

Administrative Staff

General Studies Principal.....Mrs. Estee Hebel
Assistant Principal for Judaic StudiesMrs. Fagie Minkowich
School AdministratorRabbi Shimon Richter
Outreach Coordinator / Daycare SupervisorMrs. Risa Gold

Administrative Support

Director of Special ServicesTBD
Guidance Counselor.....TBD
Student Council CoordinatorTBD
Student Activities Coordinator..... Mrs. Avigayl Fendel

Mission Statement

The goal of Shalom Torah Academy is to provide the next generation of American Jews with an outstanding secular education complemented by an appreciation for the Jewish heritage and a love for Torah, mitzvot, mankind and the Land of Israel.

Shalom Torah Academy celebrates the uniqueness of each individual and strives to enable all students and staff members to achieve their highest potential.

To help achieve this at all age levels, we aim to:

- Create a happy, secure, well-ordered and caring environment in keeping with the principles of the Torah.
- Foster self-discipline and self-esteem in all students.
- Provide a balanced and challenging General Studies curriculum that includes a broad knowledge base and the development of skills needed for successful and responsible participation in a democratic society.
- Provide opportunities for active and engaging learning while meeting the academic needs of each individual student.
- Offer a dual curriculum of both General and Judaic Studies
- Maintain a partnership between teachers, administration and parents.

General Information

Age Requirements

Nursery3 years old by December 31, and toilet trained
Pre-K4 years old by December 31
Kindergarten5 years old by December 31

School Schedule

Arrival: The school day begins with line-up promptly at 8:39 A.M. Monday through Friday.

Dismissal: Monday through Thursday dismissal is at 3:45 P.M. Friday dismissal is at 2:45 P.M. or 1:30 P.M. Please refer to the school calendar for the dates when these times apply.

On all Fridays and shortened school days, the school schedule is adjusted to allow for equal distribution of instructional time between Judaic and General Studies classes.

Transportation

Transportation is available to and from most of the surrounding townships. Students who ride the busses must follow all safety and behavioral guidelines set forth by the respective bus companies.

If you would like to avail yourself of bus transportation, please contact Rabbi Richter at extension #13 to make arrangements.

Lunch and Snacks

Our cook prepares fresh, well-balanced meals containing the four different basic food groups. Alternatives to the main course are available for children who have other food preferences or with specific dietary needs (for example, sandwiches of peanut butter and/or jelly, cream cheese or butter, crackers, cottage cheese, yogurt, etc.) Milk or juice will be served in accordance with dairy or meat lunches. A salad bar is available with each meal.

The school provides morning and afternoon snacks of fruit/cookies/rice cakes etc. as well as drinks.

Children may bring whole (uncut) fresh fruits or vegetables only as an alternative to school snacks. In deference to the varying kashrut standards of the Shalom Torah families, and in the interest of the safety of children with food allergies and sensitivities, Shalom does not permit any other food to

be brought from home at any time. Birthday parties are the only exception. Please follow the guidelines in that section of this handbook.

If your child has special dietary needs, please call the school office.

Chewing gum is not allowed at any time on school premises.

Due to the severe nature of certain allergies, our school maintains a firm PEANUT AND SESAME FREE policy which is applied to all lunches, snacks and any other foods brought into the building including Student Council Snack Locker, class celebrations, holiday treats, and special events.

Academic Policies

Curriculum

Our school provides a dual curriculum of General and Judaic Studies.

On “Back to School Night” (please check school calendar for dates), you will have an opportunity to learn about the skills and content your children will be taught this year.

Outlines of our curriculum goals for all grade levels in our pre-, elementary and middle schools in both departments are available to our parent body upon request.

General Studies

Operating under a constructivist and student - centered philosophy of education, our General Studies curriculum is driven by high academic and life - skills goals for all of the subject areas delineated by the NJ Department of Education. While we place our major emphasis on Math, Reading / Language Arts, Science and Social Studies, we attach equal importance to Health and Physical Education, Technological Literacy and Visual / Performing Arts. Our differentiated program allows each student to reach his/ her highest potential and to gain an edge in our highly competitive society by encouraging creativity and individual expression.

Judaic Studies

Our Judaic Studies curriculum maintains the high curricular goals of Jewish Day Schools affiliated with the Torah Umesorah National Society of Hebrew Day Schools. It emphasizes Hebrew language, the Land of Israel, morals and values, Torah, Mishna, and Talmud Study, as well as prayer and the experience of participating in Jewish holidays. Special attention is given to transfer students to enable smooth acclimation and acquisition of Hebrew skills.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah

The Judaic studies curriculum and staff prepare students for their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. A formal Bat Mitzvah ceremony is held each year for the twelve-year-old girls and their families. While Bar Mitzvah ceremonies are held individually out of school, private training is available for all boys through Shalom. If you are interested in registering, please call the school office.

Scholastic Assessment/Progress Reporting

Report cards are distributed three times during the school year, with interim reports sent home in the middle of each trimester if needed. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled after the first and second trimester. Communicating in person offers both the parents and the teacher insights and a feeling of collaboration that often cannot be obtained on the phone. These conferences are held in the evenings. Please check your school calendar for the exact dates.

Standardized achievement tests are administered annually in grades one through eight in order to better evaluate each child's progress and our fulfillment of overall curricular goals. Our dual curriculum, combined with our dedicated staff and small classes, has enabled our students to consistently excel on these standardized exams.

Academic Honors

Students who achieve an average of 90 % or better for a trimester in either Judaic or General Studies are eligible for a Certificate of Honor. Student who achieve an average of 90 % or better for the year in both Judaic and General studies are eligible for the Principal's Honor, the highest academic honor at Shalom Torah Academy.

At the end of the year, there is an awards assembly, at which all students will receive two awards (one from each teacher) in at least one area in which they excelled. Additionally, a special award will be presented to students with perfect attendance.

Homework

Our teachers are dedicated to providing meaningful lessons for their students in class as well as purposeful assignments to be done at home. Some of the most important reasons for assigning homework are:

- Regular homework promotes good work and study habits and self-discipline in children.
- Homework enriches classroom learning through practice, preparation assignments and extensions beyond the in-class lesson.
- Homework is one efficient way for teachers to evaluate academic progress.
- Homework allows for constant communication between parents and teachers and allows parents to keep abreast of class activities.

At the pre-school levels, there is little or no written homework, unless the teacher informs the parents of a special assignment or policy. We strongly encourage your involvement with show and tell, group projects, etc.

In the kindergarten and elementary grades, homework will be given regularly. Please help your child to succeed by:

1. Providing him/her with a quiet place for doing homework.
2. Setting a time early each evening when the child is expected to be doing his/her homework.
3. Encouraging that homework should be done after the child has had some time to relax.
4. Please check that homework has been completed before your child goes to bed and before affixing your signature to it.
5. With regard to long-term assignments, projects or exams in the upper grades, please encourage your child to plan ahead so that she/ he may avoid the pitfalls of high-pressure, last minute work.

Unless the teacher specifically notifies you, your child should not need parental assistance in doing homework. If your child consistently has difficulty doing his/her homework, the teacher should be notified.

Special Needs

Guidance

Our guidance counselor affords all parents and students an opportunity to address any social or emotional issues. She is also actively involved in assessing the life-skills and social aspects of our curriculum.

N.J. Board of Education Services

Upon referral, a speech therapist, a compensatory/supplementary education teacher, an E.S.L. (English as second language) teacher and all other support services are available through the county educational services commission during the school year. If either a parent or a teacher feels the need for a child to be evaluated or tested, the Director of Special Needs will arrange for M.O.E.S.C. (Monmouth Ocean Educational Services Commission) to provide this service.

Special Education Department

Shalom Torah Academy has a remediation program consisting of a staff of certified special educators. Our Director of Special Needs is involved in the placement, curriculum modifications and inclusion process of all students identified with special needs, with or without county

classifications. The director and resource room teachers work closely with the classroom teachers to maximize each child's success according to his/her fullest potential.

Extra Curricular Programs

Specials

Shalom Torah Academy offers weekly, scheduled classes in technology / research, art, music, and physical education.

Field Trips

Shalom Torah Academy arranges numerous educational field trips throughout the year. The purpose of these trips is to promote learning through experience and to enhance the child's understanding of academic subjects. Permission slips must be signed before each trip. School trips have always been a source of pride and pleasure for our school. We are frequently complimented on the fine manners and behavior of our students as they venture out on field trips.

Student Council

Shalom Torah Academy's Student Council fosters leadership, community and real-life skills in its participants. The Student Council under the guidance of a faculty advisor runs both academic and creative programs.

School Newsletter

A fundamental means of communication with our families is the weekly newsletter, the *Shalom Torah Times*. The *Times* provides a regular opportunity to share information with our parent body. The newsletter is sent via email every Friday or on the last day of the school week. It includes a message from an administrator, contributions from the faculty and PTO, announcements, extra-curricular activities updates and calendar reminders. The lunch menu for the coming week and other items of interest will also be found in the newsletter. We rely on your staying informed by reading it. Please be sure that the school office has your current email address at all times.

Special Events

Throughout the school year Shalom parents have several opportunities to share in their children's development at our special events. Please check the calendar for the dates of the science fair, Judaic fair, weekend retreat, parent-child learning session, Chanukah music festival, art fair and family picnic.

Students are required to dress in conformity with school dress code regulations at all school events even after regular school hours.

Programs

To supplement classroom learning, we have several organized programs each year. These may include Thanksgiving celebrations, Holocaust Remembrance Day observance, Yom Ha'atzmaut festivities, recognition of all legal holidays and special speakers and feature presentations.

Community Service (*Chesed*)

Shalom Torah Academy attaches great importance to our students' developing tolerance, acceptance of social diversity and a sense of giving and responsibility to the community. With this in mind, and in keeping with the Jewish precept of empathy for those less fortunate than ourselves, Shalom Torah Academy involves the students in various community service activities including (but not limited to):

1. Visiting the elderly / infirm
2. Volunteer work with the physically and mentally disabled
3. Environmental service
4. Fundraising for charitable causes

General School Policies

School Attendance

Regular attendance in school is a prerequisite for academic achievement. Medical or other appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours whenever possible. In case of absence, please call the office the first day your child is out of school to make arrangements to obtain your child's assignments and books.

Frequent tardiness causes disruption to the class and a loss of instructional time for your child. Please help your child form consistent sleep and wakeup times, as well as morning routines that lead to consistent punctuality. Frequent lateness will be noted on your child's cumulative record and will result in disciplinary measures.

Students who are absent from school without a doctor's note or administrative permission during Standardized Testing week will be charged a proctor's fee of \$50 to make up the exam. Please check the school calendar to be sure not to schedule appointments during that time.

School Attire

In order to achieve an environment promoting self-respect and learning among our students, there is a code of dress designed to accommodate our children's different levels of maturity. Students who are not in appropriate attire will not be permitted to remain in class. They will be offered a substitute garment to wear for the duration of the day.

All students (Boys and girls) of grades 1-8:

1. Shorts and may not be worn in school beginning in the first grade.
2. All shoes must have backs and be closed-toed. (No slippers, sandals, clogs, crocs, etc.)
3. Students may not dye, highlight or bleach their hair any color that does not look completely natural on them. Decisions regarding color will be made at the discretion of the administration. In general, we prefer that hair coloring of any sort be avoided.
4. Body piercing is not permitted with the exception of earrings *for girls only*.
5. "Healies" or other shoes with wheels are not permitted anywhere on school premises. The shoes may be worn without the wheels. Wheels found in school will be taken away and returned only to the parents.
6. Baseball caps or any other hats may be worn on field trips only and not in school.
7. General modesty in style and fit should be considered in all choices of school clothing. Clothing that is deemed by the administration to be provocative or inappropriate in any way will not be permitted.

Girls, grades 1-8:

1. Beginning grade 5 girls must be wearing skirts or dresses. Pants may not be worn under skirts (tights and leggings may be worn underneath).
2. In grades 1-4 pants may be worn (shorts excluded). Leggings may be worn only under a skirt.
3. All skirts must cover the knees with slits no higher than mid-knee.
4. Shirts must meet pants/skirts. Belly shirts and bare midriffs are not appropriate in school.
5. Beginning grade 5, low -cut and deep v-necks may be worn only with a layer underneath.
6. All shirts must have sleeves. *Halter tops and cap or very short sleeves are not permitted.*

Boys, grades 1-8:

1. Beginning grade 5 capris may not be worn – all pants must be long.
2. Yarmulkas must be worn at all times. Any boy without one must purchase one from the school for \$0.25. (Or something of value for his teacher to hold until it is brought.)
3. Starting grade 1, Tzitzit, (fringed garments) must be worn. Younger boys are encouraged in this practice as well.

Preschool (grades N – K):

All students must wear shoes that have a closed front and back and do not easily slip off (No slippers, sandals, clogs, crocs, etc.). There is no other formal code of dress for preschool/daycare.

There are periodic events/holiday programs for which we request that students dress appropriate to the occasion. (eg. Rosh Chodesh, Yom Haatzmaut). "Formal attire" requests will require students to wear a white or light top and dark bottom. Students will be advised of how to dress prior to all events.

For your convenience, yarmulkas and tzitzit are available for purchase from the school office.

Please label all outerwear, backpacks and supplies. We can only return these items promptly if they are properly labeled.

Conduct and Discipline

Shalom Torah Academy instills a sense of respect in all students. Respect for oneself, respect for others and respect for learning are all essential for the growth of our children. Teachers, administrators, staff and students are expected to treat each other with respect at all times. We openly recognize positive behaviors on the part of our students. Each child will be made aware of the rules of the school and of his/her class and will be encouraged to follow them. Please stress the importance of adhering to school-wide and classroom rules when speaking to your child. With your encouragement, our students will feel secure and confident with regard to school expectations.

Correction of inappropriate behaviors will be undertaken through discussion, instruction and provision of positive models. Positive reinforcement will be always used first.

Disruptive or inappropriate behaviors are sometimes resistant to initial interventions. In these circumstances our discipline code will be implemented. On the first day of school, a student orientation is held to review all school rules to ensure a positive experience for everybody.

Discipline is handled in one of three ways depending on the nature and the frequency of the problem. The general categories for disciplinary intervention are those to be executed in class, those that require administrative involvement and those that are met with zero-tolerance under any and all circumstances.

In-Class Consequences

The teacher or the adult supervising the student at any given time will deal with less severe or initial infractions of rules. These may include:

1. Classroom misbehavior (as defined by the rules presented by the teacher)
2. Lack of proper general school decorum in the class, halls, gym or lunchroom.
3. Non-compliance with teacher directives.

Interventions may be:

1. Conference with the students/ warning
2. Contact with the parents
3. Loss of classroom related privilege
4. Individualized student contract

Administrative Involvement

Repeated or pattern behavior problems or severe infractions of the rules will be brought to the attention of a principal. "Severe" violations include:

1. Overt disrespect to a teacher or any adult
2. Physical fighting
3. Vandalism/ Causing damage to school property
4. Dress code violations
5. Repeated tardiness to school
6. Repeated problems in classroom or school decorum
7. Cheating/ Plagiarism
8. Foul language/ Cursing
9. Discussion or displaying of any inappropriate material

Issues brought to the attention of a principal will be handled as follows:

FIRST OFFENSE: Conference with the students and a possible consequence

SECOND OFFENSE: Conference with the students, communication with the parents and a consequence

THIRD OFFENSE: Half hour after school detention and communication with parents

FOURTH OFFENSE: One hour after school detention and communication with parents

FIFTH OFFENSE: Suspension *until* parents meet in person with a principal

Anecdotal records of all "severe" infractions will be entered into the student's file.

Consequences meted out by principals may include:

1. Warning
2. Student contract/ behavior program
3. Assignment of educational value
4. Loss of school privileges (ie: trips, assemblies, special programs)
5. School service requirement

Zero-Tolerance

In order to provide every child with a physically and emotionally safe school environment, certain behaviors will be met with zero-tolerance even at the first incidence. Please discuss these with your child so that they never occur. They are:

1. Behavior that threatens the security or safety of the students (eg: pulling the fire alarm, using dangerous items in school, engaging in behavior that poses a safety risk).
2. Bullying, defined as the purposeful victimization of another student in any physical or verbal manner. The school's statement on bullying is maintained as a separate document. A copy can be found at the back of this handbook for further clarification.
3. Purposeful hiding or avoidance of detection from the supervising adult during any activity during school hours.
4. Misuse of the school computers in any way.

These infractions will be dealt with as follows:

FIRST OFFENSE: Communication with parents and a consequence

SECOND OFFENSE: Suspension from school *until* parents meet in person with a principal and a student behavior contract is agreed upon by all parties.

THIRD OFFENSE: Measures to be determined by the administration may include exclusion from extra-curricular activities, extended suspension or expulsion.

We ask you to review this code with your children and to join us in partnership for the best development of your children.

Supplies

All students need to have proper supplies in order to be well prepared for school. Please provide the supplies listed for your child's grade and check supplies at least once during each marking period in order to replenish them as needed. Please do not count on the office to keep your child's supply box stocked or to supply materials needed for projects designed to be done at home.

Pre-school children should have a spare set of labeled clothing, including underwear and socks, in school.

All supplies should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

School Property

Students are responsible for respecting all school property, including items on loan to them for the duration of the year such as lockers, desks and textbooks. Students who damage school property either willfully or through inappropriate use will be required to replace or pay for them.

Textbooks

All General Studies textbooks must be covered. Please replace covers should they come off during the year. We strongly recommend covering Judaic texts with clear contact paper.

Students will be held responsible for the replacement or cost of lost or damaged textbooks. Texts vary in cost from \$65 to \$85. Students who do not return textbooks at the end of the year will not receive report cards until they are replaced or paid for. Middle school students will not be allowed to take final exams without returning their texts.

Computers

The school computers and printers are designated for technology instruction and for enhancing classroom learning. They are not to be used for printing homework assignments or for play.

Decorum

Whether in the hallway, the classroom or any other place in the school, with a group or alone, students are expected to:

- Walk, not run in a structured, respectful and quiet manner.
- Make sure all garbage is disposed of into waste bins.
- Listen quietly to all instructions during recess, fire drills, trips, assemblies, and line-up.

Students must carry a hall pass when leaving the classroom, recess area or lunch room.

Cell Phones and Electronic Equipment

Students are not to bring cell phones to school or anywhere on the school property. Cell phones are not to be brought on any school trip either. If a student is found with a cell phone, it will be taken from the student and returned only to a parent.

Electronic equipment (Ipods, Gameboys, etc.) may be used before and after school hours and may be stored in lockers and knapsacks provided they do not come out during the school day. Electronic equipment used during school hours will be confiscated and returned only to a parent.

General Parent Concerns

Arrival and Dismissal

Strict adherence to arrival and dismissal times is one sign of a high-performing school. These times will be strictly enforced, as part of our uncompromisingly academic environment.

Children are to arrive at school by 8:40 A.M. They may enter the building beginning at 8:30 A.M. Private vehicles are to pull up in the yellow striped area at the front of the building to discharge students. **Adults are not to leave their vehicles unattended in the drop off lane.** An adult will be at the front of the building to supervise the orderly entrance of all students into the school. All students are to report to the lineup area for their grade. There will be adult supervision for lineup until 8:45 A.M. when all teachers will escort their students to their classrooms. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD STUDENTS GO TO THEIR CLASSES WITHOUT THEIR TEACHER.**

At the end of the school day private vehicles are to pull up into their assigned pick-up zone and follow the procedures for that zone. Please do not leave your vehicle if your zone does not permit it. To switch zones please call the office. A list of zones will be provided at the start of the school year.

Children will be dismissed at 3:45 P.M.. Friday dismissal will be either at 2:45 P.M. or 1:30 P.M. as per the school calendar.

Safety and Security

The school building was designed to meet the strictest standards for safety and security. The building has many exterior doors but only one entrance. Other doors will be used primarily as emergency exits and cannot be used to enter the building. In order to monitor all presence in the building, all children and parents will receive a barcode tag which must be used to scan in upon entry.

There will be periodic safety and fire drills throughout the year. The exercise is of utmost importance so that we will all be prepared to safely evacuate our children in the event of an emergency.

There may be family issues relevant only to your family that would affect school access or pick-up for your child. Please inform us of these issues and the action we need to take in order to be able to accede to your wishes or relevant legal agreements. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

In the event of illness or other reasons for children to be picked up at other than regular dismissal time you will have to park in a parking stall and enter the building to sign out your child. If you need to have your child picked up by someone other than a parent, we must have written permission to release your child to that person and that person must present picture ID. This permission may be faxed, but cannot be verbal. Please understand that these measures are in place for the protection of the children. We appreciate your cooperation in safety matters, and understanding will avoid embarrassment on the part of staff members having to refuse a request to bend school policies.

Health and Hygiene

Staff members will maintain a high level of hygiene and precaution on a constant basis. Hand washing, gloving and prevention of cross contamination are policies that will be followed consistently by all staff. The entire facility is cleaned and sanitized on a daily, and more frequently if necessary.

You can take an active role in keeping your child healthy by making sure that he/she gets enough rest and maintains proper nutrition and hygiene. Tooth brushing, bathing and frequent hand washing are good health habits that can be instilled early in a child's development.

Emergency Contact

In case of any health emergency, parents will be notified immediately. It is the responsibility of each parent to leave current business, home and cell phone numbers, as well as emergency numbers with the school so that you can be contacted promptly if necessary. If any of this information changes at any time, be sure to notify the school office. Emergency contacts **must** be people who are geographically available to the location of the school during the day. If we are unable to reach a parent or emergency contact person, it is our procedure to call the child's physician or the rescue squad.

Sick Children

When parents are notified that a child is ill, arrangements must be made to pick up the child quickly. If the parent is unable to pick up the child, emergency contacts will be called. *Just as you do not want your child to become ill, other parents do not want their children exposed to unnecessary germs or sicknesses.* Please refer to our chart of illnesses/symptoms.

| Symptom | School Policy |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Elevated temperature of 100 or higher | Child must be out of school until fever free without medication for 24 hours. |
| Sore throat | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note. |
| Severe cough | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note. |
| Severe pain / discomfort | Child stays out of school until symptom free. |
| Diarrhea | Child stays out of school until symptom free. |
| Vomiting | Child stays out of school until symptom free. |
| Yellow eyes or skin | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note. |
| Red eyes with discharge | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note, at least 24 hours after start of medication. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Discharge from nose that is not clear and thin | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note. |
| Enlarged lymph nodes | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return with doctor's note. |
| Ear infection | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return with doctor's note. |
| Communicable diseases | Child must be seen by a doctor. Can return symptom free with doctor's note. If on antibiotics, must remain out of school for 48 hours after starting medication. |

There are times when a child exhibits signs of illness at home. While we appreciate that it is difficult to make the decision to keep a child at home, particularly for working parents, we must insist that you *refrain from sending your child to school with even slight signs of illness*. Please adhere to the guidelines above. Please inform the office any time your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease (strep throat, chicken pox, etc.)

Our fax number is 732-536-0511. Doctors may fax notes to the school to expedite a child's return to school. Faxed notes must be on doctor's stationery and contain the doctor's signature.

Medication

The staff is not permitted to dispense any medication without signed parental permission. With the exception of Tylenol, additional permission must be obtained from the child's physician. This applies to all prescription and over-the-counter medications. If a child needs medication during the day, it must be sent to the school in its original container with written directions from the physician. Your physician can fax instructions to us, provided they arrive on letterhead and with the doctor's signature. Medications with prescription dates older than 30 days will not be administered and will be discarded. Please inform the office of medication issues as soon as possible so that medications are not left in backpacks. A medication dispenser (calibrated spoon, etc.) must be included. Non-prescription lotions or ointments can be applied without a doctor's note which should also include the frequency of application.

Health Forms

Please make sure to fill out health forms, and include information regarding allergies and sensitivities, as well as the symptoms your child might exhibit if exposed to an allergen and measures that need to be taken should your child have an allergic reaction.

Head Lice

Head Lice is not related to personal hygiene and any child can catch it. Any child who is found to have head lice must be picked up immediately and will be permitted to return to school only after proper treatment and removal of all nits and lice, dead or alive as per the guidelines of the school pediatrician. If your child is found to have head lice, you will be given a copy of those guidelines.

Communication

If at any time during any communication with students or parents, a situation arises in which you feel the need for administrative support, please do not hesitate to have us partner with you to resolve the problem.

Academic/Classroom Concerns

The most effective way of acquiring information or allaying concerns regarding your child's progress is to contact his/her teacher directly. Please call the school phone number and enter the appropriate extension and leave a voice mail message. Your call will be returned within a reasonable amount of time. If, for any reason, you are experiencing difficulty reaching a faculty member, please call the office at extension #0. A staff extension list is provided at the back of this handbook.

Administrative Concerns

If you feel you need to speak to an administrator or have more global concerns please contact:

- Mrs. Hebel- *regarding General Studies concerns*
- Mrs. Minkowich – *regarding Judaic Studies concerns*
- Secretary- *general questions*
- Guidance Counselor – *regarding social/emotional concerns*
- Director of Special Needs- *regarding special services needs*
- Rabbi Richter- *transportation, the physical premises, and tuition/financial concerns*
- Mrs. Gold- *regarding admission, daycare concerns, scholarship information*

Messages for teachers or students can be delivered at the time of the call only in case of emergency. The office phone is only to be used by students with permission from office personnel or administration. Students and parents need to understand that students should make phone calls during the day only in the event of schedule or other changes that have occurred unexpectedly. For transportation changes with Tiny Tikes, please follow the company's procedures. For individual pick up or carpool changes, please call the school office before 2:30 PM on the respective day.

Visiting Policy

Parents who wish to enter the school to meet with an administrator or teacher are welcome to do so. In order for the meeting to take place without disrupting other activities, please make an appointment in advance. Other visitors, such as grandparents or other relatives, should restrict their visits to family events and student productions.

All parents and visitors entering the building must report to the office. Parents and visitors may not go to classrooms or any other location without permission.

Once a year, we hold a Parents' Day in order to give you the opportunity to experience your child's school day. Parents are invited to sit in on a period each of Judaic and General Studies and then to eat lunch with their child.

PTO

The Parent-Teacher Organization is what unites the school and home, cementing the relationship between parents, teachers and students. A parent interested in the enhanced development of his or her child should utilize this vehicle as a way to assist the school in continued growth. We are proud to have an extremely dedicated and active PTO working side by side with us. Parents are urged to become involved and participate in all of the various projects and programs of the PTO. We invite your input in this area.

Birthday Parties/ Class Celebrations

Small, in-class birthday parties are permitted for students UP TO AND INCLUDING GRADE TWO provided that the classroom teacher is consulted at least *five days* in advance. Any food item brought into the school for a party must be certified as kosher by the symbols below. These items must be in the original sealed package. Items having a D or the word "dairy" near the kosher symbol on the package are considered to be dairy and may not be served in the afternoon on days when lunch contains a meat item.

Siblings from other classes are not permitted to join the party as it is disruptive and takes away from the sibling's learning.

Invitations to birthday parties held outside of the school must be sent through regular mail and may not be distributed in Shalom Torah Academy. Please take into consideration the *Kashruth* and *Shabbat* convictions of classmates when planning your party as it is very painful for a child to have to be left out.

All foods brought to school must be PEANUT AND SESAME FREE.

The only acceptable Kosher symbols are:  and 

Leaving out one or a few individual children from the invitation list is a form of bullying. Please keep parties small or include all of your child's classmates.

A Final Word

We are very proud of Shalom's history, and eagerly continue to build its future. The staff, parents and children are the components of a warm and loving family. Together we can assure that every member of the family reaches his/her potential- intellectually, socially and emotionally.