

TEMPLE BETH EMET OF BURBANK

MORRIS GOLD RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2024-2024



"The Temple with a Heart"

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About Morris Gold

Morris Gold was one of the founding members of Temple Beth Emet, one of its Presidents, and a strong supporter of its Religious School.

Morris Gold was an intelligent, hardworking, generous man who never let life's trials, tribulations, and tragedies slow him down or get him down. He was the kind of man who was committed to his family, to his synagogue, and to his country. He had many passions including reading, writing (especially Temple press releases) and loving life. But the greatest of Morrie's passions was learning new things and always sharing his learning with others. As we are commanded to do, "learn so you may teach," Morrie did. He was a man who had strong convictions but could change if he found his ideas were not all in the best interest of the Temple. He was a man who loved quiet and solitude, yet he could be quite loud when the Temple needed defending. Most of all, Morrie was the person new people always met when they came to services because he would go out and greet them.

That is why the Religious School is named for Morrie. He is what education should be – quiet sometimes and loud other times. Teaching you to have strong opinions but allowing you to change them when presented with new information. Most of all, education, like Morrie, should go out and greet you and make you feel welcome. This is what we aim for our school. This is who Morris Gold was and that is why our school bears his name. May his life be an inspiration to us all and may all our students learn from his example.



WELCOME LETTER FROM OUR TEMPLE PRESIDENT



Dear Religious School Parents,

Welcome to the start of another exciting year at the Morris Gold Religious School! The education of our children is a primary obligation of the Jewish community. Torah commands us, “(a)nd these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children” (Deuteronomy 6:6). Our Temple Beth Emet family takes this obligation seriously, yet joyously, and we are

honored to partner with you in instilling in the next generation the knowledge and experiences that will form their Jewish identities for the rest of their lives.

You are a valuable member of our Temple family. As parents, your role in your children’s Jewish education is even more important than ours. If we want Judaism to be important to our children, we must show them that Judaism is important to us. I urge you to become involved, not only in our Religious School, but in our Temple community as well. There are opportunities through our Religious School Parents Association, Shabbat and holiday observances, adult education, Sisterhood, and numerous other Temple activities and volunteer opportunities. If you have an interest in something we are not already addressing, please let us know -- our next best idea may be yours!

We know that there are many demands on your personal and family time, but I assure you that if you make the investment of your energies in our Temple Beth Emet community, the return will be surprisingly rewarding. Our Temple belongs to you as well as you belonging to it.

Thank you again for allowing us to be part of your children’s Jewish education. Please feel free to express your ideas or concerns to me, the school administration, or any member of the Board of Directors.

We are going to have a wonderful year!

Cordially,

IRA L. GOLDSTEIN, President



Curriculum

Grade	Social Studies	Hebrew
Kindergarten & 1st Grade	Introduction to Shabbat, Holidays and Torah/Bible Stories	Aleph Bet, simple Temple vocabulary
2nd & 3rd Grade	Life Cycle Events, Holidays and Torah/Bible Stories	Alef Bet, simple prayer vocabulary
4th & 5th Grade	Life Cycle Events, Holidays, Prophets, Jewish History and Torah study (weekly portion)	Simple prayers (e.g., candles, wine, bread, Chanukah), Shema, Torah prayers, long kiddush, weekly portion
6th & 7th Grade	Timeline of Jewish History and Holidays, Ethics	Review all prayers (packet), Torah & Haftora
Bar/Bat Mitzvah		Specialized training and preparation for Bar/Bat Mitzvah
8th, 9th, 10th Grade	Modern Jewish History, Jewish Ethics and Comparative Religion cumulating in Confirmation	



Hebrew Names

We encourage our teachers to use Hebrew names in class whenever possible, especially in the upper grades. If your child does not have a Hebrew name, the school administration will be happy to assist you in the selection of one.

Music

Music is a regular part of Religious School. Songs, both Hebrew and English, relate to holidays and the lessons being taught to students.

Individual Class Service & Oneg

During the year, each class has the honor of participating in Shabbat Services on Friday night. The dates when your child's class will be honored will be announced by the teacher several weeks ahead of time. Parents of the class generally sponsor the Oneg when their class participates under the direction of the class Room Parent.

Tzedakkah

One of the common threads that binds together all we believe and all we teach at Temple Beth Emet, is the idea of Tzedakkah – righteous behavior. One way that we participate in this process is by collecting money for causes deemed worthy by our students. The Jewish National Fund, Lifeline for the Old, Jewish World Watch, North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry, and Magen David Adom have been among the recipients of all the moneys raised by our students.

By actively participating in giving Tzedakkah, our students learn that we are part of a community and that our community reaches beyond our local boundaries to include Israel and world Jewry.

Tikkun Olam (Repair the World)

One of the goals of our Religious School is to do more Mitzvot in our daily lives. During the year, we will hold various social action programs where each class will have an opportunity to learn and participate in Tikkun Olam.



Junior Choir

The Junior Choir consists of a group of students from K to 7th Grade who love to sing. Songs range from traditional Hebrew songs to modern English songs. Practices are held after Religious School from Noon – 12:45 PM. The Junior Choir performs at Family Shabbat Services, the first Friday of the month.

Library

Books are available for both recreational reading and for research projects in the Temple library. Library books can be checked out from the Temple office.

Homework

Homework is part of the learning process. Since the real key to learning Hebrew is practice and repetition, we highly recommend that each student try to practice reading aloud for 15 minutes every day.



Guidelines for Parents

Your child's religious instruction is a partnership between the Temple and you! We promise to provide the best instruction and atmosphere we can. By enrolling your child in Religious School, we know that you have made a commitment to your child's religious education as well. With that in mind—

1. Attendance is important! While we will work with you to accommodate sports programs, scouting and other obligations, your child cannot be expected to succeed with religious instruction if he or she is not in the class. Please encourage regular attendance. If you demonstrate that Religious School instruction is important, your child will pick up on that and the Religious School will be important to your child.
2. Since school is in session only one morning a week, and for only three hours, every minute counts. Therefore, please have your child at school on time. Your child must be in the sanctuary by **9:00 AM**.
3. Your child will have the full benefit of instructional time, if you avoid picking up your child up early. For the safety of our children, children must be picked up in the sanctuary at **12:00 Noon**. Students will not be dismissed to the parking lot. Children cannot leave the Temple, without their parents or the person listed as the emergency contact on the student information card.
4. Please review with your child what he or she is learning at Religious School. Ask about what is being covered in class. Review the lessons with your child either at home, or even informally in the car. As your child begins to learn to read Hebrew, have your child read to you.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Many of you may not feel comfortable reading Hebrew yourselves. You should be honest with your child about your abilities, but please do not let that deter you from having your child read to you. You may not be able to tell if your child is reading everything correctly, but by listening, you will be able to see if your child is reading comfortably. By



encouraging your child to read to you, you can reinforce the importance you place on their religious instruction, and reading is easier with practice.

5. G-D is a verb! Judaism calls upon each of us to be part of the Jewish community, and Temple Beth Emet is your Jewish community. We therefore, recommend that you and your child attend Shabbat Services Friday evening during the year. The first Friday of each month is a Family Shabbat Service, which starts earlier and is somewhat shorter. It is recommended that each child in the school attends Friday night Services at least twice a month.

It is particularly important for Bar/Bat Mitzvah students to attend services regularly with their parent(s)! We have found that many parents have become unfamiliar with the service in general, and with the Temple Beth Emet service in particular. This has led to instances where parents themselves were not fully prepared for participation in their child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah services. Regular attendance prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah also gives the child a better feel for the pace and feel of the service. This will help them feel more at ease on their big day!

6. Our parking lot is small. Please follow the direction of the parking lot attendant on duty and be courteous and careful in the parking lot. Remember, our parking lot attendants are often parent volunteers.
7. Become involved! There is no better way to show your child the value you place on Judaism than to become involved. We have numerous ways for you to serve our Temple on Sunday mornings during school or at other events. You can volunteer to be a Room Parent, attend meetings of the Parents Association, assist at the Sukkot breakfast, Chanukah Celebration, Purim Carnival, or Passover Seder. Temple Beth Emet was built on the vision and talents of parents like you. Please help us assure the continued success of the Temple and of your child. We promise that you will find great satisfaction and spiritual fulfillment in your efforts. PLEASE, let the school administration, your child's teacher, the Temple Office Staff or the Parents Association officers know of your ability to assist and of any special talents



you have.

8. Feel free to contact us if you are having challenges with your child's public school (e.g., religious holiday activities in classrooms, prayer at school functions, absences during religious holidays). You may also want to obtain *Religious Issues in Your Child's Public School: A Guide for Jewish Parents*, a publication of the Anti-Defamation League.

Surrounding your child with friends in Religious School makes their experience that much more enjoyable. Please recommend our school to people seeking a quality Jewish education.

Healthy School Plan

To ensure that our school campus and our classrooms are safe, friendly, and productive places for our students, we that in the Temple and in the classroom, everyone (students, parents, teachers, guests) should behave in a respectful manner at all times.

There is a zero tolerance policy for profanity, harassment, verbal disrespect, name calling, weapons and violence of any sort. Moreover, rough-housing of any kind is strictly prohibited. These may be grounds for immediate dismissal

As in every educational setting, parents, teachers, and others may raise issues about various aspects of the Religious School from time to time. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and the school administration whenever they have concerns of any type. The school takes all of your concerns seriously, and a procedure is in place to investigate all concerns brought to its attention. Person(s) expressing the concern will be contacted as to its resolution. Privacy and confidentiality will always be maintained.

We welcome your ideas, your observations, and your constructive criticism. Temple Beth Emet belongs to you and your children. We invite you to take the opportunity afforded by your child's attendance in our school to become more involved with the Temple.



Student Discipline Policy

We are confident that all of our children will behave in a manner which will not entail the enforcement of this Discipline Policy. If the need arises, however, know that we do intend to implement this Discipline Policy to its fullest. Please read the Discipline Policy with your child(ren).

1. Students should behave in the classroom and in the synagogue in a respectful and responsible manner.
2. Students who disrupt or disturb other students will be disciplined by the teacher. Each teacher is encouraged to employ whichever strategy he/she finds most effective to achieve optimum classroom decorum.
3. If a student continues to be disruptive, he/she will be sent to meet with the school administrator. If the behavior does not improve, a conference with parents may be required.
4. If inappropriate behavior continues after the conference, the school administrator together with the parents will make arrangements for the student to continue his/her studies outside of regular classes.
5. In the event that a student is expelled from the Religious School the student forfeits the privilege to participate in any Temple related activities or events. This includes the expectation of an invitation to former classmates' B'nai Mitzvah.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes regularly throughout the year. We request that parents call or e-mail the office whenever a child is absent. Parents will be notified if absences are a problem.



Tardiness

With instructional time so limited and with so much to accomplish, every minute counts. Please make every effort to get your child in the sanctuary by 9:00 AM. When a child enters the assembly or the classroom late, the learning process is disrupted for all students.

Illness

Please do not send your child to school with a fever or contagious condition. We will notify you (using your emergency number) if your child becomes ill. Sick children can be picked up in the Temple office.

Appropriate Dress

Students should wear comfortable, appropriate clothing, respectful to the sanctity of our Temple facility. Shoes must have a back strap. Sandals and flip-flops are not allowed. Baseball caps may not be worn in the place of kippot in the Temple.

In the Parking Lot

In order to help ensure everyone's safety, we are requesting that you help exercise caution in our parking lot. If you park in the lot for drop off in the morning, please accompany your child(ren) to the entrance of the school. For pick-up, please park your car, come inside to meet your child(ren), and walk back together to your car. Children darting in-between cars that slow down for pick-up is a potentially dangerous situation. Help keep all of our students safe!

Electronics, Toys, Bikes, etc.

Music players, electronic games, and all toys (unless requested by a teacher as part of the classroom activities) should be left at home. Cell Phones are to be turned off at all times during instructional hours. Any item that is designed to cause injury to another is not allowed and the possession of such an item may be grounds for immediate dismissal. Skateboards, rollerblades, wheelie shoes, and bicycles are not allowed in the building without clearance from the Temple Office. These items will be appropriately stored for the student as needed.



Classroom Visits

Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. To schedule a visit, please call the Temple Office at least one day in advance. For the safety and security of our students, no one is allowed to enter a classroom without first checking-in with the Temple Office. If your child would like to bring a guest to class, please notify or call the Office in advance.

Registration

Our Religious School is in session from September through May; however, a child may be enrolled in Religious School at any time. Students cannot start Religious School without completing the following registration forms for the current year:

- Student Information Card
- Disaster Preparedness Release Form
 - Treatment of Minor and Disclaimer Form
 - Discipline Policy Agreement
- Photo/Video Release Form
- Temple Organization Information Request Form

Financial Assistance

We do not want any child left out! Religious School tuition can be paid in full or in installments. Financial assistance is available each year on the basis of demonstrated financial need. Families are encouraged to make us aware of any changes in their financial status. All information is kept in the strictest confidence.

Religious School Parents Association

Our Parents Association works with the school administration and teachers in planning and hosting all the holiday celebrations for the Religious School. We depend upon our parents and our Temple members to help enrich the Religious School experience. "Your actions equal a thousand words."

Please volunteer some time during the school year and attend our brief monthly meetings; show your child life-long Jewish living.