



The Meyer and Anna Prentis Family
Religious School

Family Handbook

2026–2027 | Hebrew Year 5787

Temple Beth El

7400 Telegraph Road · Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48301 · 248-865-0612



At a Glance

The essentials, if you only have two minutes. Full detail is in the sections that follow.

KEY DATES

- **First day:** Sunday, September 27, 2026. Grades K–6 meet 9:30 am–12:00 pm.
- **Consecration:** Sunday, October 4, 2026, 11:30 am (Simchat Torah).
- **Confirmation & Graduation:** Friday, April 30, 2027, 7:00 pm.
- **Last day of instruction:** Sunday, May 2, 2027. The teen program does not meet in May.
- **Community Learning** November 8, January 24, and April 18, 10:00–11:30 am. These are family programs, not drop-off events.
- **No Religious School:** Nov 29; Dec 20, 27; Jan 3, 17; Feb 14, 21; Mar 28; Apr 4.

T'FILAH

- **Standard Sundays:** Grades K–2 pray 9:30–10:00 am; Grades 3–6 pray 11:30 am–12:00 pm.
- **All-School T'filah:** six mornings at 9:30 am (Oct 11, Nov 8, Jan 24, Feb 28, Mar 14, Apr 18). Families are welcome at every T'filah, but these are special: the whole K–6 school prays together, and we especially hope you will join us. Each is followed by adult learning with Rabbi David or a Community Learning program.

STAYING IN THE LOOP

- **Chadashot** (“news”) is the weekly Religious School update. The Director sends two compiled emails every Monday morning: one for Grades K–5 and one for Grades 6–12. Families receive the edition for their child's grade, or both if they have children in both groups.
- Photos/video may appear in Chadashot, on the website, and on social media; opt out any time through the Education Center.

SAFETY & HEALTH

- Nut-sensitive program: no peanuts or tree nuts in classrooms.
- State of Michigan immunization compliance is required; non-medical exemptions are not accepted.

TUITION

- \$100 per-student deposit at registration; the balance may be paid in installments and is due by March 1.

KEY CONTACTS

- **Dr. Lorry Black, Director:** 248-865-0619 ext. 3152 · lblack@tbeonline.org
- **Education Center:** 248-865-0612 · **Temple Main Office:** 248-851-1100

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1 Welcome & Educational Philosophy

Dear Religious School Students and Families,

Welcome to a new year of learning, discovery, and Jewish growth. Every year, I am inspired by the curiosity, creativity, and enthusiasm our students bring to our classrooms. There is a special *neshama*, a spark of soul and spirit, in each child, and it is a privilege to help that spark grow. Together, we will explore our traditions, history, values, language, and our responsibilities as Jews in the modern world.

At its heart, Jewish education is about more than preparing for b'nei mitzvah. It is about helping young people discover who they are, where they come from, what they believe, and how they can contribute to the world. The curriculum in this handbook reflects a journey that begins with wonder and belonging in our youngest grades and grows into deeper questions of leadership, ethics, and identity as students mature.

The most meaningful Jewish learning happens through relationships. Our teachers and staff bring knowledge, creativity, and care. Students bring curiosity and joy. Families bring the traditions and lived Jewish experiences that make learning real. Some of the most lasting Jewish moments happen not in a classroom, but at home: around the dinner table, during holiday celebrations, through everyday acts of kindness. When home, school, and community come together, Jewish learning comes alive.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children's Jewish education. Together, we are helping to write the next chapter of the Jewish story, one student, one family, and one community at a time.

B'Shalom,

Dr. Lorry Black

Director of Religious School | Temple Beth El

Our Educational Philosophy

At Temple Beth El, our youth learn that:

- 1 Learning is a Communal Responsibility.** Learning is at its best when every stakeholder (student, family, teacher, and congregation) is involved.
- 2 Learning is a Family Value.** Learning is at its best when multiple generations invest in their own and each other's education.
- 3 Learning is a Dynamic Endeavor.** Learning is at its best when it pushes the boundaries of the classroom.
- 4 Learning is Adaptive.** Learning is at its best when it meets students where they are and encourages them to learn, confront, apply, and develop ownership of material as appropriate to their stage of development.
- 5 Learning is Lifelong.** Temple Beth El continues its youth education program through 12th grade and considers the continuing Jewish education of adults equally important.

2 Our School & Learning Program

The Meyer and Anna Prentis Family Religious School is Temple Beth El's K–12 supplemental Jewish education program. We meet on Sunday mornings throughout the school year. The program is built around a spiral curriculum: each year's guiding question deepens the one before, while adding new layers of knowledge, skill, and meaning.

Program Schedule

Program	Grades	Time
Religious School	K–6	9:30 am–12:00 pm
B'nei Mitzvah Year (incl. breakfast)	7	10:30 am–12:00 pm
Religious School Teens (incl. lunch)	8–12	11:30 am–1:00 pm

Classes & Teachers

Religious School runs nine classes this year. Grade 3 is a single class, not two sections.

Class	Teacher	Room
Kindergarten (Gan)	Jenny Dok	Room 107
Grade 1 (Kitah Alef)	Marina Smorgonsky	Room 108
Grade 2 (Kitah Bet)	Craig Matichuk	Room 212
Grade 3 (Kitah Gimel)	Rae Monchnik	Room 202
Grade 4 (Kitah Dalet)	Sarah McCoskey	Room 207
Grade 5 (Kitah Hey)	Jacqui Gordon	Room 208
Grade 6 (Kitah Vav)	Monte Schloss	Room 203
Grade 7 (Kitah Zayin)	Francie Fruitman	Room 206
Grades 8–12 (Religious School Teens)	Sari McKinley and Rabbi David Castiglione	Room 205

Specialists

Beyond the classroom teacher, students learn with a team of specialists across the year: music with Sam Smetanin, art with Marla Schloss, library with Laura Gottlieb, prayer Hebrew with Alan (Grades 5 and 6), Hebrew with our ShinShin (Israeli emissary), and regular visits from Cantor Adam, Rabbi David, Rabbi Brudney, and Dr. Lorry. Every class also keeps a protected block of uninterrupted teaching time each week.

Curriculum Overview by Grade

Each grade is organized around a central guiding question that frames the year's learning. These questions are shared anchors across our curriculum, connecting individual lessons to the larger goals of the program.

Class	Grade	Theme	Guiding Question	Core Value
Gan	Kindergarten	Wonder, Joy & Belonging	What does it mean to belong to the Jewish people?	B'tzelem Elohim
Kitah Alef	Grade 1	Judaism at Home	How does Judaism live in our homes?	Hakarat HaTov
Kitah Bet	Grade 2	Jewish Community	Why do Jews gather?	Hachnasat Orchim
Kitah Gimel	Grade 3	Jewish Diversity	How do Jews express Judaism differently?	Kibud Zekaynim (honoring our elders)
Kitah Dalet	Grade 4	Freedom & Responsibility	What does freedom require of us?	Tikkun Olam
Kitah Hey	Grade 5	Community & Continuity	How do Jewish communities survive and change?	Areivut
Kitah Vav	Grade 6	Leadership & Adulthood	What responsibilities come with becoming Jewishly adult?	Ometz Lev
Kitah Zayin	Grade 7	Life's Big Questions	How does Judaism help us navigate joy, loss, and moral complexity?	Teshuvah
Religious School Teens	Grades 8–12	Identity & the Modern World	What does Jewish identity demand of us in the modern world?	Jewish Identity & Ethical Responsibility

What Each Grade Explores

Grade	Focus this year
Gan	Joyful, hands-on first encounters with Jewish holidays, stories, music, and Israel that help every child feel they belong.
Kitah Alef	How Judaism lives at home: ritual objects, family traditions, Shabbat, and gratitude.
Kitah Bet	Why Jews gather: the sanctuary and its sacred objects, celebrating as a community, and welcoming others.

Grade	Focus this year
Kitah Gimel	God's wonder, holy spaces, and the different types of Jewish prayer.
Kitah Dalet	Tikkun olam and tzedakah: how Jewish values call us to act and to care for others, and a deeper understanding of Shabbat. In the second half of the year, the Jewish life cycle.
Kitah Hey	How Jewish communities keep traditions alive across generations. In the second half of the year, the Jewish life cycle.
Kitah Vav	Jewish history, and preparing for Jewish adulthood: responsibility, ethical choices, and leadership, including <i>Lo Titen Michshol</i> , the teaching not to place a stumbling block before the blind.
Kitah Zayin	Jewish pride: who we are, where we come from, and how Judaism helps us meet life's big questions.
Teens	Jewish identity, ethics, Israel, and the questions facing Jews today, explored through discussion, debate, and text study. Culminates in Confirmation (Grade 10) and Graduation (Grade 12).

Prayer Learning by Grade

Grade	New prayers introduced this year
Gan	Hamotzi; Borei P'ri Hagafen; Shema (intro); Shabbat blessings; Shehecheyanu
Kitah Alef	Shema (review); Kiddush; Hamotzi; holiday blessings (intro); Modeh/Modah Ani
Kitah Bet	Bar'chu; Oseh Shalom; Adon Olam; Ma Tov
Kitah Gimel	Yotzer Or; Lulav blessing
Kitah Dalet	V'Ahavta; Sim Shalom; Kiddush (Friday night + Shabbat morning)
Kitah Hey	Avot (V'Imahot); G'vurot; Havdalah blessings
Kitah Vav	Torah/Aliyah blessings; Kaddish
Kitah Zayin	Kedushah; Nisim B'chol Yom; El Maleh Rachamim; Yizkor
Teens	Full independent liturgical leadership (shaliach tzibbur); Confirmation & Graduation liturgy

Prayer learning is cumulative: students review what they have learned and add new liturgy each year.

T'filah (Prayer)

On standard Sundays, Grades K–2 pray together from 9:30–10:00 am and Grades 3–6 from 11:30 am–12:00 pm, led by two members of our clergy and leadership team: Cantor Adam, Rabbi Brudney, Rabbi David, and Dr. Lorry. Teachers and Madrichim pray alongside their classes. Grade 7 and Grades 8–12 do not attend these services. Parents and family members are always welcome to join us for T'filah on any Sunday.

All-School T'filah is something special. Six times during the year, all of Grades K–6 pray together as one community at 9:30 am, and we especially hope parents will join us on those mornings. See Section 6 for dates.

Milestone Ceremonies

Consecration

Sunday, October 4, 2026 · 11:30 am · Simchat Torah

We are proud to consecrate all students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 who are beginning Religious School for the first time. This beautiful ceremony celebrates the beginning of your child's formal Jewish education. With their Gan and Kitah Alef teachers, students lead the Sh'ma, Shabbat prayers, and Oseh Shalom during the service.

Confirmation & Graduation

Friday, April 30, 2027 · 7:00 pm · held together at the same Shabbat evening service

Confirmation takes place in 10th grade. Students engage in a year of reflection on their essential Jewish beliefs and affirm their connection to God and the Jewish community. The ceremony is a meaningful milestone of personal and communal commitment.

We celebrate when our High School Seniors complete our formal educational program. Seniors address the congregation at this same Shabbat evening service, sharing their Jewish journey and their commitment to lifelong Jewish living and learning.

Tzedakah: Derech Tzedakah (“The Way of Giving”)

Across the year the whole school gets behind one way of giving at a time: money, food, clothing, and finally time and service. Two periods each semester, four in all. Each one climbs Rambam's (Maimonides') eight traditional levels of tzedakah. Rambam counts downward, so Level 8 is the most basic form of giving and Level 1 the highest. We move from a first coin in the fall to helping someone become self-supporting by spring. A shared visual in the building tracks our progress together, one rung at a time.

Period	Dates	What We're Collecting	Rambam's Level
Money	Sept. 27–Nov. 1, 2026	Tzedakah boxes and coins; classroom boxes collected	Levels 7–8: beginning with what we have

Period	Dates	What We're Collecting	Rambam's Level
Canned Food	Nov. 8–Dec. 13, 2026	Canned and shelf-stable food for local food pantries	Level 5: giving before being asked
Clothing	Jan. 10–Mar. 7, 2027	Coats, clothing, and winter gear	Levels 3–4: dignified giving; the recipient stays anonymous
Time & Service	Mar. 14–May 2, 2027	<i>Volunteering, mentorship, and service; details to come</i>	Level 1 (highest): enabling self-sufficiency

Watch *Chadashot* each week for what we're collecting and how your family can help.

3 Policies & Expectations

Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential for learning and community building. Regular participation is a key part of student success. If your child misses two Sundays in a row, expect a caring check-in from your child's teacher about how they are doing and what they missed. Please let the Education Center know in advance about planned absences.

Behavior and Bullying

Our school is committed to a learning environment where all participants are treated with fairness and respect. When behavior disrupts learning, staff will work with students to restore a positive environment; if a situation cannot be resolved in the classroom, the Director steps in. For ongoing concerns, the Director will reach out to you directly. Families are important partners in this process. Bullying of any kind (verbal, physical, or electronic) will not be tolerated and is reported to the Director immediately.

Cell Phones

Students may not use cell phones during Religious School hours. To reach your child during program time, please contact the Education Center at 248-865-0612.

Guests and Family Visits

- **Student guests:** Students may bring a guest with advance written permission submitted to the Education Center. Guests follow all school behavior expectations and remain the responsibility of the host student's family.
- **Family visits:** Parents and family members are welcome to visit a class. Please arrange your visit in advance through the Education Center.

Immunizations

Enrollment requires compliance with applicable State of Michigan immunization requirements. Temple Beth El does not accept non-medical exemptions; medical exemptions are reviewed by the Board Medical Committee. Jewish tradition teaches that preserving life, *pikuach nefesh*, is a central value. Immunization protects our entire community, especially its most vulnerable members.

Madrichim

Madrichim are high school students who serve as assistant educators, supporting teachers and working directly with students as aides, small-group tutors, and hands-on helpers. They are teachers-in-training and a valued part of our educational team.

Learning Support and Inclusion: Opening Doors

In partnership with the Jewish Community Center, Religious School provides access to a special education consultant through the Opening Doors program during program hours. The goal is full inclusion and meaningful participation for all learners. If your child may need additional support or accommodation, please contact the Director as early as possible. If a teacher has a concern about your child's learning, the Director will contact you so we can agree on a plan of support together.

An Inclusive Community

Temple Beth El is a Reform congregation, and our school reflects that heritage. We are a pluralistic, inclusive, and progressive community serving interfaith families, LGBTQ+ families, single-parent households, blended families, and a wide range of Jewish backgrounds and practices. Every student should see themselves and their family reflected with dignity. In the Reform movement, a child with a Jewish parent, mother or father, who is being raised Jewishly is considered Jewish.

- **Pronouns and names:** Teachers use the names and pronouns students and families ask them to use. Please let us know.
- **Custody arrangements:** Teachers communicate about student matters with custodial parents or guardians. If a non-custodial parent should be involved, please provide written permission to the Education Center. We encourage every caregiver to be part of their child's Jewish life where appropriate.

Seven Jewish Values for Inclusion

These seven values, drawn from Keshet's framework for LGBTQ+ inclusion in Jewish life, guide how we build a community where everyone belongs.

Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning
כבוד	Kavod	Honor and Dignity: Every person deserves to be treated with dignity.
שלום בית	Shalom Bayit	Peaceful Home: Jewish families take many forms, and each deserves care and respect.
בצלם אלוהים	B'tzelem Elohim	In the Image of God: All people are created in the divine image.
כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה	Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh Bazeh	All Jews Are Responsible for One Another: We share accountability for each other's wellbeing.
שמירת הלשון	Shmirat HaLashon	Guarding Our Speech: Words have power. We choose language that affirms rather than harms.
ואהבת לרעך כמוך	V'ahavta L'reiecha Kamocho	Love Your Neighbor as Yourself: The foundation of ethical Jewish life.

Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning
אל תפרוש מן הציבור	Al Tifrosh Min HaTzibur	Do Not Separate from the Community: No one should be excluded from Jewish life.

Learn more at keshetonline.org.

Tuition

Tuition is billed at registration. A \$100 per-student deposit is required; the remaining balance may be paid in installments and is due by March 1. Families must be current with all prior balances or have an approved payment arrangement to register for a new year.

4 Safety, Security & Arrival

Allergies and Health

Religious School is a nut-sensitive program: no foods containing peanuts or tree nuts are permitted in classrooms. Other food allergies are addressed case by case within each classroom. If your child requires an EpiPen or other emergency medication, please provide it to the Education Center along with written instructions and a completed Food Allergy Action Plan. Emergency medications are kept in the Education Center, and teachers review each Food Allergy Action Plan at the start of the year.

As a general rule, if your child is feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms of illness, for the health of our whole kehillah we ask that they stay home and rejoin us as soon as they get better.

If a student is injured or becomes ill, staff bring the student to the Education Center (or stay with them and call for help if they should not be moved) and notify the Director. Staff do not give aspirin, over-the-counter remedies, or any other medication.

Security

Temple Beth El maintains detailed emergency and security procedures for the building, set out in the Temple Beth El Emergency Procedures Handbook. Questions about building security should be directed to the Director of Security, Kenneth Jackson.

- All faculty and staff wear a Temple-issued badge while in the building.
- Visitors, guests, and outside speakers are arranged in advance so that security is notified.
- Each classroom has a two-way radio for coordination and emergency response.
- Adults never meet one-on-one with a student out of sight: any one-on-one conversation happens in view of a window or a fully open door. Storage and non-classroom spaces are off-limits to students.

Drop-Off, Pick-Up and Parking

On Sunday mornings, enter from 14 Mile Road and park in the West lot. Exit via 14 Mile Road. The carpool lane is closed during arrival and dismissal.

- Students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 must be brought in and picked up directly from their classroom by an adult.
- Students in Grade 3 and above may be dismissed independently and picked up in the parking lot.
- The first two rows of the West lot are reserved for Religious School parents. Please do not park or idle in the carpool lane during arrival or dismissal.

Early Dismissal

Students leaving early must be signed out at the Education Center by an authorized adult; teachers cannot release a student from the classroom door. Please send a written note in advance whenever possible.

Emergency and Inclement Weather Closings

If Religious School is closed, families will be notified through the Temple's emergency communication system by email, phone, and text message. For questions, call the Temple Main Office at 248-851-1100.

5 Staying Connected

Chadashot

Chadashot (“news”) is our weekly update. Instead of a separate newsletter from each classroom, the Director compiles the classes into two emails, one for Grades K–5 and one for Grades 6–12, sent Monday mornings with highlights and photos from the week. You will receive the edition for your child’s grade (or both, if you have children in each).

Photo, Video & Social Media

The school periodically photographs or records classroom activities, T’filah, and events for use in *Chadashot*, the Temple website, and social media.

- You will be asked to indicate your family’s photo/video preference at registration.
- If you’d prefer your child not be photographed for use in *Chadashot*, the Temple website, and social media, let the Education Center know. You can update this preference at any time.
- We never post a student’s photo alongside identifying information such as their last name, address, or schedule.

Parent Participation

Families are strongly encouraged to attend our three K–6 Community Learning programs, All-School T’filah (six mornings during the year), and our all-school assemblies, and to engage in Jewish learning at home. See Section 6 for the calendar. Classroom visits can be arranged in advance through the Education Center.

Adult Learning with Rabbi David

Sunday, October 11, 2026 · Sunday, February 28, 2027 · Sunday, March 14, 2027

About 10:00–11:00 am, directly following All-School T’filah

On these three All-School T’filah mornings, Rabbi David Castiglione leads approximately one hour of adult learning. (On the other three All-School T’filah mornings, a K–6 Community Learning program takes its place; see Section 6.) Parents, grandparents, and any adult who brought a child that morning are all invited. Your children are in their classrooms during this hour, so the timing asks nothing extra of your Sunday. You are already in the building; we hope you will stay. If your child needs you during the session, the Education Center will come find you.

Rabbi David takes up whatever the season puts in front of us: the holiday coming into view, a question raised in that morning’s service, a text worth sitting with for an hour. Conversation is the format, not lecture. Each session stands on its own. You do not need Hebrew, prior study, or any particular Jewish background, only curiosity. If you have ever thought you were not knowledgeable enough for adult learning, please know that this hour was built for exactly that worry.

Jewish learning was never meant to end at bar or bat mitzvah, and it was never meant to belong only to children. When students see the adults in their lives learning too, asking real questions, disagreeing, coming back the next time, it teaches them something no curriculum can say out loud. That is the real reason this hour exists.

6 Calendar, Family Education & Special Programs

Religious School Class Dates, 2026–2027

Grades K–6 meet Sundays, 9:30 am–12:00 pm. Grade 7 and Grades 8–12 meet on the same Sundays, except that the teen program does not run in May.

Month	Sundays in session	No Religious School
September 2026	27	
October 2026	4, 11, 18, 25	
November 2026	1, 8, 15, 22	29
December 2026	6, 13	20, 27
January 2027	10, 24, 31	3; 17 (Day for Justice)
February 2027	7, 28	14, 21
March 2027	7, 14, 21	28
April 2027	11, 18, 25	4
May 2027	2 (last day of instruction)	

Month by Month

Every date below is a Sunday unless noted. Sundays not listed follow the regular schedule.

Date	What's happening
SEPTEMBER 2026	
Sept. 27	First day of Religious School. All-Community T'filah 9:30–10:00 am · Parent Assembly (parents only) 10:00–10:30 am · Coffee with Dr. Lorry 10:30–11:00 am · Noah Aronson concert 11:15 am, followed by our Sukkot celebration.
OCTOBER 2026	
Oct. 4	Consecration , 11:30 am, for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students new to Religious School (Simchat Torah).
Oct. 11	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by Adult Learning with Rabbi David 10:00–11:00 am.

Date	What's happening
Oct. 18	Teva Tots 10:00–11:00 am (ages 1–4; registration required). BETY K–2 and BETY 3–5 youth programs 12:00–1:30 pm with lunch.
NOVEMBER 2026	
Nov. 8	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by K–6 Community Learning: Shabbat at Home, Start to Finish , 10:00–11:30 am.
Nov. 15	Teva Tots 10:00–11:00 am. BETY K–2 and BETY 3–5, 12:00–1:30 pm with lunch.
Nov. 22	Grades 7–12 field trip to the Detroit Institute of Arts.
Nov. 29	No Religious School
DECEMBER 2026	
Dec. 20 & 27	No Religious School
JANUARY 2027	
Jan. 3	No Religious School
Jan. 10	All-school assembly with parents , 9:30–10:10 am. BETY K–2 and BETY 3–5, 12:00–1:30 pm with lunch. Teva Tots 10:00–11:00 am.
Fri. Jan. 15–Mon. Jan. 18	Grades 8–12 High School Trip (Los Angeles).
Jan. 17	No Religious School: Day for Justice
Jan. 24	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by K–6 Community Learning: A Tu B'Shvat Seder , 10:00–11:30 am.
FEBRUARY 2027	
Feb. 7	Teva Tots 10:00–11:00 am (ages 1–4; registration required). BETY K–2 and BETY 3–5, 12:00–1:30 pm with lunch.
Feb. 14 & 21	No Religious School
Feb. 28	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by Adult Learning with Rabbi David 10:00–11:00 am.
MARCH 2027	
Mar. 7	Teva Tots 10:00–11:00 am. BETY K–2 and BETY 3–5, 12:00–1:30 pm with lunch.

Date	What's happening
Mar. 14	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by Adult Learning with Rabbi David 10:00–11:00 am.
Mar. 21	Purim. Megillah reading with the Ruach Singers at 11:15 am (in place of regular T'filah), followed by the Purim Carnival at 12:00 pm.
Mar. 28	No Religious School
APRIL 2027	
Apr. 4	No Religious School
Fri. Apr. 9–Sun. Apr. 11	Grades 4–6 Tamarack Shabbaton. Grade 7 Chicago trip (two nights). Regular Religious School meets for K–3 and Grades 8–12; Grades 4–7 participate in their respective trips. No Ruach Singers.
Apr. 18	K–6 All-School T'filah 9:30–10:00 am, followed by K–6 Community Learning: Making Pesach Yours , 10:00–11:30 am.
Fri. Apr. 30	Confirmation & Graduation , 7:00 pm.
MAY 2027	
May 2	Last day of instruction.
May 16	Yom Ha'Atzmaut Community Blowout!

All-School T'filah

Six times during the year, Grades K–6 pray together at 9:30 am with available clergy leading, instead of the usual split sessions. Families are welcome at every T'filah, but these mornings are special, and we especially hope you will join us. Grades 7–12 do not participate.

Date	Followed by (10:00 am)
Sunday, October 11, 2026	Adult Learning with Rabbi David
Sunday, November 8, 2026	K–6 Community Learning: Shabbat at Home
Sunday, January 24, 2027	K–6 Community Learning: A Tu B'Shvat Seder
Sunday, February 28, 2027	Adult Learning with Rabbi David
Sunday, March 14, 2027	Adult Learning with Rabbi David
Sunday, April 18, 2027	K–6 Community Learning: Making Pesach Yours

There is no All-School T'filah in December. On March 21 (Purim) there is no regular T'filah; a Megillah reading is held instead at 11:15 am.

K–6 Community Learning: Building Our Kehilla

This year we are changing how family learning works. In place of a separate learning day for each grade, we are gathering the whole community, every Religious School family from Kindergarten through Grade 6, for three substantial programs across the year: one in the fall and two in the spring, each anchored to a moment in the Jewish calendar.

The reason is simple. A kehilla, a community, is not built one classroom at a time. It is built when the family of a first grader and the family of a sixth grader end up at the same table, working on the same thing, and discover they are trying to solve the same problems at home. Grade-by-grade learning days kept those families apart. These programs put them together.

Each program runs 90 minutes: a 45-minute session, a 10-minute break, and a 35-minute session to close. Both halves are hands-on. You will leave with something you can actually use on a Friday night or at your own table, not a handout you mean to read later. These are all-hands community mornings with the hope that all available parents will attend.

Date	Program	Time
Sunday, Nov. 8, 2026	Shabbat at Home, Start to Finish	10:00–11:30 am
Sunday, Jan. 24, 2027	A Tu B'Shvat Seder: Judaism and the Earth	10:00–11:30 am
Sunday, Apr. 18, 2027	Making Pesach Yours: Freedom, Learning, and an Open Door	10:00–11:30 am

Grades 7–12 have their own programming and are not part of these gatherings. Each program follows All-School T'filah and takes the place of Rabbi David's adult-learning hour that morning.

Shabbat at Home, Start to Finish

Sunday, November 8, 2026

Most of us know that Shabbat is supposed to be a gift. Fewer of us know what to actually do with it on a Friday when one child has a game, another has homework, and dinner is late. This program walks through a Shabbat at home from the first candle to Havdalah (the blessings, the food, the songs, the long slow middle) and treats the competing-schedule problem as the real problem it is. We will look at what a 20-minute Shabbat looks like and why it still counts, how to give a teenager and a five-year-old each something to do, and how families with different levels of observance and different backgrounds make it their own. Come with your actual Friday nights in mind.

A Tu B'Shvat Seder: Judaism and the Earth

Sunday, January 24, 2027

Tu B'Shvat, the new year of the trees, falls on Saturday, January 23 this year, and we will mark it together the very next morning with a seder: four cups, the fruits, the blessings, the whole arc. Most families have never

done one. Alongside the seder we will explore what Judaism actually says about our obligations to the natural world: *bal tashchit*, the prohibition against needless destruction; the sabbatical year; the tradition that the trees themselves have a birthday. This is a program to eat your way through, and one your children will remember.

Making Pesach Yours: Freedom, Learning, and an Open Door

Sunday, April 18, 2027

The first seder falls on Wednesday evening, April 21, so this is the last Sunday we are together before Passover begins: three days out, with everything still to prepare. The seder is the most widely observed Jewish ritual there is, and also the one most likely to feel like an obligation to get through rather than a night to look forward to. This program is about changing that. We will look at how to make your seder a genuine space of learning and questioning rather than a recitation, how to keep every age at the table engaged, from the youngest asking the Four Questions to the adults who have heard it forty times, and what freedom actually asks of us once the meal is over. We will also take seriously the seder's oldest instruction, let all who are hungry come and eat, and what it means to build a table where interfaith families, guests who have never been to a seder, and anyone who might otherwise be alone that night all belong. The Ivrit of the Day that morning is *cherut*, freedom.

Trips

Several grades travel this year. Trips are part of the curriculum and attendance is expected. Times and costs will be shared separately for each trip.

Grades	Trip	Date(s)
Grades 7–12	Detroit Institute of Arts	Sunday, Nov. 22, 2026
Grades 8–12	Los Angeles	Friday, Jan. 15–Monday, Jan. 18, 2027
Grades 4–6	Tamarack Shabbaton	Friday, Apr. 9–Sunday, Apr. 11, 2027
Grade 7	Chicago, two nights	Friday, Apr. 9–Sunday, Apr. 11, 2027

The Detroit Institute of Arts visit is to see *Guests of Honor: Art of Faith* from the Jewish Museum, New York.

Programs & Special Events

Date	Event
Sunday, Sept. 27, 2026	First day: All-Community T'filah, Parent Assembly, Coffee with Dr. Lorry, Noah Aronson concert, and Sukkot celebration.
Sunday, Oct. 4, 2026	Consecration / Simchat Torah, 11:30 am.
Sunday, Jan. 10, 2027	All-school assembly with parents, 9:30–10:10 am.

Date	Event
Sunday, Mar. 21, 2027	Purim. Megillah reading with the Ruach Singers 11:15 am; Purim Carnival 12:00–2:00 pm.
Friday, Apr. 30, 2027	Confirmation and Graduation, 7:00 pm.
Sunday, May 16, 2027	Yom Ha'Atzmaut Community Blowout!

Other Temple Beth El Youth & Family Programs

These run alongside Religious School and may be relevant if you have children in more than one program.

Program	Dates
Teva Tots (ages 1–4; 10:00–11:00 am; registration required)	Oct. 18; Nov. 15; Jan. 10; Feb. 7; Mar. 7
BETY K–2 (12:00–1:30 pm, with lunch)	Oct. 18; Nov. 15; Jan. 10; Feb. 7; Mar. 7
BETY 3–5 (12:00–1:30 pm, with lunch)	Oct. 18; Nov. 15; Jan. 10; Feb. 7; Mar. 7; Lock-In Saturday, May 1, 7:00 pm
Ruach Singers (Grades 2–6; Sundays, 12:00–1:30 pm, with lunch)	Oct. 4, 11, 25; Nov. 1, 8, 22; Dec. 6, 13; Jan. 10, 24, 31; Feb. 28; Mar. 14, 21; Apr. 11, 18, 25; May 2

7 Quick Reference

Ivrit of the Day, 2026–2027

Each Sunday, the school introduces a Hebrew letter and Hebrew word of the day. Ask your child about it on the ride home, and try using it at home during the week.

Date	Letter	Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning
9/27/26	ח	חברים	Chaverim	Friends
10/4/26	ה	הקפה	Hakafah	Walking or marching with the Torah in circles
10/11/26	כ	כיתה	Kitah	Classroom
10/18/26	ו	ועד	Va'ad	Committee or group
10/25/26	ב	בית	Bayit	House / Home
11/1/26	ר	רוח	Ruach	Spirit / Energy
11/8/26	מ	מה נשמע	Ma Nishma?	How are you?
11/15/26	ד	דרך ארץ	Derech Eretz	Respect / Kindness
11/22/26	ת	תודה	Todah	Thank you
12/6/26	א	אור	Or	Light
12/13/26	ש	שלג	Sheleg	Snow
1/10/27	צ	צדק	Tzedek	Justice
1/24/27	ע	עץ	Etz	Tree
1/31/27	ז	זמר	Zemer	Song
2/7/27	ס	ספר	Sefer	Book
2/28/27	ק	קדושה	Kedushah	Holiness
3/7/27	ל	לב	Lev	Heart
3/14/27	ג	גבורה	G'vurah	Strength / Courage
3/21/27	פ	פינה	Pinah	Corner / Point
4/11/27	נ	נשמה	Neshamah	Soul

Date	Letter	Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning
4/18/27	ח	חרות	Cherut	Freedom
4/25/27	מ	מצה	Matzah	Unleavened bread
5/2/27	י	יישר כוח	Yasher Koach	Good job / More strength to you

Hebrew Words to Use at Home

Hebrew	Transliteration	English
OUR CLASSES		
גן	Gan	Kindergarten
כיתה א'	Kitah Alef	Grade 1
כיתה ב'	Kitah Bet	Grade 2
כיתה ג'	Kitah Gimel	Grade 3
כיתה ד'	Kitah Dalet	Grade 4
כיתה ה'	Kitah Hey	Grade 5
כיתה ו'	Kitah Vav	Grade 6
GREETINGS & POLITE EXPRESSIONS		
בוקר טוב	Boker Tov	Good morning
בוקר אור	Boker Or	A morning of light (response to Boker Tov)
להתראות	L'hitraot	See you soon
תודה	Todah	Thank you
בבקשה	B'vakashah	Please / You are welcome
לבריאות	Labriyut	Bless you (after a sneeze)

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact
Director of Religious School	Dr. Lorry Black (he/him)	248-865-0619 ext. 3152 (office) 818-419-9262 (mobile) lblack@tbeonline.org
Education Center	Ilene Stone	248-865-0612 248-345-5111 (mobile) istone@tbeonline.org
Temple Main Office		248-851-1100
Director of Security	Kenneth Jackson	Contact through the Temple Main Office

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