



May 2019/Iyar 5779

Dear Parents;

I am so pleased to be sending you information about B'Yachad (together) TBE's 6th and 7th grade learning program. We are working hard to plan an interactive, multidisciplinary, engaging program for all 6th and 7th-grade learners at TBE that includes elements of both formal and informal learning. Following the success of our Explorations program in grades 4 and 5 and the myriad creative opportunities available through our innovative teen program (Havayah), we are really excited to be expanding our B'Yachad curriculum to include more opportunities for creative expression both in the classroom and in the process of becoming a bar/bat mitzvah. An important component of the B'Yachad program is our yearly Shabbaton (retreat) which is an integral part of the curriculum. The informal setting provides opportunities to build community within B'Yachad through experiential learning which strengthens and develops the bonds and comfort between peers and faculty. **Save the date: B'Yachad Shabbaton 5780, Friday to Saturday, October 25-26, 2019** at URJ Camp Eisner in Great Barrington, MA.

This letter contains important information about the program structure, B'nei Mitzvah expectations related to our learning programs, registration, and class placement. Please read this letter carefully **BEFORE** you register your child(ren) for B'Yachad.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND SCHEDULE

Grade 6

Students in **Grade 6** engage in both learning and volunteer work. They meet once a week for 2 hours during which they participate in Group Tutoring in Hebrew language with an emphasis on prayer proficiency and literacy, followed by a highly interactive exploration of ancient and modern Jewish texts with a focus on thoughtful questioning and personal interpretation. Families may choose one of three mid-week sessions: **Tuesday afternoon (3:30-5:30 p.m.) OR Tuesday evening (6:00-8:00 p.m.) OR Wednesday afternoon (4:00-6:00 p.m.)**.

A hallmark of B'Yachad is our Ma'asim Tovim (good works) community service initiative that engages small groups of students in volunteer work within our surrounding communities. Students volunteer for a set number of sessions at their Ma'asim Tovim location as well as engage in service learning in order to develop an understanding of the Jewish imperative to engage in the volunteer work. Detailed information about Ma'asim Tovim will be included in our Welcome program in September.

6th Grade Hebrew and B'nei Mitzvah Tutoring

TBE's 6th-grade Hebrew curriculum is designed to be the first formal step in the B'nei Mitzvah process for your child. **Your student will be assigned to a class for Group Tutoring based on their Hebrew ability.** The ultimate goal is for your child to lead the Jewish community in prayer when he or she becomes Bar or Bat Mitzvah. During these once-a-week sessions, students work with each other and tutors to achieve key milestones in learning prayer book Hebrew and specific blessings.

One-on-one sessions with the tutor are designed to teach your child his/her Torah portion and Haftarah portion for the Shacharit (morning) service or the Ashrei for the Mincha/Ma'ariv (evening) service. **Students are required to master material covered in Group Tutoring before they are permitted to begin one-on-one tutoring.** We regularly administer assessments to gauge each student's mastery of the material and readiness for one-on-one tutoring. Students must practice Hebrew reading and chanting at home in between classes to attain the mastery needed to begin 1:1 tutoring. Homework is given every week and you will receive an email from the teacher with the prayers to practice each week. The materials students are learning can be found on the TBE website. **We cannot stress enough how important it is to find time to practice with your child every week to ensure s/he will be able to move onto one-on-one tutoring in a timely way.**

We will continue to provide adjustments and additional support for students with learning needs. **Please complete the concern form on the registration form so we can be best prepared to meet your child's needs.** We want to assure you that all assessments are conducted privately and confidentially.

The date 1:1 tutoring begins is determined in accordance with your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, readiness and learning style. We intentionally pair each student with a tutor we feel fits the child's learning needs. The tutor will contact you to schedule a regular time* for your child to attend tutoring. Each tutoring session is 30 minutes long.

*Please note: 1:1 tutoring cannot take place during your child's B'Yachad session.

B'nei Mitzvah Family Programs

As part of the B'nei Mitzvah preparation, parents and students must attend family programs led by our clergy. These sessions connect families with our clergy and facilitate the process of becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Details and dates will be included in our summer mailing.

Grade 7

Students in **Grade 7** engage in learning, 1:1 B'nei Mitzvah tutoring and community service volunteer work. They meet once a week for *Keshet* (connection), where students participate in relevant gender-based, peer-to-peer discussions facilitated by our dedicated staff. The second portion of their class time involves reflections on the Holocaust and culminates in creating a memorable, creative project. Families may choose one of three mid-week sessions: **Tuesday afternoon (3:30-5:30 p.m.) Tuesday evening (6:00-8:00 p.m.) or Wednesday afternoon (4:00-6:00 p.m.).** * Students in Grade 7 also continue their Ma'asim Tovim (good works) community service they began last year. More information about Ma'asim Tovim will be available at our Welcome Program in September.

*Please note: Attendance for the full 7th-grade year of B'Yachad is expected regardless of your child's B'nei Mitzvah date.

Students with Siblings in Grades 4-5

Our grades 4 - 5 learning programs also offer Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon options (registration packet mailed separately). Families with children in both grades 4 - 5 and B'Yachad might consider registering both children for Tuesday (3:30-5:30) or Wednesday (4:00-6:00).

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Registration is ONLINE through our **Member Portal**; you will need to log-in to register. You will be able to register all your children in grades K-7 on one form. Please note that your account needs to be up to date to be able to register. If you have questions about your account, please contact Stephen Ashkinos at sashkinos@tbewellesley.org or call Stephen at the temple office ext. 241.

Once you have submitted the registration, you will be redirected to the home page on **TBEYouth.org**, and you will receive a confirmation email. Please save this email for your records. If you do not receive an email confirmation, your submission might not have been complete, please check your spam folder or contact Heather at HPellegrini@TBEWellesley for assistance.

Need help? If you have any difficulties completing registration online, please call Heather in the Learning Program office at ext. 215 and she will be happy to assist you. Please see the enclosed flyer for instructions on how to access the registration forms.

Class Placement and Lottery

We will strive to honor all placement requests, but we cannot guarantee either that we will be able to place your child in the preferred class or session, or that your child will be placed in a class with a specific friend. We consider a range of issues, including, but not limited to, gender balance, learning styles, towns in which students live and class size. Our ultimate goal is to ensure the best possible learning environment for every student. **If requests for a class or session reach maximum capacity, a lottery will be held from all complete registrations received on or before 9:00 am on Tuesday, May 28th. Registrations received after the May 28th deadline will be placed in classes after all on-time registrations have been placed.** Thank you for your timely return of materials.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to the registration process and your timely completion of our materials. Working together, we will be able to finalize class placement, notify families to facilitate making plans for the fall in a timely manner. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

L'Shalom,



Jessica Bram
Director of K-7 Learning Programs