



2026-2027

Handbook

The 2026-2027 school year promises to be meaningful and exciting, with many outstanding programs planned. Meitin Alliance for Growth and Learning (MAGAL) is committed to your children's Jewish educational needs. A collaboration between Temple Shir Shalom and Temple Israel, MAGAL offers families a unique experience. MAGAL, which means *circle*, is an opportunity for us to share our differences and similarities as part of the greater circle of our people.

MAGAL follows a robust curriculum developed to help our students not just master the material, but to feel part of the grand story of Judaism – past, present, and future. We strive to enhance and expand our teaching materials and methods each year while meeting our curriculum's learning goals and providing our students with an environment to build Jewish connections and a sense of community.

This handbook is a guide to help us all work together to ensure the best experience for our children and our families. We hope it will answer the simple questions and let us get to the inspiring parts of our faith and tradition.

Our Mission

We provide an innovative and effective formal Jewish educational experience for all children that will equip them with the tools for continuous Jewish growth and involvement in their adult years.

It is our goal to strengthen Jewish families and enrich the educational experience of MAGAL's students. We do this by encouraging parents to become involved as partners and co-educators in their children's religious school experience. Throughout the year, there will be programs for parents to join in for family learning. Additionally, the weekly Kehilah program, homework review, and family discussions about what was covered are equally important.

MAGAL is a facilitator helping to create positive Jewish experiences in a Jewish environment. Our program is designed to enhance the Jewish family unit and develop and sustain Jewish values and commitments within the family.

Our teachers are not only great educators, but they have a deep love for Judaism and our students. As a result, our children develop strong bonds with their teachers and enjoy attending our school.

MAGAL is a cooperative school drawing students from multiple synagogues and Jewish movements. We welcome all families and children and believe in equity and belonging across race, gender, nation of origin, and identity. Our community is enriched because of our differences.

Class Attendance

Regularly attending MAGAL is the first step in gaining a solid understanding of Judaism and a sense of belonging. The time your children spend at our school will not only prepare them for a lifetime of being Jewish, but will also benefit their secular studies and social maturity. Please help us set an expectation of engaged learning by discussing with your child the importance of active and respectful participation. Their presence is the start of their learning, but we expect them to be lively learners as well.

We understand our students likely participate in many activities outside of MAGAL and that there will be times when these activities conflict with religious school and services. If you know of unavoidable absences, please talk with us to arrange for alternative activities and studies to help keep your child's religious education in line with his/her peers. We expect students to attend at least 75% of their classes. If your child misses too many sessions, it may be necessary to receive private tutoring to achieve the same level of preparedness as their peers, to postpone his/her graduation, or to delay his/her B'nai Mitzvah.

Service Attendance

Attending services regularly is an extension of your children's education and greatly increases their feelings of being part of your congregational family. The services also provide many opportunities for our students to put their Judaic skills into practice, which makes their learning much more meaningful. Parents are encouraged to check with their home synagogue for their schedule and unique opportunities to participate in services and holiday observances.

Dress Code

All students should dress in clothing appropriate for a synagogue school setting. As a sign of respect, students are required to wear a kippah. The school supplies kippot, but we encourage our students to get one that is uniquely their own. The Temple Israel gift shop has many to choose from and can be conveniently found on site.

Weather permitting, the children are able to enjoy our playground during recess. In order for the children to have a fun and safe time on the playground, we ask that they wear appropriate shoes. Sandals and open shoes often invite some of God's smallest and most bothersome creatures to hitch a ride.

Tzniut (modesty) is a long-standing Jewish value. As people who see ourselves as reflecting the image of God, our community believes that we should act accordingly. How we dress is a basic example of these values. With your cooperation, there should be no need for students to be spoken to about their attire.

Cell Phones and Other Electronics

We ask that students not bring electronic game devices to school. Phones may be brought but should remain in bags or pockets for the duration of school. We want to encourage our students to learn and engage with each other while at MAGAL. If there are problems with devices, they will be confiscated for the remainder of the day and returned to their parents.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

All classes and activities will start promptly at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays. This allows us to make the most of our day. On Sundays, please walk your child to his or her classroom by 9:00 a.m., and say hi to the teacher to ensure everyone gets where they need to be.

Parents are asked to pick their children up on time at the end of religious school. Please arrive at the campus for pick up by 12:30 p.m. on Sundays. On Sundays, the children will be dismissed from their classrooms. We encourage parents to join us for our Kehilla, community time, which begins at noon in the chapel. The teaching staff cannot leave the premises until all children are picked up so please be prompt.

If you need to pick your child up early, please let us know in advance and tell their teacher and Cantor Kim or Rabbi Neely. These policies are designed to keep all our students safe and secure. If someone other than those who you have designated on your registration form will pick up your child, you must tell the teacher face to face and provide a written note. No child will be allowed to leave the building at the end of the school day without a designated adult.

Communication

We send out a weekly email with class summaries, special event information and calendar reminders. If you would like to discuss something with your student's teacher, please wait until all the other students have been dismissed which will allow for their undivided attention. If you would like to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, Rabbi Neely and /or Cantor Kim, please reach out to them directly to set up a time to meet.

Behavior

What is hateful to you, don't do to others.

Hillel

School should be a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for our children to explore and develop their spirituality, culture, history, and personal identity. To help ensure this, please encourage your child to follow these simple rules:

- Speak respectfully to each other and your teachers
- No bullying or teasing
- Do not damage school property or the property of others
- No profanity
- Respect our community's policies regarding keeping kosher. All outside food must have a kosher symbol
- Stay with your teacher at all times
- No roughhousing

Discipline Policy and Procedure

Even with the best of intentions, problems can still arise. Our discipline policy helps teachers to deal with a situation, and parents to know what you can expect from us. This system recognizes that children need to fail (occasionally), experience the consequence of that failure, and have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and change their behavior. If there are minor problems, we will try to handle them without involving the parents. If these problems persist, the student will be sent to the Rabbi/Cantor to discuss the situation. Parents will be notified of such events. Should there be recurring incidents, parents will be called in to discuss ways to correct the behavior.

Violence of any kind will not be tolerated. Should a situation involving violence arise, the student will not be allowed back to class until the situation has been discussed with all concerned parties including parents.

Books, Supplies, and Homework

Students are expected to attend class with all the books and materials they need to participate in class. Texts, workbooks, and other learning materials will be provided by the school. Not all books are permitted to be taken home. When a book is taken home, it is expected that the student will bring it back for the next session. Some books will be sent home, and it is expected that the students will continue their studies with them. At the end of the school year, students will be allowed to keep their workbooks.

Throughout the year, our students will be encouraged to make use of our Children's Library. Students and families are welcome to check out books with one of our staff. Please ensure the books are well looked after and returned on time.

Additional supplies may be required by individual teachers. Please check your child's notebooks for notes and flyers from the teacher and from the school.

Students will be asked to complete homework assignments on occasion. Our teachers are well aware of secular school obligations and will not give lengthy homework assignments regularly. If your child is new to Hebrew, please encourage him or her to review the Hebrew letters and vowels at home and make progress during the week.

Tzedakah

A fundamental concept of Judaism is the responsibility of each person to his or her fellow human beings. Performing acts of tzedakah are important for our students to fulfill this obligation. We'd like every family to encourage and support this mitzvah by providing each student with a tzedakah box at home to save for donations to be made on Sundays. Classes will decide how best to use these funds to help others in need. MAGAL often participates in holiday and end-of-year mitzvah projects.

We encourage families to donate non-perishable food to the Little Free Pantry and books to the Little Free Library, both located by the second parking lot entrance on Moss Road. These are used often by the community, so students can see firsthand how their donations make a difference.

Our congregations are also involved with local secular and religious organizations that help others. We sincerely hope that you will encourage your children to participate in these worthwhile projects. We encourage you to participate with us in the school as well as help your child to participate in acts of tzedakah outside of school.

Graduation

Graduation from MAGAL is a major accomplishment. It represents the completion of the first stage of Jewish education, which involves the study of many areas of Jewish life including holidays, Hebrew, prayers, history, customs and ceremonies, life cycle events, ethics, and moral values. Students who have completed the 7th grade will be honored at the end of the year.

MAGAL graduates are encouraged to volunteer as madrichim (classroom helpers). Not only is the presence of madrichim a great benefit to classroom teachers, it allows older students to serve as role models for our younger learners. If you have a child grade 8 or higher who would be interested, please contact Rabbi Neely or Cantor Kim. Madrichim may be able to earn community service hours but should check with their school advisors about the requirements.

Parent Involvement

Our religious school is strengthened through our community of students, teachers, and parents. To provide our students with the most valuable and enriching experience possible, we need your help. Throughout the year there will be many opportunities for you to support our school. In particular, we will ask for parent volunteers, special supplies, time and resources to plan large events, for smaller holiday celebrations, etc. These dates are noted on our school calendar. Even if you can't volunteer, you are welcome to attend. We encourage you to show up for our students - to be an example for your children of what it means to be a Jewish member of our community, through engagement and enablement of our school program. Thank you in advance for your support.

On behalf of Temple Israel and Temple Shir Shalom, thank you for being a part of our expanding circle of learning and community – MAGAL!