



Bet Shraga
Hebrew Academy
of the
Capital District

2009-2010
Parent
Handbook

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BET SHRAGA HEBREW ACADEMY PARENT HANDBOOK

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Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy of the Capital District receives substantial support from the United Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York and from its Endowment Fund.

OUR MISSION

In a nurturing and respectful school community that values the uniqueness of each child and the diversity of Jewish practice.

BET SHRAGA HEBREW ACADEMY

Creates an outstanding integrative curriculum in General and Judaic studies, encouraging intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and love of learning.

Celebrates the richness of Jewish tradition, Torah and Israel.

Inspires ethical growth rooted in the values of justice, kindness and tikkun olam, the principle that we must each do our part to make the world a better place.

Philosophy of the School

The Hebrew Academy of the Capital District was established to provide Jewish young people with an education integrating the intellectual rigor, ethical norms and spiritual warmth of the Jewish tradition with the values of the American democratic heritage and the wisdom of the Western intellectual tradition. The Academy's goal is to produce graduates who are well grounded in Judaic and secular studies and prepared to pursue both at more advanced levels, sensitive to ethical and moral demands in their dealings with all persons, committed to the religious traditions and Zionist aspirations of the Jewish people, loyal to the American democratic way of life, and possessed of a keen sense of civic responsibility toward the various communities—American, Jewish and universal – in which they will participate as adults.

An intense love of learning for its own sake has long characterized the Jewish life style, and the Academy strives to develop this devotion in its students and to see it applied to all learning, sacred and secular. Academic excellence is expected to result from this view of scholarship as its own reward and not from a sense of competitiveness. At the same time, the Academy's curriculum is designed to transmit the values to which the school is dedicated. Natural sciences are taught from the point of view of man's obligation to respect the world in which he lives. Social sciences are taught to foster the concern for social justice and sense of communal responsibility common to the Jewish and Western democratic traditions. The transmitting of knowledge and the transmitting of values are the two main purposes of a school, and the Academy strives to create an atmosphere in which both of these functions are carried out simultaneously.

Therefore, the Academy seeks to attract faculty members not only for their skills in conveying information, but also for their ability to serve as role models. Classes at the Academy are small, allowing for an intimate teacher-student relationship. In this way, the school's sense of community, strong as it is, does not override its respect for the individual.

The school was established in 1962 by a group of dedicated Jewish community leaders under the guidance of its founding Principal, Mr. Shraga Arian, after whom the school was renamed as Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy.

DREAM, LITTLE CHILDREN

This is the heritage we bequeath to you.
This school was not established
to leave you untouched, uninspired.
Ours is more than an institution
devoted to pursuing excellence in
General studies and in Hebraica.
We have built this school so that you can
dream dreams, see visions, and do wonders.
~Shraga Arian, Founding Principal~

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Head of School
Elementary School Coordinator
Principal, Middle School

Rabbi Rami Strosberg
Patricia Balmer
Dan Miller

Main Office
Primary Wing
Middle School

PARENT ORGANIZATION

The Hebrew Academy Parent Organization engages in many activities and programs for the benefit of the school's students, faculty, and parents. Parent Org dues are included in the membership fee, so all parents are members. Please become an active member! For additional information and to get involved, please contact Deborah Gold at 459-0189 (H) or daygold@nycap.rr.com.

COMMUNICATION

General Guidelines to Remember

1. Please remember that we are partners in the educational process.
2. The home plays an important role in helping a child achieve his/her maximum potential.
3. Encourage your child by focusing on positive experiences at school. Ask him/her to tell you about the good things that happened in school. Accentuate the positive.
4. Keep in touch with your child's teacher. You can contact teachers by leaving a voice message at school, by writing a note or sending an email.
5. Encourage your child to improve his/her work habits by reminding him/her to listen carefully, follow directions, complete assignments, work independently, accept correction and take pride in work well done.

Reporting to Parents

Email is the primary communication from school to home. It is important that the school office be notified of email address changes. Paper communication is sometimes sent with the students. We refer to this as "kiddie mail". Students are strongly encouraged to carry a pocket folder to and from school every day. All papers (including homework) should be placed in the pocket folder. Please ask your child to look in his/her pocket folder for messages from school.

When Parents Have Questions

The most efficient way for parents to ensure that their questions are addressed and problems are solved is to approach the right person with the right issue. As a rule, the staff member whose role it is to deal directly with a matter is the one best equipped to help.

- Questions about a child's classroom work and progress should be addressed to their teachers.
- Questions about the school's general studies curriculum should be directed to Mrs. Patty Balmer (K-5th Grade) and Mr. Dan Miller (6th - 8th Grade). Questions about Judaic Studies should be addressed to Rabbi Rami Strosberg.
- Financial matters are handled by Jen Jarose.
- Transportation issues can be addressed to the office staff.
- Questions relating to development, fundraising, and marketing should be directed to Liz Goldstein.
- Admissions and placement issues are handled by Lorraine Arcus.

If, following contact with the appropriate person, the matter is not yet resolved; parents should contact Rabbi Rami Strosberg.

Report Cards:

Formal communication of how your child is progressing in school is through report cards and interim reports. As always, we will communicate with you throughout the year. If necessary, additional conferences can be set up as well.

Kindergarten – Grade 4:

Report cards are written three times a year – in December, March, and June.

Parent Conferences are held during the day on Veteran's Day in November and in the afternoon in early April. All parents are scheduled for conferences in November by the school. The April conferences are by parent or teacher request.

Grades 5-8:

Report Cards are written four times per year. Interim Reports for Middle School students are meant to bring to your attention any problems or areas of weakness that may have developed since the last report card. They will also indicate areas of improvement as well as areas of excellence that have been evident since the last marking period.

Email

Faculty and staff can be reached via email at [First initial Last name @ hacdalbany.com]. For example, Dan Miller's email address is dmiller@hacdalbany.com. Faculty and staff will communicate with you via email. Please make sure that the office is notified if you change your email address.

Shabbaton

The *E-Shabbaton*, our school's newsletter, is the primary means of communication. The *E-Shabbaton* informs parents and students of school and community events and school calendar changes.

If you have information for the *E-Shabbaton*, it must be submitted to the office by Wednesday morning of the week it is to be published. In the interest of cost and time in producing the *E-Shabbaton*, the editor will reserve judgment on the size of any article and the number of times a given item will run. ***All inserts should be formatted for Microsoft and emailed to Nancy Daigle at ndaigle@hacdalbany.com.***

Website

Hebrew Academy's web address is www.hacdalbany.org. You may check our website for the *E-Shabbaton* and up-to-date information. Messages can be sent to the principal or other school personnel via email through the website.

DAILY ROUTINES AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

School Day

Classes begin at 8:00 am. Children may be dropped off by their parents or by bus, starting at 7:45 am. Please **do not** drop off children earlier than 7:45 or later than 8:00 am. Elementary children are supervised in the small gym or a designated classroom until 8:00 am when they go to their classrooms. Middle school students are allowed to go directly upstairs to their classrooms.

A student arriving between 8:00 and 8:30 should go directly to their class. Students entering after 8:30 a.m. should go to the nurse to sign in.

If your child must leave the building for any reason before dismissal he or she must be picked up in the office and signed out. Children will be called from class when you arrive in the school office. This way, we avoid disrupting classroom learning. Please do not show up at your child's classroom unannounced.

Lunch

It is the policy of our school to follow the strict observance of the Dietary Laws of Kashrut. ***Please refer to the Kashrut policy in this handbook.*** Students are to bring Kosher dairy or parve (neither meat nor dairy) lunches. Milk is available each day at a nominal fee which is due when tuition is billed.

Outside Recess

Elementary children go outside daily before or after lunch. We consider it very important to provide this opportunity for children to have some vigorous outdoor activities. If your child is unable, for health reasons, to participate in recess, please send a doctor's note to the school nurse. Without a doctor's note, we will expect children to participate in outdoor recess. Make sure that your child has proper outdoor clothing for all seasons. During inclement weather there will be no outdoor recess. Children will have time in their classrooms for games or relaxation.

Holiday Observances

Holiday observances and special events offer an opportunity for parents to join students and faculty in school activities. Time and space limitations make it impossible for an open invitation to be extended for every event, but we will invite you to a number of holiday observances throughout the year.

Field Trips

At every grade level, class trips are planned as part of the curriculum in general studies and Judaic studies. These trips enhance the children's understanding of academic subjects and promote learning through experience. Students visit local museums, theaters, synagogues and other significant sites. Longer trips are taken in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Sixth Grade Trip to the Teva Learning Center

Our sixth graders attend a Jewish nature study camp in Connecticut for four days in the fall. They join with several other Solomon Schechter Day Schools for a program that includes daily prayer, hiking, nature study, singing, and a variety of other activities based on Jewish values connected to ecology and nature.

Seventh Grade Trip

Our seventh grade takes a two-day trip to a large city in the spring. For the past several years this trip has been to New York City or Philadelphia. Our students visit places of Jewish as well as secular interest.

Eighth Grade Trip to ISRAEL

Our eighth graders take a trip in the spring. Eighth grade students travel to Israel as the culminating experience and exam relating to their Bet Shraga education. The itinerary includes visits to sites of Jewish religious heritage, history and interest. Students and parents work on fundraising projects to help defray the cost of the trip.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Refund Policy

A student's enrollment may be withdrawn upon written notice to HACD on or before September 1st which will result in a forfeiture of the Registration and Membership fee as follows:

Before July 1:	All but \$100 will be refunded
On or after July 1 but before August 15:	All but \$200 will be refunded
On or after August 15 but before September 1:	All but \$300 will be refunded

Tuition is refundable based upon the day of withdrawal of the student. One tenth of tuition becomes an obligation on the first day of each school month - September through June - regardless of the number of school days actually attended. Tuition is not pro-rated on a daily basis.

The **Building Fund** obligation is a one-time payment of \$500 upon enrollment. For families whose first child is entering Kindergarten, this obligation will not be due until the child enters first grade. This payment may be added to SMART payment or paid in full. Families on tuition adjustment will be allowed to meet this obligation over a five year period (annual payments of \$100.00). If your child is no longer going to attend HACD, the full amount is due, except when the withdrawal is at the request of the school administration for educational reasons or when the family relocates out of the Capital District.

Give or Get becomes an obligation when a student has been enrolled in the school and is still enrolled on the first student school day in January.

Attendance

It is particularly important for parents to communicate to students a sense of responsibility with regard to attendance. Parents of students with frequent absences and or tardiness will be asked to meet with administration. Please refer to the school calendar in planning vacations and family trips. Parents are urged not to schedule vacations while school is in session.

Conduct

We are dedicated to promoting a climate of respect, kindness, and sensitivity based on Jewish values in our school. We recognize that children learn from the examples set by their parents, teachers, and fellow students and we do our best to model good behavior at all times. Clear expectations regarding behavior in school will be established jointly by students and teachers at the beginning of each school year. The Bet Shraga Code of Conduct specifically outlines values, expectations and our philosophy as a school community.

Appearance and Attire

Students are free to express their own style and individuality through their dress. That expression must fall within certain clear boundaries. Specifically, the Hebrew Academy seeks to create an environment that is both conducive to learning, and in keeping with the Jewish value of modesty. With those ideals in mind, the following are requirements when in the Hebrew Academy building:

- **On Fridays, all students in grades K-5 must wear their white Hebrew Academy school shirt or a solid white collard shirt. Middle School students must wear their school shirt on Fridays when a school wide Oneg is scheduled.** If a student must be provided a shirt, a \$10.00 fee will be charged.
- The *kipah* is one way to signify our awareness of the sanctity which surrounds us. In addition, it can serve as an important symbol of identification with Judaism and with other Jews. In recognition of the school's status as a *beit midrash* (house of study), boys and men wear *kipot* at all times, and girls and women are encouraged to do so if they choose. Baseball caps are not permitted indoors for males or females. If a student must be provided a kipah, a \$2.50 fee will be charged per kipah. Baseball hats or other types of hats are not acceptable alternatives to kipah.
- No inappropriate messages on clothing. Profanities, advertisements for alcoholic beverages, or sexually suggestive language or pictures are examples of unacceptable elements.
- No inappropriate exposure. No bare midriiffs. No skin may be visible between the shirt and pants/skirt. No low cut tops. Tank tops and spaghetti straps are not acceptable. No very short shorts or skirts/dresses. Since "an arm's length" varies, we ask that shorts, skirts and dresses are an appropriate length for school.

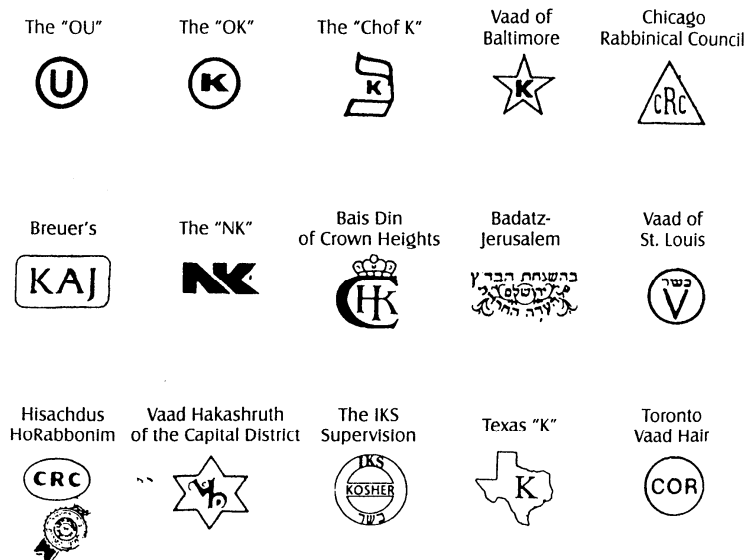
Students, who are out of dress code and their parents, will receive reminders. Persistent offenders will be excluded from class until they are appropriately attired.

Kashrut Policy

Our school serves the entire Jewish community and always strives to be sensitive to the needs of all its families. In school we observe a strict kashrut policy in accordance with the standards of the Vaad HaKashrut. We ask that you be equally sensitive when inviting students to your home or to birthday parties outside your home.

Please review the following guidelines regarding food in school:

- All lunches and snacks must be dairy or parve (neither meat nor milk). Meat may not be brought into the school.
- **Sharing or trading of food between students is not permitted.** This is due to the issues of health, restricted diets, and individual family practices of Kashrut. It is expected that parents, as well as faculty, will reinforce this principle.
- All food for school and/or classroom celebrations must arrive in school in the original, sealed containers with an acceptable kosher certification symbol. Check food in at front office before bringing it to the classroom. Foods prepared at home are not acceptable for classroom celebrations.
- **Nothing is to be brought into the kitchen without permission from the office.**
- There will be no food purchases on official school trips except at designated venues. All the necessary meals and snacks will be provided, either by the parents or by the school unless indicated otherwise.
- The school facilities may sometimes be available for private rental, subject to approval by the office. Use of the kitchen requires approval from the Vaad HaKashrut.
- The following indicates the acceptable symbols of Kashrut Certification according to our Vaad HaKashrut of the Capital District



IMPORTANT: The status of a product can usually be determined by whether meat/dairy/parve is printed in the immediate vicinity of the kosher certification symbol.

Birthday Parties and Celebrations

Our school year is filled with happy occasions including birthday parties. Teachers in each grade have developed age-appropriate ways to celebrate. Please check with your child's classroom teachers regarding the individual class policies for in-school birthday celebrations. Please remember: ***All food brought into the school must be Kosher in accordance with our Kashrut policy, and checked at the office before being brought to the classroom. We strongly suggest that parties outside of the school include the entire class or at least all classmates of the same gender.***

Personal Belongings

Parents are asked to be aware of what their children bring to school. Students may bring in small games to use for car pool or bus waiting time with the understanding that these games **must** remain in the students' backpack during class time.

Cell phones for after-school parent communication must remain off and in the student's backpack during the school day. Electronic equipment, such as MP3 players and video games are not permitted to be used during the school day. Water pistols, pocket knives, or toys or tools that can be used as weapons are not permitted on the bus or in school. A teacher or administrator will confiscate items deemed inappropriate for school and parents will be required to retrieve them.

Money is not to be brought to school, unless it is for tzedakah or a specific requested purpose.

Early or Changed Dismissal

It is extremely important to maintain the highest level of safety and security for our children. We therefore require that you follow the guidelines below if your child must leave school during the school day or before the usual dismissal time. A pad of Dismissal Notices is provided to each family for ease of providing written notes about dismissal arrangements.

- You must send a note or call the school office if there is a change in your child's normal mode of transportation. If the change affects more than one child, please send a separate note for each child. Changes must be to the office **no later than 1:00pm** in order to be successfully carried out. Be sure to include the name of the person who will be picking up your child and the time that they will be picked up.
- Students will be dismissed from class upon the arrival of the child's ride at school. All children must be signed out in the office. If your child returns to the building, please sign him/her back in at the office.

CHILDREN WILL NOT BE DISMISSED FROM THE MAIN OFFICE AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY. IF YOU ARE PICKING UP YOUR CHILD AT DISMISSAL YOU MUST DO SO FROM THE CARPOOL LINE.

Parking

When visiting the school, please use the parking lot across the street on Sand Creek Road. Handicapped people may be dropped off at the door adjacent to the parking lot next to school. Please do not park your car on Russell Road where the buses park at dismissal time. **Students will not be dismissed onto Russell Road at the end of the school day.**

Emergency Closings and Snow Days

If school must close or have a late opening due to inclement weather or for any other emergency situations, Hebrew Academy announcements will be transmitted over the following media outlets (or their web site): television stations **WRGB – Channel 6 (www.cbs6albany.com)**, **WTEN – Channel 10 (www.wten.com)**, **WNYT – Channel 13 (www.wnyt.com)**, **WXXA (FOX)-Channel 23 (www.fox23news.com)**, **Time Warner Cable Capital News Channel 9 (www.capitalnews9.com)**, and newspapers The Times Union (**www.timesunion.com**) starting at 6:00 a.m.

The announcements are the best way to determine whether or not classes are in session. Parents should not call the school office or school personnel at home regarding school closings or early dismissals.

If there is a delayed opening, it will be consistently a two hour delay and classes will begin at **10:00 a.m.** If there is a delayed opening, verify that your school district is providing bus transportation and any changes in its schedule from the media or with your school district. Please do not drop child(en) off earlier than 9:45.

If school is already in session and we must have an early or emergency dismissal, parents will be notified by phone, in addition to the media announcements. Contact the office if your student/s will be going home in a different way than they normally go home. Parents must indicate on the emergency forms where they can be reached in case of an early dismissal. We must also have the name and telephone number of an alternate person to call, such as a neighbor or relative, who can be notified if the parents cannot be reached.

Visits to School

Adult visitors are welcome in the school. The school's priorities are, first and foremost, preservation of a safe and secure learning environment. **If you would like to visit your child's class, arrangements must be made in advance with the teacher or an administrator.** To minimize any disruption to the educational process, siblings should not accompany parents during classroom visits. ***Whenever you visit the school or your child's class, please sign the visitors' book and obtain a visitor's pass in the Main Office.*** With prior approval, graduates of our school are welcome to visit during lunch hour. **All visitors must wear a visitor's badge.**

Volunteering

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in various school activities. Please check with the administration and your child's teacher, as they may have "wish list" projects specifically suited for volunteer parents who have the time, talent, and energy. The Parent Organization is an integral part of the Hebrew Academy family and parents may choose to help with Parent Organization sponsored events.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Books and Workbooks

Jews are often referred to as the “People of the Book”. Not only do we value the Torah, but we value all books so we expect them to be treated with care. Students are responsible for maintaining their books and workbooks in good condition and having them in class as needed. **Students will have to pay for lost textbooks or workbooks.**

General studies books and workbooks for all children must be picked up by the parent prior to the start of school at the public school districts, with the exception of Albany and districts covered by BOCES. Public schools will notify the parents of pick-up time and place. *Parents should write their child(ren)'s name(s) in every book that they receive from their school district.* The office will distribute any Judaic books that do not come from the district as well as the books for Albany and BOCES students at the beginning of the school year.

At the end of the school year, all textbooks (not including workbooks) must be returned to their respective public school districts, except Albany and BOCES books, which are kept at the Hebrew Academy. Elementary teachers will send home the books and a copy of the original book order the last week of school. Middle School students will receive a copy of the original book order the last week of school. Teachers will help them find the correct books to take home.

Supplies

A school supply list with most items needed by students in class is distributed during the summer. Parents are responsible for providing these supplies.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the educational experience. It is a necessary medium to attain the academic objectives set forth for each class. In addition, attention to scholastic work at home helps develop a sense of responsibility and a more complete involvement for the student with his/her school work. The need for home assignments varies with each class. Consequently, homework policies were established by the faculty and the Board of Education, in accordance with the specific needs of each grade. The guidelines are included both in the Parent Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Parents are asked to provide an atmosphere conducive to studying for their children and to assist him/her in planning time properly. Children should not need parental assistance in doing the homework. If a child seems continuously perplexed by the homework assignments, the teacher should be informed of this.

Guidelines for Homework Assignments

In a school with a dual curriculum, students are expected to do homework in increasing amounts as they progress through the school.

General Philosophy

Homework is an integral part of the entire educational process in our school. It is designed to contribute to our goal of creating life-long independent learners, capable of producing a good product and with the skills to pursue interests and research ideas.

Current Practice

Homework is used for:

- Reinforcing subject matter taught, such as vocabulary, spelling, math drills, reading practice, writing practice, and grammar drills.
- Enriching: reading for pleasure, further research, advancing in math, class reports, permitting and encouraging a child to pursue an interest.
- Extending class time:
 - by having children read ahead in literature, Bible or in social studies to prepare for a discussion to follow in class.
 - having children complete incomplete class assignments.
- Individualizing curriculum by assigning work that varies in length of time needed, depth of commitment, scope of interest and level of difficulty.
- Preparation for class tests and examinations.

Discipline Policy

At the beginning of the school year, teachers and students will be discussing appropriate classroom behaviors and expectations, why the behaviors and expectations are important, and possible consequences for not following the behaviors.

Rules and regulations are established in any institution to indicate the limits of acceptable social behavior. Discipline in the school is a prerequisite to the creation of an effective learning environment.

BET SHRAGA COMPUTER USE POLICY

The Bet Shraga Hebrew Academy of the Capital District is pleased to offer students **supervised access** to a computer network for the Internet. Using computers to access the Internet to help perform academic work, to explore educational topics, to conduct research projects is a privilege. The privilege of using computers in school may be revoked at any time if a student(s) fail to comply with this policy. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in the event of violations of this policy.

What is possible?

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories around the world. Some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. While the purposes of school are to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages.

What is expected?

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in the classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with school standards and the specific rules set forth below. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. Viewing of inappropriate content such as pornography is prohibited. Students will not access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

What are the rules?

Network storage areas: Network administrators may review communications and saved files to maintain system integrity and insure that students are using the system responsibly.

Illegal copying: Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks, unless they have permission from the teacher/network administrator. Nor should students copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files.

Inappropriate materials or language: Profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. A good rule to follow is never view, send or access materials, which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately.

COMPUTER USE POLICY—RULES OF APPROPRIATE USE

1. Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work.
2. Do not damage the computer or the network in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware.
4. No intentional bypassing of security for viewing inappropriate Internet sites. Do not attempt to gain access to restricted areas or go beyond authorized access by entering another person's password or accessing another person's files or email. Do not change, copy, rename, delete, read or otherwise access files that you did not create, unless you have a teacher's permission."
5. Do not violate copyright laws or plagiarize.
6. Do not view, send, or display offensive messages or pictures.
7. Do not waste limited resources such as disk space or printing capacity.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work, or files.
9. Do notify an adult immediately if, by accident, you encounter materials, which violate the rules of appropriate use.
10. Do not communicate via email, chat rooms, user groups, bulletin boards or other means without direct supervision and permission of a teacher.
11. Do not give out home addresses or telephone numbers.
12. Do not employ the network for commercial purposes.
13. Do not use encryption.
14. Do not access a private Internet provider.
15. Do not change the computer's desktop, screen saver or home page.
16. **BE PREPARED** to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

HEALTH OFFICE

Hours

The school nurse is on duty daily. Specific hours will be set by the beginning of the school year.

Absences

Please notify the school nurse of any illnesses or extended absences. All communicable diseases are to be reported to the school nurse as soon as the parent knows the diagnosis.

In order to facilitate the proper keeping of attendance records required by New York State, parents are asked to observe the following procedures:

- Call the school nurse the morning of your child's absence and leave a message on her voice mail stating the reason for their absence. This is necessary so that we can monitor any contagious illnesses and avoid potential problems.
- When your child returns to school, provide a written note giving the date and reason for his/her absence from school. Your child should bring this note to his/her teacher on the morning that he/she returns to school.
- Send a written excuse to the school one day before necessary absences for a day or part of a day, such as for medical appointments.
- For longer absences which are known in advance, please notify the teachers, office and school nurse. Teachers are not required to prepare materials for your child to use during the absence. They may, however, apprise you of the work that will be covered during that time.

Guidelines for Parents

If your child complains of or shows the following symptoms at home, please follow these guidelines:

- **Rash or eye inflammation** - Any child with an unexplained rash or eye inflammation should be kept at home until the condition is diagnosed and treated by a physician.
- **Fever** - If a fever is present for any reason, a child should be kept at home until the temperature is normal for at least 24 hours and all symptoms have disappeared.
- **Cold** - A child with acute early symptoms of a cold should stay at home to prevent serious developments and to protect classmates and teachers from exposure to infection. If this practice is followed, fewer absences due to respiratory illness will occur.
- **Stomach ache** - Any child who is nauseated or has vomited during the night should be kept at home for observation. Occasionally a young child may experience a stomach ache before the bus arrives. Parents are asked to use their judgment as to whether this is simple anxiety or an actual illness.

Medication in School

No medicine may be given in school unless a written note is on file from both the doctor and the parent. The parent must either deliver the medicine to the school, or call the school to let the nurse know to expect it. Aspirin, Tylenol, or similar products **will not** be given without **both** the doctor and parent's notes. The parent must provide the product. If you anticipate that your child might need these products, please send in the two required notes and the product you wish, labeled with your child's name. ***This is required by New York State law for either prescription or over-the-counter medication.***

Immunizations and Health Forms

Health appraisals are required for all children in kindergarten, second, fourth, and seventh grades. Please return forms to the health office as soon as possible.

New York State Law requires that all children attending school must be immunized against **Polio, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Measles, German measles, Mumps, and Hepatitis B**. Proof of this with a physician's signature must be on file in the child's permanent school record.

Allergies

Information regarding allergies or specific health needs must be discussed with the school nurse.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

The Hebrew Academy receives funds from the **Drug Free Schools and Communities Act**. These funds are used for educational programs and materials. The regulations of the **DFS&CA** require the Hebrew Academy to disseminate its Drug and Alcohol Policy. To this end, the policy is available for review upon request from the office.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The Sexual Harassment policy of the Hebrew Academy is available for review upon request from the office.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus Information

Parents of all students, except Albany, Schenectady, Cohoes City School District, and students residing more than 15 miles from the school, must file a transportation request form with their public school district before April 1st of each year. For families new to the area, this form must be completed within one month of arrival. Students residing more than 15 miles from the school are not provided transportation by the public school district. If you are not eligible for District transportation, please refer to the sections on carpool information and procedures.

As a general rule, public school districts do not provide transportation when their classes are not in session. It is the parents' responsibility to contact your district to determine if transportation will be available and to arrange for alternate means of transportation when necessary.

Public school districts, or their contact, will inform parents of pick-up and drop-off times and locations. On the first few days of district provided transportation delays in pick-up and drop-off of the students should be expected. Parents should wait for buses with young children until the schedules are normalized.

Questions or concerns about bus transportation, such as location of the bus stop or a late arrival, cannot be addressed in the school office. Please call your school district's transportation office or the contract bus company. It is helpful to keep this number handy.

Students cannot get off at a different stop, unless the arrangements are made in advance by the parent with the bus company. This is necessary because of the insurance restrictions with which each bus company must comply. Changes in bus or bus stop cannot be handled in the school office, but a note must be sent to the school office in the morning if there is a change.

Bus Procedures

It is important for the safety and well being of all our students that each student follows bus rules. Help your child by encouraging them to follow sensible, kind, and responsible behavior. Students must observe these rules:

- Sit down in a seat after boarding the bus and remain seated. Keep your arms and head inside the bus.
- If your bus is equipped with seat belts, you must use the seat belt.
- Be respectful to the bus driver and other children.
- The driver is in charge on the bus. Follow her or his instructions.
- Talk in a normal, not loud, voice.
- Don't eat on the bus. Keep the bus clean.
- Behave in a safe manner at the bus stop. Be aware of the traffic near your stop, even before the bus comes. Never throw snowballs or other things at the bus or any vehicle. Cross the road safely after leaving the bus.
- Use your assigned bus stop to get on or off, unless your parents have made special arrangements for the day.

Parents should be aware that a serious violation or constant minor violations can result in the child's being removed from the bus for a period of time. In such cases, the parent becomes responsible for transportation. Such actions are at the discretion of the bus company and/or principals.

Carpool Information

In order to expedite dismissal, we have instituted a carpool system for the students residing in districts that do not provide transportation and for students who are picked up on a frequent and/or consistent basis. ***The school does not make carpool arrangements***; however, upon request, we will try to provide you with the names of potential carpool members. Please advise the office in writing of any changes in your existing carpool.

If someone other than a parent is picking up student(s) on a regular or temporary basis, please inform the school. The school will require this individual to establish their identity by showing a photo ID and verification from the parent(s) that they are authorized to remove students from the school.

Carpool Procedures - Morning Drop-Off

All students being driven to school in the morning are to be dropped off at the school entrance in the small parking lot on Sand Creek Road. There are teachers on duty to help with the morning drop-off.

Carpool Procedures - Afternoon Pick-Up

It is very important for the safety of all our students that these carpool procedures are adhered to by all Hebrew Academy families. When everyone cooperates we have a smooth, efficient, safe, and rapid dismissal.

Please follow these guidelines when you pick up your child (ren):

- All cars should approach the school on Sand Creek Rd from the east (Everett Rd or Russell Rd).
- Enter the school parking lot on the right and drive around to face Sand Creek Road and the school.
- Cars facing the school should be lined up double file.
- When you cross Sand Creek Road please drive completely around the pick-up area, allowing as many cars as possible in the area.
- ***Please do not leave your car when you are in the pick-up area.***
- If, for any reason, your child has to re-enter the building, please drive out of the pick-up area, park your car, and walk your child back into the building.

Rules for Carpool Dismissal

- Share the rules with temporary drivers (spouse, guardian, grandparents, friends, etc.).
- When the small parking lot is full, the cars line up double file in the large lot.
Stay with your car.
- When you pull into the small lot, drive as far around the circle as you can. The cars are loaded in "groups". Children are not dismissed until all the cars are stopped.
- ***Do not pull out of line.*** Please wait patiently until the car(s) in front of you move.
- You may only make a right turn out of the small lot.
- After school program drivers must park in the large parking lot, walk their carpools out of the front door, exit, and cross the street carefully.
- If you need to come into the school, use the main office door.
- **No pedestrians are allowed in the small parking lot.**
- CIVILITY and PATIENCE at all times.