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## **1. WELCOME TO DESERT TORAH ACADEMY**

This booklet is designed to help you understand the rules and regulations necessary to make our school a productive, safe and healthy learning environment.

Our educational philosophy encourages students to become independent, responsible, resourceful and creative learners. The role and function of the staff is to maximize the possibilities for successful learning by providing a responsive environment, with personal guidance and support. Our school environment encourages the development of a love of learning, self-respect and positive self-esteem.

We recognize that our actions serve as a powerful model for our children. Therefore, our staff provides the necessary support and positive attitudes that create a warm and nurturing environment to maximize the potential of our children. We appreciate your support and concern as we establish a successful school experience for the students of DTA.

## **2. PHILOSOPHY**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Desert Torah Academy is to provide the Jewish children of Southern Nevada with an outstanding Judaic, Hebrew and Secular education. DTA staff will help promote students' growth as active learners, respectable, responsible citizens and independent thinkers. In our stimulating and safe learning environment, our students will grow in appreciation of Jewish tradition and culture while being prepared for success in high school and life in the world community.

### **Vision Statement**

Desert Torah Academy was founded on the principles of Chabad philosophy, which is a way of life that integrates the love of G-d, intellectual knowledge and understanding of the Torah, and the appreciation of the uniqueness of every individual of the community. Our administration and staff implement this philosophy in all areas of Judaic and general studies while fostering a supportive environment for all our students. By empowering the head, heart and soul, a Desert Torah Academy education provides our students with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be successful and to become members of contemporary society.

It is our hope to inspire our students to become active members of the Jewish community. Furthermore, in keeping with the teachings of Tanach, we hope that they will inspire their parents and community to join them on the path of Judaism.

## **Educational Goals and Beliefs**

We believe...

- in fostering a positive Jewish identity and love of Torah in our students
- that the teachings of Chabad philosophy are an important component in fostering this love of Torah
- that it is our duty to be respectful of the diversity of backgrounds of our students in religious observance and practice
- that family and school must work as a team in order to provide the best education for a child
- that it is our duty to provide financial aide in the form of scholarships to those families who truly need it
- that our curriculum and teaching methodology, both secular and Judaic, be shaped for optimum responsiveness to the unique strengths and learning styles of each student
- that we must expose our children to moral and ethical beliefs and teachings so that they grow to be upright and productive American citizens
- that it is our duty to teach our children to love the land of Israel and the Hebrew language spoken there
- that we must instill our students with a love of learning so they will become lifelong learners
- that our school can serve as a valuable resource to the overall Jewish community

### **3. ADMISSION**

Before a student is admitted to Desert Torah Academy the following items need to be on file in the school office:

- \*Complete Registration Form
- \*Completed Enrollment Contract
- \*Birth Certificate
- \*Immunization Record

A birth certificate must be provided as proof of age for each child enrolling for the first time in Desert Torah Academy. Nevada law dictates that the dirthday deadline for grade entry is September 30. For example, a child entering kindergarten must turn five by September 30. Students are required to have satisfied the immunization requirements as stated on the Nevada Immunization Record. If parents choose not to have their child immunized, they must complete the exemption form that is available in the school office. If a child cannot have certain immunizations for **medical** reasons, a written medical exemption is required.

It is most important that each parent supply the school with the telephone number where he/she can be reached during the day. It is also required that you provide us with the addresses and phone numbers of two friends or relatives authorized to act for the parent when the parent cannot be reached in the event of an emergency. If emergency numbers change during the year, it is important that the office be notified so that our records can be updated.

Children are admitted to Desert Torah Academy regardless of race, gender, nationality and disability.

#### 4. SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

The school office phone number is 702-259-1000. If voice mail picks up, please leave a message. We will return your call as soon as possible. The school fax number is 702-776-7599. The address is 1312 Vista Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89102. The school email address is [info@dtalv.com](mailto:info@dtalv.com).

School telephone lines are reserved for official business. Children are not permitted to use them except in emergencies. Telephone messages will be accepted in case of emergency only. Please bear in mind the difficulty of delivering messages to individual students, especially at the end of the school day. Parents should make all necessary arrangements before children leave for school so that interruption of class can be avoided.

Teachers can be contacted by email via the Sycamore Education website, [www.sycamoreeducation.com](http://www.sycamoreeducation.com). Please refer to #16 on page 10 for more details about the Sycamore Education website.

#### 5. SCHOOL HOURS /ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The Desert Torah Academy (K-8th) school day is from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm. Please ensure that your child is dropped off between 8:15 am and 8:25 am daily so classes can start on time.

On Fridays, during the months of daylight savings time, dismissal is at 3:00 pm in honor of Shabbos. On Fridays, during the winter, dismissal is at 2:00 pm.

For dismissal, children line up by class and are called to their car as it approaches the front of the carpool line. If parents so desire, they may park their car in a designated parking spot and accompany their children to a parked car. Students must be picked up from the front of school on Vista Drive.

Desert Torah Academy is pleased to offer an extended care program. Morning Extended Care begins at 8:00 am Monday – Friday. Afternoon extended care hours are from 4:00 – 5:00 pm. **There is no aftercare on Fridays.** The cost is \$3.00 per hour with a minimum of 1/2 hour daily. These fees must be paid in advance together with the tuition fees. If you are unsure as to how many days you will be using extended care, or if you do not need extended care on a regular basis, the charge for occasional use is \$4.00 per hour and you will be billed every second month.

**Students who arrive more than 15 minutes before class begins or are picked up more than 15 minutes after school ends will be automatically enrolled in our extended care program and parents will be billed at the rate of \$4.00 per hour. There will be a minimum charge of \$2.00 per child even if you are only five minutes late.**

## 6. EARLY PICKUP

Parents may pick up a student during school hours by coming to the school office and requesting that their child be called out of class. The school receptionist will notify the teacher that a student should be sent to the office for early dismissal. **Parents should not go directly to their child's classroom.** Students must be signed out before leaving. Only upon written parental authorization will the school release a student to any adult other than the parents. Parents wishing to pick up their children early must do so prior to 3:45 pm. No students will be released from class between 3:45 and 4:00.

## 7. MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Please avoid scheduling medical appointments during school time. If a parent has no choice and has to take his/her child for an appointment during school hours, then all policies regarding early pickup apply to early dismissal for medical appointments.

## 8. CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Respect for the school and school property is part of our educational program. We enlist the aid of parents in emphasizing these values to their children. When school property is damaged, parents will be responsible for the repair costs.

Students will also be issued textbooks and workbooks for both Judaic and General studies. All books are the property of Desert Torah Academy and are "loaned" to students to be used during the school year. If the book is lost, the school will issue another book at the expense of the parents.

## 9. SUPPLIES

Teachers will provide lists of specific supplies needed. Lists will be included in a packet received before school. They will also be posted on the Desert Torah Academy website. Please help your child obtain the proper supplies and equipment.

## 10. DRESS STANDARDS

Appropriate dress is a direct reflection on a child's home and school. **ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A SCHOOL UNIFORM. This includes any sweaters or sweatshirts that will be worn in class. No other shirt or shirt sleeves may be visible under the uniform shirt. Scarves and leggings are also not allowed.**

Children should come to school clean and neatly dressed. All uniform clothing, including boy's pants must be purchased from Campus Club. Torn clothing is not allowed. The uniforms for

Desert Torah Academy can be purchased from Campus Club, which is located at 2411 Tech Center Court, Suite #107 (off Smoke Ranch, between Tenaya and Buffalo). Their phone number is 360-0555, fax 242-2595. Price lists are available in the school office.

All boys are required to wear a kippah and tzitzit daily. Boys who come to school without a kippah will be supplied with one at a charge of 25 cents, and parents will be billed. Tzitzis may be purchased in the school office for \$7. Dress or grooming that draw undue attention detract from a learning environment and are therefore unacceptable.

Makeup may not be worn to school. Girls may wear clear nail polish only. They may also wear modest, tasteful jewelry, such as stud earrings or small hoops, and single, lightweight chain necklaces and bracelets only. Excessive amounts of jewelry will not be accepted. Scarves are considered outerwear and may not be worn in class. All students are required to wear socks and shoes that have backs. No slippers or clogs are allowed in school. Girls with hair that is shoulder length or longer need to have it put up in a hair tie.

All students must be dressed appropriately in uniform. The school administration will conduct periodic uniform checks. Parents will be notified if their child is not in proper uniform. Several infractions may result in the child being removed from class until the problem is taken care of. All articles of clothing should be labeled for easy identification in case of loss. All items that carry no name labels will be placed in the Lost and Found.

## 11. LUNCH

Your child will need to bring a dairy or pareve lunch to school including a drink and an ice pack if needed (unless you are participating in the hot lunch program). We ask that parents provide the children with lunches and snacks that conform to the laws of kashrus. All items sent to school should have an acceptable kosher symbol like an OU or OK. If you not certain about the kashrus of any item, please ask in the school office. Also, please do not send food that was purchased at non kosher restaurants even if it is not meat. You must provide any utensils, napkins, etc. needed for your child's lunch. Lunch and snack foods should also be low in sugar and high in nutrition.

In order to provide an atmosphere that does not differentiate between families that have accessibility to kosher meat with those that may not, we require that no meat, meat products or poultry be brought into school regardless of their kashrus. Instant soups may be sent for lunch provided that they are **kosher and pareve only**. **Soups may not contain any meat, poultry or dairy products regardless of their kashrus.** Hot water is provided for instant soups.

Every child must have a lunch box or bag with his/her name clearly printed on the outside.

## 12. HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Our school provides a hot lunch program, at an additional cost. Hot lunch menus cover a four week time period. Menus, with prices, are given out and posted on the Desert Torah Academy website at the beginning of each month. Hot lunches must be ordered and paid for ahead of time by filling out and returning the menu to the office. **Hot lunches may be purchased on the same day for \$5.00.**

Please note these important procedures concerning the hot lunch program:

1. If you know that you will be purchasing several days of hot lunch in a month (even if it is not the entire month), complete the monthly menu form. you want.
2. If you do purchase a lunch on the same day you MUST:
  - a. Place your order in the front office before 10:00 am in the morning
  - b. Pay for the lunch when it is ordered
3. In the event that your child is not in school on a day when lunch was already ordered, please call the front office **before 10:00 am** to request a credit. Credits cannot be issued for requests for that are made after the food has already been prepared.

This program is a service provided for the benefit of the students and is optional.

## 13. ILLNESS AND ABSENCE

Do not send your child to school if he/she shows any sign of illness. Any contagious or communicable illness should be reported to the school secretary. If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be notified in order to make proper arrangements for him/her to be picked up.

**In order to comply with Clark County Health Department regulations, the following policies are in effect:**

### **Guidelines for excluding from program**

The following symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have these symptoms will be excluded from the school setting until a physician has certified in writing that the symptoms are not associated with an infection agent or they are no longer a threat to the health of other children or until the symptoms have subsided for 24 hours.

**Fever** – 100 degrees or higher, especially if accompanied by other symptoms, such as vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, headache, and stiff neck or undiagnosed rash.

**Respiratory Symptoms** – Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing; child makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after he/she coughs and child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous rash.

**Diarrhea** – An increased number of abnormally loose stools in the previous 12 hours or 2 episodes at the school.

**Vomiting** – Two or more episodes of vomiting within the previous 12 hours or one episode at

the school.

**Eye/Nose Drainage** – Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose.

**Sore Throat** – Sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in neck are present.

**Skin Problems** – Skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious. Infected sores with crusty, yellow or green drainage, which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages.

**Itching** – Persistent itching (or scratching) of body or scalp.

**Appearance/Behavior**- Child looks or acts differently, unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, difficult to awaken.

**Unusual Color**- Eyes or skin yellow (jaundice): stool gray or white, urine dark or tea colored. These symptoms can be found in hepatitis and should be evaluated by a physician.

**Guidelines For Re-Admitting**-If the Director’s assessment of the illness indicates need for further evaluation, the parent must bring a “return to school” statement back to the school on the child’s next attendance day. A child taking antibiotics must be excluded for 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotic, whether the illness is contagious or not.

**Communicable Disease Policy**- Parents are asked to notify the school as soon as possible in the event of illness or if their child has been exposed to any communicable disease.

Desert Torah Academy will notify parents in writing when the children have been exposed to a communicable disease. Further, the school will notify the Southern Nevada Health District when any illness or condition specified by law or regulation is present in the program within 24 hours of the school’s awareness of the situation.

Immunizations need to be current for children enrolled in the school. If immunizations are delayed for medical reason, a physician’s statement must be provided explaining the reasons for the delay and when the immunizations are expected to be given.

### **Medications Administered**

The only medication administered by school staff shall be:

1. Medicine prescribed by a doctor. The prescribed medications must be in the original pharmacist’s bottle, with a current pharmacist’s label.
2. Over the counter medications, with written or verbal permission from a parent.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCE/UNEXCUSED ABSENCE**

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a critical factor in the learning process. It is also the school’s legal responsibility to make sure that children attend school regularly. Desert Torah Academy has therefore instituted the following attendance policy:

If a child is absent due to illness, parents must send a note to school to be handed in to the homeroom teacher (first class after davening) within three days of the student’s return to school. If a note is not received within three days of a child’s return to school, then the absence will be considered unexcused.

## **Trips or Personal Days**

Trips or personal days will only be considered excused

- a. if they are arranged with the school principal in advance
- b. for a maximum of ten days per school year
- c. if work assigned by the teacher is completed and brought to school

The absence will be considered unexcused if the above three conditions are not met.

If your child is absent from school for more than one day, and you would like homework sent home, please call the office in the morning (or earlier if possible) so that there is sufficient time to collect work from the teachers. Homework assignments may also be viewed on the Sycamore Education website (Please refer to #16 on page 10 for detailed information about the Sycamore Education website).

## **TARDY STUDENTS**

Three tardies (after 8:35 am) will be considered one unexcused absence. Please be aware that school starts at 8:30 am and it is extremely important that students be on time. We are allowing a five minute grace period because of the crowded traffic conditions that exist when students are being dropped off at school.

Students in third grade or higher who are tardy three times or less per trimester will be given the Punctuality Award at the end of each trimester.

Our school day starts with davening. Please be aware that frequent tardies will result in an incomplete davening grade.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES AND TARDIES**

1. The parents of students who have five unexcused absences will be contacted by the school principal in order to try to resolve this issue.
2. Parents of students who have ten unexcused absences will be contacted by the principal again in order to try to resolve this issue.
3. Parents of students who have fifteen unexcused absences will be required to come in to school for a conference with the principal.
4. Students who have twenty unexcused absences will be required to repeat the school year.

**Please do not forget that every three tardies counts for one unexcused absence.**

5. A student who has twenty or more excused absences, or a combination of twenty or more excused and unexcused absences, may be retained in his/her grade. The student's academic progress will be reviewed by the school administration to make a final decision on the student's status.

## **14. IN AN EMERGENCY**

In an emergency, an attempt will be made to notify the parent and/or emergency contact. If necessary, the child will be taken to the closest emergency room for treatment.

\*\*Please note: The school will be unable to seek emergency medical aid for your child without your signature on the Medical Information form that is included in the registration packet. Please be sure that you have signed the form upon registering your child.

## **15. HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS**

- Set a reasonable and consistent bedtime for your child
- Allow sufficient time for breakfast and morning routines so your child arrives at school feeling relaxed and secure
- Ensure that your child arrives at school on time
- Inform the teacher if something is going on at home (illness of a family member, extended absence of a parent, etc.) that might affect your child
- Inform the school when you will be away from home and your child will be in the care of another adult. This is important in the event of transportation problems or emergencies
- Regular attendance is essential. Help your child learn that school is important. A child who attends regularly does not miss parts of long-term projects or units and finds it easier to establish himself/herself as part of the group

## **16. SYCAMORE EDUCATION ONLINE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Effective communication is essential to your child's education. Feel free to contact the school about any matter whatsoever. You are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with your child's teacher. If you have further questions or concerns, please discuss them with the principal/director.

The Sycamore Education website, [www.sycamoreeducation.com](http://www.sycamoreeducation.com) is an excellent way to communicate with the school community. Parents are emailed a user ID and login to Sycamore when their child has been enrolled in Desert Torah Academy. Once logged on, parents may visit the website to obtain general school information as well as specific homework assignments and class events. All staff, including teachers and administration can be reached via email through the website. Your child's grades, homework assignments (current and any that may be missing) can be viewed on Sycamore Education. By logging onto Sycamore on a daily basis you will have a totally updated record of what your child is learning, how they are doing, and what is expected of them. We strongly urge parents to take full advantage of the website and all it has to offer. It is an extremely useful form of communication.

In addition, the school administration sends out emails informing parents of various school events throughout the year. Often these emails contain important information. Please look for,

and read carefully, any email sent by Desert Torah Academy.

Frequently, children are given school and community information in the form of notes or memos to be taken home. Please check your child's backpack daily to ensure that you don't miss out on important information.

A monthly newsletter is published and sent home with each student. This includes points on the weekly Torah portion, upcoming events, and news from the class, pictures, student work, a monthly calendar of events and more. Please read the newsletters as they are very informative and contain important information about school events

Parents can visit the Desert Torah Academy website, [www.deserttorahacademy.org](http://www.deserttorahacademy.org) to obtain forms, information on school events and to see pictures of school activities. Desert Torah Academy also has a Facebook page.

## **17. CONFERENCES**

Teachers are always available to discuss your child's progress. In addition, during the first trimester of the school year, parents have an opportunity to meet their child's teachers at Back-to-School Night. At the end of the first grading period, parent-teacher conferences are scheduled to evaluate each child's progress. Desert Torah Academy and its employees maintain the confidentiality of all information.

## **18. PUPIL EVALUATION**

Teachers administer tests periodically to evaluate each student's progress. Report cards are issued 3 times annually for both Judaic and General studies. In addition, progress reports are sent home between official grading periods. At the end of the school year, Desert Torah Academy administers the Terra Nova Test in the Secular studies department, grades 3-8. Results of these tests are generally not available before the end of the school year. Parents should call the school office to obtain their children's results.

In addition to the Terra Nova testing at the end of the year, DTA also evaluates its students' progress using the Aimsweb Assessments. These assessments are given in the fall, the winter and the spring of each school year. If a student is found to be below grade level, then a special intervention program is developed for that child. More frequent assessments will also be given to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's intervention program for the student.

## 19. HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are an integral part of the planned curriculum. General Studies and Judaic teachers cooperate in order to keep the amount of homework within reasonable limits. Due to Desert Torah Academy's enriched program, featuring a dual curriculum, parents should expect their children to have a little more homework than is customary in a public school. Parents who find their child spending an unreasonable amount of time in order to complete homework assignments should communicate with the child's teacher first, and when necessary with the principal through the school office. The approximate duration of homework assignments per grade should be as follows:

Kindergarten	10 minutes	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	15 minutes
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	20-25 minutes	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	30-45 minutes
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	40-60 minutes	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	50-75 minutes
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	60-80 minutes	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	70-90 minutes
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	90-120 minutes		

Requests for homework for students who are ill must be called into the school office in the morning. Homework assignments are also posted daily on the Sycamore Education website. Please refer to #16 on page 10 for details about accessing the website.

Parental responsibilities in helping children establish good homework habits include the following:

- Provide a quiet place and a scheduled time to do homework
- Act as a consultant or guide when your child asks for help
- Help create a timetable for completion of projects, and check often to see that your child stays on track
- Inform teachers if assignments seem to be too difficult, so that appropriate help may be given to your child in school
- Assist your child in obtaining resource material
- Refrain from doing the student's assignment. All homework must be the student's own work

## 20. COUNSELING AND DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

Occasionally, a teacher may see a need for a student to be assessed by professionals outside the school. This may occur when teachers observe behaviors that raise questions about the presence of a developmental delay, learning difference, or other special need. The purpose of such an assessment is to provide teachers and parents with the information needed to meet the students learning needs, either within the school or through a tutor or other resource person arranged for by the parents. All costs incurred are the responsibility of the parent.

## 21. CLASS OBSERVATION

If you are interested in occasionally visiting your child's classroom, we ask that parents follow the procedures delineated below. By following these steps, we are able to provide a consistent, optimal learning environment for all students.

1. Call the school office in advance of your visit. Office staff will check with the teacher to be sure the time is appropriate. We may ask you to change your time if there is a test scheduled or if there are special projects or programs going on.
2. When you visit the classroom, please sit in the area designated by the teacher. It is important that the classroom routines have as little disruption as possible and that students continue with their learning activities. Helping students, especially your own, should be done only at the invitation of the teacher.
3. Classroom visits should be limited to occasional occurrences. If you feel the need for frequent visits, please discuss this with the principal. It is important that your children know you care about and support their education, but we also need to encourage their independence in learning.

## 22. PROTOCOL FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS

If your child is having a problem in a particular class, please try to resolve the problem directly with that teacher. The best way to communicate with the teacher is via email. Please do not text teachers about school issues. If you feel that after speaking to the teacher, the problem is continuing, please contact the school administration. Furthermore, if your child is having a problem with a fellow student, **please do not contact that child's parents or speak to the child directly.** Instead, please contact your child's teacher or the school administration and ask them to help you resolve the problem.

Parents are asked to use discretion when discussing school issues, especially in front of their children. It is very important to help our children have a positive attitude toward their school and their education. Modeling a positive attitude while quietly pursuing solutions lets children know that their parents and teachers are working together for their benefit and shows that there is mutual trust between school and home.

## 23. ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING

Desert Torah Academy is accredited by the National Council for Private School Accreditation and the National Accreditation Board of Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch. Desert Torah Academy is operated as an exempt school under the provisions of NRS 394.211 and as such is exempt from the provisions of the Private Elementary and Secondary Education Authorization Act.

## 24. BEHAVIOR POLICY

Desert Torah Academy's philosophy of behavior management is grounded firmly in the belief that children thrive in a positive and affirmative atmosphere. Setting fair and reasonable limits for behavior and reinforcing desired behaviors are effective methods to promote good student behavior. At the same time, students who frequently violate the rules will face negative consequences. These may include a time out, or having to write an essay that helps the student re-think his/her inappropriate behavior. If the poor behavior continues, the child's parents will be asked to come in for a conference. Further infractions may result in suspension or even expulsion from Desert Torah Academy. Furthermore, serious infractions may result in immediate suspension or expulsion from Desert Torah Academy.

### Desert Torah Academy Rights and Responsibilities

- Article I                      Everyone has the right to live safely
- A. Follow the routines and procedures established for the school and for your classroom(s)
  - B. Keep hands and feet to yourself
  - C. Handle school and personal property appropriately
  - D. Practice safe health habits
- Article II                     Everyone has the right to learn
- A. Follow directions
  - B. Follow classroom rules
  - C. Allow others to learn
  - D. Come to school everyday, on time, prepared to learn
- Article III                    Everyone has the responsibility to be respectful and polite
- A. Treat adults with absolute respect
  - B. Treat fellow students with respect
  - C. Use kind words and actions
  - D. Keep the school environment clean for yourself and others
- Article IV                    Everyone has the responsibility to be honest
- A. Always tell the truth
  - B. Do your own work
  - C. Take ownership for your actions
- Article V                     Everyone has the responsibility to use time wisely
- A. Come to class on time
  - B. Allow others to do their work without interruption
  - C. Complete classwork as directed
  - D. Finish homework and turn it in on time

## 25. CARING ABOUT OTHERS

Caring about another person is extremely important. Part of the educational process includes learning how to be a “mentch.” A student can show how he/she cares by:

1. Speaking respectfully to teachers
2. Helping a friend or teacher
3. Offering a compliment to a friend or teacher
4. Calling a classmate who is ill
5. Being careful not to say things which hurt another person’s feelings

## 26. TZEDAKA

Tzedaka, (charity) is a basic concept in Judaism. Our school attempts to develop a commitment amongst our students to share with others less fortunate than themselves by donating a few pennies a day to charity. Parents are asked to provide young children with one coin daily.

Older children should give Tzedaka from their allowance money.

## 27. SHABBOS PARTIES/BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Shabbos parties are an essential part of our curriculum. They are held every Friday in the Kindergarten and 1st grade Judaic classes. Birthday celebrations are held in conjunction with Shabbos Parties, on the Friday closest to the birthday in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Parents must sign up in the office in order to reserve the date for their child’s celebration. Any food that the parents wish to bring for the party must be checked by the office prior to the party. Older grades may also celebrate a child’s birthday. This is done a few minutes before recess on the child’s Hebrew birthday. You may find out your child’s Hebrew date of birth from the office if you do not already know it.

In consideration of your child's fellow classmates who observe the laws of Shabbos and Kashrus, we request that invitations given out in school for parties being held outside of school include the following: 1) all of the child’s classmates are invited, 2) the party is not held on Shabbos, 3) kosher food is available. **These invitations for birthday parties held outside of school need to be approved by the director, who will distribute them to the children only if they meet the above criteria. Please do not give the invitations to your child to distribute in school.**

## **28. HOLIDAYS NOT CELEBRATED**

Halloween, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day are not celebrated at DTA.

## **29. ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies are held periodically throughout the year. They usually include performances by the children, either with Judaic or Secular curriculum themes or concerning specific calendar dates. Advance notice is given in the school newsletter and via email of assemblies and announcing which class will be performing.

## **30. FIRE AND EVACUATION DRILLS**

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis. The fire alarm is sounded and the children exit their classrooms in silent, single file. Each classroom has a fire escape route posted in a prominent place, indicating the exit route and assembly point. In-place-shelter drills are also conducted. Desert Torah Academy has a detailed evacuation plan and evacuation drills also take place on a regular basis. If a parent is on campus when the fire alarm goes off, they must follow the same evacuation procedures as our students and staff.

## **31. SAFETY PLAN**

Senate bill 289 requires all Nevada Schools to have a safety plan. The plan contains all of DTA's emergency procedures and also provides parents with a list of the school's evacuation sights. In case of an emergency, please do not take your child from the school or one of the evacuation sights without informing the director, principal or your child's teacher. Parents are welcome to review the plan, but for reasons of confidentiality it may not be removed from school property.

## **32. POSITION ON THE STATE OF ISRAEL**

The creation of the State of Israel is one of the seminal events in Jewish history. Recognizing the significance of the State and its national institutions, we seek to instill in our students an attachment to the State of Israel and its people as well as a sense of responsibility for their welfare.

## **33. PHOTOGRAPHS**

Individual and class photographs are taken annually. Parents are given the opportunity to purchase photos but are under no obligation to do so.

### **34. FIELD TRIPS**

Classes frequently go on educational field trips. General permission slips for all field trips must be signed at the beginning of the school year. In addition, notices for specific trips are sent home shortly before the scheduled date. These notices must also be signed and returned to the office. You will be notified at that time if your child requires a car seat. It is the parent's responsibility to supply a car seat if required. If a trip fee is requested, parents will be notified in advance.

### **35. PARENT SUPPORT & PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. Specifically, this includes the responsibility to establish a home environment which encourages the moral values, ethics, social skills, self-discipline, and commitment to learning that is fostered in our school; to be fully informed regarding all aspects of their children's progress; to take and/to support appropriate remedial action when needed, and to make every effort to establish and maintain a cooperative and mutually supportive relationship with the school.

Schools have the responsibility to guide, assist, support and complement parents in their efforts to meet these responsibilities. Of particular importance is the school's obligation to assist parents in gaining the information and insight necessary to make informed judgments regarding the religious and moral education of their children.

The PTO is an organization of parents that assists the school and sponsors school related activities. Parents are encouraged to join and actively participate in the PTO. Parent Teacher Organizations provide many opportunities for volunteer efforts.

Here are some ways parents can support Desert Torah Academy:

- \* Volunteer
- \* Donate audio-visual equipment
- \* Volunteer to drive for a field trip
- \* Volunteer to be a soup mom or dad
- \* Volunteer your expertise i.e., plumbing, electrical, etc
- \* Encourage other families to enroll their sons and daughters
- \* Donate books or software
- \* Become a tutor
- \* Donate games and activities

### **36. STUDENT CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students may bring cell phones and personal electronic devices to school, but may not use them between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm. Furthermore, they must be kept in the student's locker or backpack throughout the school day. They may not be kept anywhere on the student's person. Violations of this rule will result in:

First violation: Students will give the principal the device and it will be returned at the end of the day.

Second violation: Students will give the device to the principal. It will only be returned to a parent.

Third Violation: The parent and student will be given the option of surrendering the device until the end of the year or having the student serve a two day suspension.

**Have a wonderful year and welcome to the extended family of Chabad's  
Desert Torah Academy!**