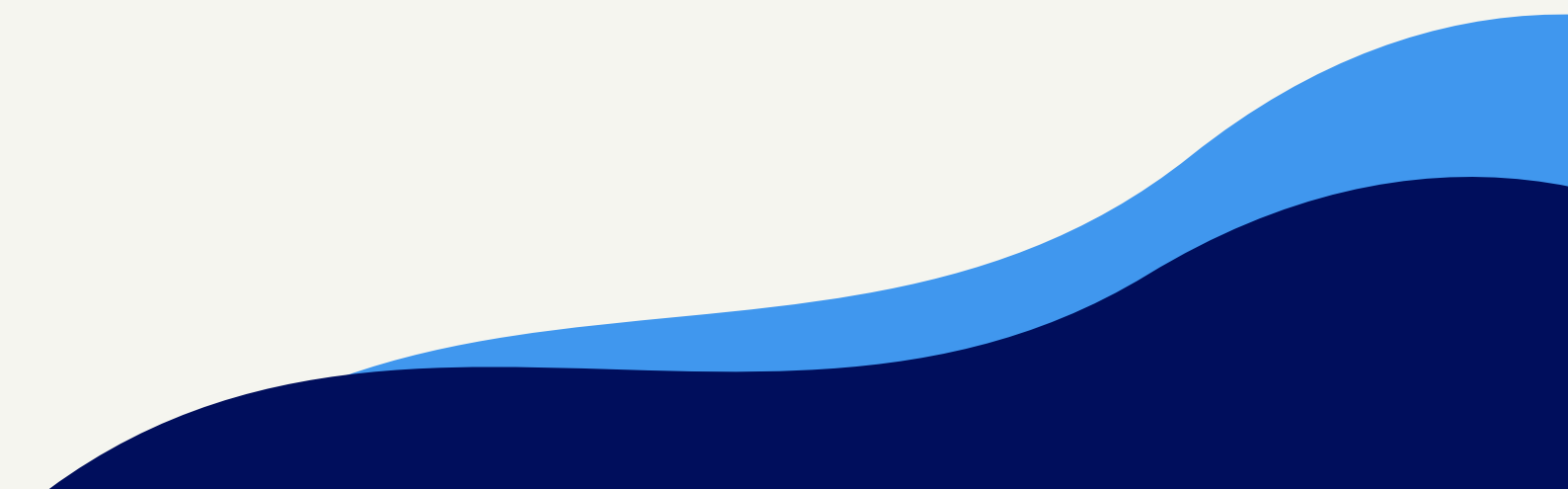
Gain a rich foundation in Hebrew Literacy, Prayer, Bible, Jewish History, Customs and Traditions.

Acquire basic Hebrew skills including decoding, reading, writing, reading comprehension and oral classroom vocabulary.

Develop a deeper commitment to the observance of Mitzvot.

Establish an identification with the State of Israel.

Learn more about Conservative Judaism while maintaining respect for other traditions.



CODE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

To help foster a positive educational climate in our school, we have developed a discipline plan that affords each student the opportunity to accept responsibility for his/her own behavior. Everyone in the school community must play a role in contributing to an effective educational environment.

THE STUDENT WILL:

- Accept responsibility for his/ her own actions.
- Attend school regularly.
- Arrive on time for class and activities.
- Treat fellow students, teachers and staff with respect.
- Respect property.
- Only bring appropriate materials to school.
- Abide by our school's dress code and policies.
- Accept responsibility for completing all classroom requirements.

THE PARENT WILL:

- Assure the student's regular attendance in school.
- Encourage the student's required attendance at Junior Congregation.
- Exemplify an enthusiastic and supportive attitude toward the school and Jewish education.
- Discuss behavioral responsibilities and expectations with the student.
- Be responsible for student's behavior, including paying for damaged books and property.

THE TEACHER WILL:

- Promote a climate of mutual respect and dignity, hence strengthening each student's positive self-image.
- Discuss with students the behavioral guidelines, including individual interpretations and expectations, teacher to student, as well as student to teacher.
- Attend to minor behavioral problems in the classroom, always maintaining the student's dignity.
- Follow the guidelines set forth for inappropriate behavior.
- Keep parents and Principal apprised of student's progress.

CODE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES: (always maintaining the student's dignity)

First time: Student is warned by teacher.

Second time: Student loses break or other class privilege and meets with teacher and/or Educational Director after class.

Third time: Parent is notified by teacher.

If problem persists: Parents will be notified by Educational Director and a conference with all parties present will be called.

SEVERE CLAUSE:

A student who engages in fighting, defies a teacher, is disrespectful, destroys school property, or leaves the school grounds without permission will be sent to the Educational Director immediately and not be readmitted to class until a conference with his/her parent takes place. In some cases, the parent will be required to remain with the student for the entire session.

Please keep the lines of communication open between you, your child, and the teacher and do not hesitate to call should any problem arise.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY - ZERO-TOLERANCE

Beth El Religious School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying against any pupil on school property, at any school sponsored activity or while using school provided transportation.

Examples of bullying and harassment may include:

Verbal abuse including name calling, teasing, racist remarks, etc.

Physical attacks including pushing, hitting, punching, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, etc.

Social exclusion including ostracism, ignoring, alienating, etc.

Psychological abuse including acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety.

Any other act that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any individual or group of individuals in such a way as to cause distress, a reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards or problem behaviors.

The use of electronic communication devices that include, but are not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone (e.g. text), computer (e.g. Instant Messaging, email) to harass, intimidate or bully.

Bullying incidents will be treated accordingly:

All reports of bullying will be brought to the attention of the teacher and director immediately.

After a period of verification, the Educational Director and Rabbi will meet with parents of offender to discuss appropriate consequences.

Depending on circumstances, consequences may include a period of suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Family and bullied child will meet with the Senior Rabbi for counseling.

SHABBAT PROGRAMMING

Attending Shabbat Services is an integral part of a religious education. Not only does it facilitate classroom learning, but it also strengthens Jewish identity. By actively participating in a service geared for your child, he/she will come to realize that there is a connection and relevance to what is being taught at school. He/she will develop an appreciation for community, a love for prayer and Judaism.

Junior Congregation

Suggested Ages: 5 –12 (Grades Gan–6) 10:30 AM – 11:45am
1st and 3rd Saturday of the Month

This amazing student led service is designed to empower our children to lead Shabbat and Holiday morning services in an interactive and fun, yet spiritual atmosphere. As our name signifies, Junior Congregation is owned by our children, who not only have an opportunity to lead the service, but also read from the Torah and deliver a D'var Torah, a short explanation of the Torah reading. In addition, they spend time learning about the prayers, Torah portions and synagogue culture in an engaging and creative manner. Everyone who attends Junior Congregation can volunteer at any time during the service. Each session a different grade is featured, and on those Shabbatot we want the class members to step up and help lead the bulk of the service.

Requirements for Shabbat Attendance Gan – Aleph (Grades K-1) & Bet (Grade 2):

It is expected that your child attends Shabbat Services a minimum of 5 times for K-1 and 8 times for Grade 2, during the year. It is easy to accumulate Junior Congregation attendance points during the year; We would like you to attend at least 3 of the 5 (for K-1) and 4 out of 8 (for 2nd Grade) services in the format described above, but the remaining service requirements can be fulfilled in a variety of creative ways:

Being in the Main Sanctuary or at another synagogue for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah
Helping your family make a minyan during weekly and/or
Shabbat Mincha and Ma'ariv (evenings) services.
Shabbat at the Shore
Attending Simchat Torah Evening
Attending the Purim Megillah Reading

While your child is having a great time meeting other children and experiencing a real Shabbat feeling, you can join your fellow congregants in the Main Sanctuary where our Rabbis and Cantor create a friendly and warm Shabbat atmosphere. There is always a great Kiddush that follows services.



SHABBAT PROGRAMMING

Gimmel-Vav (Grades 3-6):

10 times per year, 5 times per year at Beth El's Junior Congregation and 5 additional times per year at any of the above options. In order to receive credit for coming to services please put a sticker on your star on the Shabbat bulletin board with you to receive a sticker on the days you attend. Without the sticker, we have no way of verifying your attendance.

****ATTENTION ALL VAV (6th Grade) STUDENTS!**

Rabbi David Englander, Cantor Zehava Fried, and Rabbi Sam Hollander, in conjunction with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Committee and the Beth El Religious School Committee, have stipulated the following: **Twelve (12) months prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah you AND your parents must attend Shabbat Services 2 times per month in the Main Sanctuary.** Since your Vav year may not fall exactly 12 months prior to your Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you may elect to be in Junior Congregation or in the Main Sanctuary until such time.

Turn Saturday Into Shabbat

Twice a year each grade will participate in a program called "Turn Saturday into Shabbat" where the students and parents will participate in a Shabbat experience on a Saturday morning. Since students will attend on a Saturday morning they will not have to attend that Sunday. During the morning they will participate in classroom activities and Junior Congregation. Below are the assigned dates.

Gan(Kindergarten)/Aleph (1st Grade)/Bet (2nd Grade)/Gimmel (3rd Grade)

Saturday, October 31 & February 20

No Class for Gan/Aleph/Bet/Gimmel November 1, February 2

Daled (4th Grade)/Hey (5th Grade)/Vav (6th Grade)

Saturday, September 26 & April 3

No Class for Daled/Hey Vav September 27 & April 4

POLICIES

A Message from Rabbi Nogah Marshall, Educational Director

Although I try to maintain an open door policy, it is difficult to meet with parents 15 minutes prior to and during class sessions. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment so that undivided attention can be given or you can e-mail me at: nmarshall@bethelsnj.org.

Religious School Attendance

Regular & punctual attendance at Religious School is essential to maintaining continuity and fostering a meaningful religious and educational experience. In accordance with Religious School policy, you are asked to notify the school office (856-675-1166) if your child will be absent. Your child is then responsible to make up any assignment missed due to absence. Absences in excess of 25% of total class sessions may jeopardize promotion, Graduation or Confirmation. (The Educational Director and Rabbi will determine exceptions to this policy).

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

Tardiness and early dismissal are very disruptive to the class. All students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the duration of class.

Cell Phones:

We understand the need for cell phones, especially in today's world. However, the use of cell phones in class is PROHIBITED, unless needed for a class project. Texting your child during class hours is extremely disruptive to everyone in the class. Please understand that your child will not be allowed to answer text messages during class time. If there is an emergency, call the office at 856-675-1166.

Dress Requirement

Students entering the building must be clothed in a respectable and acceptable manner befitting a religious environment.

Kippot:

All male students are required to wear a kippa in Religious School and are expected to bring their kippa to school each day. Kippot are optional for female students. For sanitary reasons, we recommend that kippot be purchased from the gift shop and brought each day by the student or brought from home and kept in school. Baseball caps are acceptable but a Kippah has to be worn in the Chapel or Sanctuary for school wide services.

Supplies

Books/Supplies: In order to maintain the health and safety of our students, we plan to minimize the sharing of materials in the classrooms. We are asking all students to bring sharpened pencils, 1 pack of crayons, 1-2 glue sticks, a pen, 1 pack of markers and 1 pair of children's scissors, to be kept in a labeled ziploc bag. All books will be provided.

POLICIES

Progress Reports:

Students in Bet-Vav will receive a Hebrew reading assessment..

Books

Non-consumable books which are supplied to the student must be handled with care (we recommend book covers) and returned to the school. Should a loss occur during the school year, the student will be required to purchase a replacement.

Snacks:

Snacks may be sent in with the children; however, only Kosher* snacks are permitted in our Synagogue/School. See acceptable hechshers (kosher seals) below. Students will be able to purchase snacks from our Candy Cart.

***Only products with the following acceptable hechshers (kosher seals) are permitted at Beth El Religious School.**



School Closing Guidelines

In general, we are closed whenever Cherry Hill schools are closed. If inclement weather occurs during the day and we need to cancel Religious School, we will notify all the public schools and broadcast our school number, 3255, on KYW News Radio, 1060 AM, and send a massive email on Constant Contact.

If you previously unsubscribed on Constant Contact, you will miss out on pertinent school information throughout the year. Please contact Valerie Gross at vgross@bethelsnj.org to learn how to re-subscribe.

School Communication

Every Thursday parents will receive a Constant Contact communication called "Rabbi Marshall's Corner" with weekly Religious School announcements. Please make sure you read the email to keep up to date with Religious School happenings. Additionally, all families will be asked to sign up for the Remini app, a program that allows you to receive messages from the school for announcements.

FAMILY EDUCATION

THE AWARD WINNING FAMILY B'YACHAD (TOGETHER) PROGRAM SERIES —2026-2027

The Family B'yachad Program Series is designed to enable children and parents to learn together in a fun, interactive, hands-on manner in grades Gan-Hey. Our Vav students will be partaking in the Tallis and Tefillin workshops with Cantor Zehava Fried. The B'yachad programs provide an opportunity for families to delve deeper into a subject that is studied in the child's grade. What makes these programs unique is that in addition to the educational component, each of the B'yachad programs also incorporates an artistic component that enables families to create a meaningful, heirloom type project that is not only beautiful, but useful.

Gan (K) –Shabbat in a Box – Friday, October 9, 2026 5pm-7pm. An interactive program where parents and students together create a Shabbat ritual object, participate in a friendly family service and Shabbat dinner..

Aleph (1st Grade) Who Knows 4: Passover and the significance of the symbols – Sunday, April 4 , 2026. A 1st Grade Program whereby students and parents enjoy learning about the meaning of the symbols of Passover from the Passover Seder in a fun and interactive way, creating attractive and useful Seder items.

Bet (2nd Grade): Havdalah; Spice and Spirit – Saturday, January 9, 2027. A 2nd grade Havdalah experience including a Havdalah Service, and the creation of your very own Havdalah set.

Gimmel (3rd Grade): My Siddur – Sunday, January 10, 2027. A program that gives our families an opportunity to learn about the siddur as well as to create a personalized siddur cover.

Daled (4th Grade): Shema is for Living – Sunday, February 28, 2027. A 4th Grade Program that focuses on Jewish symbols culminating with the creation of your very own mezuzah.

Hey (5th Grade) - Tracing our Roots – March 14 2027. A 5th Grade Family Program, where students and families discover what their legacy means to them by researching their family history together and designing their individual family trees.

Vav (6th Grade)-Eyal's Flowers - October 25, 2026. A Sixth Grade Family Program where students and families will learn about the remarkable story of Eyal Sherman and the importance of helping others with special needs. Together the families will create a piece of art depicting Eyal's signature flower painting.

MILESTONES

Gan Siyum, Sunday, May 16, 2027 - This special ceremony marks the culmination of our youngest children's first year at Beth El Religious School.

Bet (2nd Grade) Spring Concert, Sunday, May 2, 2027 - This marks the culmination of the first three preparatory years (Mechina - the end of 2nd grade) and includes holiday-related songs and prayers learned throughout the year.

Gimmel Chag HaSiddur and Consecration Service, (3rd Grade) Saturday, March 13, 2027 - Prior to the celebration of your child's receiving of the siddur or prayer book. Parents and children will create a personalized siddur cover for the prayer books during a Gimmel Family B'Yachad Program which are then presented to the student at the student led Shabbat, Saturday morning service and ceremony.

Chag HaSiyyum / Vav Graduation - Wednesday, May 12, 2027 Chag HaSiyyum / Vav (6th Grade) Graduation celebrates the end of the elementary years at Beth El Religious School.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah-Bar/Bat Mitzvah requirements at Beth El Religious School follow the guidelines of United Synagogue, which require students to attend religious school for at least five years prior to becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Students are assigned a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date during the Daled (4th Grade) year and will receive a Bar/Bat Mitzvah guide with detailed information of everything they need to know. Students begin lessons approximately 9 months prior to their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. (See guide to Bar/Bat Mitzvah.)

B'nai Mitzvah Minyan (Talit & T'fillin)- 3-7 months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, B'nai Mitzvah and their families meet on Sunday morning for prayer, study and breakfast. It is there that the B'nai Mitzvah learn and practice the mitzvah of donning tallit and t'fillin and develop a deeper understanding for the process of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

GLOSSARY OF HEBREW WORDS

<u>English transliteration</u>	<u>English translation</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>
Gan	Kindergarten	גן
Mechina	Preparatory Department	מכינה
Aleph Class	Children in 1st grade public school	כתה א'
Bet Class	Children in 2nd grade public school	כתה ב'
Gimmel Class	Children in 3rd grade public school	כתה ג'
Daled Class	Children in 4th grade public school	כתה ד'
Hey Class	Children in 5th grade public school	כתה ה'
Vav Class	Children in 6th grade public school	כתה ו'
Klei Kodesh	Hebrew term for synagogue clergy	כלי קדש
Beit Midrash	Chapel	בית מדרש
Shabbat Shalom	Sabbath greeting	שבת שלום
Rosh Hashanah	New Year	ראש השנה
Erev	Eve Of	ערב
Yom Kippur	Day of Atonement	יום כפור
Sukkot	Festival of Booths	סוכות
Chol Hamoed	Intermediate days of holiday	חול המועד
Shemini Atzeret	Eighth day of assembly (8th day of Sukkot)	שמיני עצרת
Simchat Torah	Rejoicing in the Torah (9th day of Sukkot)	שמחת תורה
Chanukah	Festival of rededication	חנוכה
S'vivon	Dreidel	סביבון
Chanukiah	Menorah for Chanukah	חנוכיה
Levivot	Latkes	לביבות
Purim	Festival of lots	פורים
Mesechot	Masks	מסכות
Mishloach manot	Sending of gifts	משלוח מנות
Pesach	Passover	פסח
Seder	"Order"--service on 1st two nights of Passover	סדר
Shavuot	"Weeks"--holiday marking the giving of the Ten Commandments	שבועות
Torah	Five books of Moses (First part of Bible)	תורה
Morah	Teacher (feminine)	מורה
Talmid, talmidah	Student (masc.)/(feminine)	תלמיד ותלמידה
Kitah	Class	כתה

GLOSSARY OF HEBREW WORDS

<u>English transliteration</u>	<u>English translation</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>
Kipah	Yarmulke	כפה
Machberet	Notebook	מחברת
Sefer	Book	ספר
Yeled	Boy	ילד
Yaldah	Girl	ילדה
Beit Kennesset	Synagogue, shul	בית כנסת
Bimah	Stage	בימה
Aron Kodesh	Holy Ark	ארון קודש
Yiddishkeit	Judaism	אידישקייט
Minyan	Quorum necessary for prayer service	מנין
Siddur	Prayer book	סדור
Kosher	Adhering to Jewish dietary laws	כשר
Mitzvah	Commandment	מצוה
Yasher Koach	Way to go! (congratulatory remark after someone performs well)	ישר כוח
Baruch T'hiyeh	you should be blessed (answer to above congratulation)	ברוך תהיה
Aliya	Aliyah (going up) to the Torah	עליה
Parshat Ha'Shavua	Torah portion of the week	פרשת השבוע
Eytz chayim hih	It (the Torah) is a tree of life	עץ חיים היא
Shacharit	Morning Prayer Service	שחרית
Ma'ariv	Evening Prayer Service	מעריב
Mincha	Afternoon Prayer Service (usually done just before Ma'ariv)	מנחה
Chag	Holiday	חג
Siyyum	Graduation Ceremony	סיום