

Rabbi Elliot Stevens
Kol Ami
Religious School
Handbook



Kol Ami
Religious School
Montgomery, AL

OUR MISSION

At Religious School, we believe our children should strengthen their faith in G-d, their love of Torah, and their identification with the Jewish people. We hope to inspire a strong sense of Jewish community and enrich their observance of Jewish practices, education and values.

Some of our goals are:

- ★ To make a sincere effort to help each student cultivate a sense of pride in being Jewish, and a comfort and joy in their Judaism.
- ★ To develop a sense of respect and caring for each other and a greater feeling of spirituality leading to good deeds and faith in G-d.
- ★ To instill a sense of responsibility for ourselves and those less fortunate through active, personal participation in Tzedakah, T'filah and Tikkun Olam.
- ★ To familiarize students with Jewish observance through worship and prayer including study, attendance at religious services, and special holiday celebrations.
- ★ To familiarize students with Torah, Jewish ethics, modern Israel and to convey an awareness of and appreciation for the richness of Jewish history and literature.
- ★ To stimulate a process of continuous learning and living which extends beyond the Religious School and lasts a lifetime.



As we begin a new school year, with tremendous enthusiasm and anticipation for a wonderful year, our hope is that each child and his/her family will find the program meaningful and stimulating. By following a few guidelines, everyone will be doing their part to ensure a successful school year.

Please contact Kerry or Jeff with any questions.

ATTENDANCE

Each student should attend Religious School regularly. In case of illness or unexpected circumstances preventing attendance, it would be greatly appreciated if parents could notify the child's teacher. If excessive absence occurs, each case will be addressed individually.

Children must be at least 3 years old and potty-trained in order to attend Religious School.

School on Sunday mornings begins at 9:30 a.m.

Students should arrive 5 minutes early to allow ample time for them to settle into their classrooms. Tardiness is a disruption to both the teacher and the classmates. In order for any student to leave class early, **a parent must contact the child's teacher or a principal before** being picked up from the classroom. Dismissal is at 11:30 a.m.

Please notify the teacher in advance if a visitor will be attending with your child.

While we welcome the active participation and involvement of our parents within the classrooms, we believe it is in the best interest of the classes as a whole to operate under the sole instruction and guidance of our teachers. Therefore, other than occasional visits or scheduled activities, we encourage parents to remain outside of our classrooms. Should you have any specific concerns or needs to be addressed, please contact a principal directly.

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

We depend on a strong partnership between home and school to achieve our goals. We seek to make the parent-teacher partnership a reality through the development of strong channels of communication and by ongoing contact in writing, by phone, or in person.

When concerns or problems arise about an aspect of your child's experience, please discuss with your child's teacher or a principal.

Each student must have current and accurate signed emergency information on file, with alternate contacts who have agreed to take full responsibility for the child's care if the parent cannot be reached.

Your children would benefit from your direct involvement in the school, whether it be teaching or volunteering during school events. ***Please Join Us!***

CURRICULUM

The nondenominational curriculum used is obtained from the ISJL, the Institute of Southern Jewish Life. The following is an explanation from their website:

The ISJL Education Curriculum is a spiraled curriculum, in which students revisit key content areas with increased sophistication as they progress through the curriculum. The ten key content areas are: Community, Culture and Symbols, G-d, Hebrew and Prayer, Israel, Jewish History, Jewish Holidays, Jewish Lifecycle Events, *Mitzvot* and Jewish Values, and *Tanach* (*Torah*, Prophets, and Writings). The curriculum is developmentally appropriate, nurturing students' Jewish identities, equipping students to live rich and meaningful lives. There are a variety of activities in each lesson that implement the idea that students have different learning styles. Visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning activities are used throughout each lesson.

POLICY ON STUDENT CONDUCT

We expect that students will: behave and speak respectfully to each other and to our staff and guests; treat school property and the property of others with respect; follow school rules which are essential to ensuring safety and learning, and demonstrate respect for our Judaic tradition.

We will not be able to sacrifice the learning experience of the entire class because of the disruptive behavior or conduct problems of a single student. It is our position that the meaningful educational activities and events of the class will serve as the most powerful deterrents to problematic behavior. The emphasis will be on positive activities and positive behavior. However, in the event that consistent behavioral difficulties arise, the following Disciplinary Policy will be implemented.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

If the student engages in inappropriate or disruptive classroom behavior, the student will be notified of such and an appropriate redirection will be presented. If the student persists or does not cooperate with the attempts to correct the undesirable behavior, the student will be sent to the office for a conference with a school principal.

If a second episode of this sort occurs, the parents will be called by the principal and instructed to take the student home for the remainder of the class time.

If a third episode occurs, depending upon the degree of severity or danger of a behavior problem, a student may be suspended or expelled.

CLOTHING

Clothing should always be synagogue/temple appropriate. Please keep in mind that students will meet in the sanctuary, so short shorts, bare midriffs, or T-shirts with inappropriate language are not permitted. Shorts/Skirts are not to be higher than 2 inches above the knee.

ELECTRONICS / CELL PHONES

Religious School is a place of learning. Any electronic devices (such as iPods or tablets) that are not related to learning will NOT be used in the school or school facilities during school hours.

Students may not use cell phones during school hours or at other school related programs during school hours. These items may be taken from the student as necessary and returned at the end of the school day.

SAFETY

- ★ Upon arrival for school, students should go directly to the Social Hall, or assigned classroom, as instructed.
- ★ No running at any time in the synagogue/temple.
- ★ Safety practices will be reviewed with the students by the principals and teachers.
- ★ To ensure the safety of your children, please be prompt in picking them up at 11:30 a.m. each Sunday in the classroom.

TZEDAKAH

Children are encouraged to bring Tzedakah (charity) each week. Tzedakah will be sent to agreed upon charities at the end of the year.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation traditionally meets from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. each Sunday morning, concurrently with Religious School. Specific information will be provided by the rabbis.

BRINGING FRIENDS

Friends are always welcome to join us for a Sunday School class. We do ask to be notified beforehand.

If friends attend 2 or more Sundays, we require that they are either Jewish and members of the Temple or Synagogue, or are on the path to becoming Jewish. At that time, tuition will be required (member or non-member fees) and the Registration Form and Student Emergency Contact forms must be completed.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Kol Ami Religious School Contacts

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